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REVIEW OF THE FY 2020 USAID BUDGET REQUEST

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COMMITTEE ON FOREIGN RELATIONS
UNITED STATES SENATE

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REVIEW OF THE FY 2020 USAID BUDGET REQUEST

WEDNESDAY, MAY 8, 2019

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

The committee met, pursuant to notice, at 9:45 a.m., in room SD–419, Dirksen Senate Office Building, Hon. James E. Risch, chairman of the committee, presiding.

Present: Senators Risch [presiding], Rubio, Johnson, Romney, Gardner, Isakson, Young, Cruz, Menendez, Cardin, Shaheen, Coons, Murphy, Kaine, and Markey.

OPENING STATEMENT OF JAMES E. RISCH, U.S. SENATOR FROM IDAHO

The CHAIRMAN. This hearing will come together, hopefully, this morning, and we will start off. I have a few opening remarks, and then I will yield to Senator Menendez to do likewise.

Before we do that, for all of our guests and everyone, we are starting early, as you can see, and we got surprising news from the floor yesterday, which does not happen regularly, but that is that we are going to have five votes, starting pretty soon. Senator Rubio and I are going to take turns chairing the committee as each of us shuttle back and forth to vote, which obviously is one of the most important things that we do.

First of all, I am pleased to welcome Administrator Mark Green, who brings to the table decades of development experience, a commitment to transparency and accountability, and a firm grasp for the purpose of foreign aid, which is to end the need for its existence.

The USAID, the lead development agency charged with advancing the economic global health and humanitarian interests of the United States overseas, is the subject of our hearing this morning. Under Mr. Green's leadership, USAID is undergoing an organizational transformation intended to make the Agency more efficient, effective, and adaptable to the 21st-century challenges. And there are many challenges, and will be many challenges in the 21st century. This transformation includes certain areas of focus, the first being creating a unified humanitarian assistance bureau, elevating stabilization and resilience programming, and ensuring that innovation cuts across all development sectors; secondly, bringing on a Clear Choice coordinator to help identify ways to counter China's malign development model; thirdly, pursuing procurement reform and an adaptive staffing plan, which, if approved, may help USAID

attract and retain needed talent in a more coherent and cost-effective manner.

Over the coming year, this committee will examine how USAID and its implementing partners manage these changes. We also will monitor how USAID positions itself to cooperate, rather than compete, with the new International Development Finance Corporation in catalyzing private-sector-led economic growth. Change is understandably difficult, but we should never allow bureaucratic inertia to prevent improvement.

USAID has done a lot over the past 58 years to make Americans proud, yet, as we sit in this room, nearly 70 million men, women, and children have been forcibly displaced from their homes, the highest number recorded in modern history. Additionally, an estimated 85 million people in 46 countries will need food aid this year, and the threat of famine persists in Yemen, South Sudan, and Northeast Nigeria. The Ebola outbreak in Congo is spreading, and I think our witness is going to have something to say about that and the risks that it possesses and is to the world. And the Taliban and Boko Haram continue to block polio vaccination efforts in small portions of the world. And corrupt governments, weak institutions, food and water scarcity, pandemic health threats, and economic exclusion are fueling broader insecurity and creating opportunities for extremist groups to exploit vulnerable populations and threaten United States interests.

The challenges are daunting, and the means to address them are limited, so it is incumbent upon this committee to carefully scrutinize the President's foreign aid budget. The budget must be strategic, effective, and aligned with the most pressing national interests of the United States. It must eliminate duplication and waste. It must focus on breaking the chain of dependency by helping communities help themselves. And it must support a workforce at USAID that is capable and adaptive to the challenge we face in 2019, not 1961.

In any budget, difficult choices must be made. Investing in U.S. military readiness is a good choice. But, undercutting effective diplomacy and development, which can stabilize situations before they spin out of control, disrupt pandemic health threats before they cross our borders, and support the growth of healthier, more stable societies with whom we can trade, rather than aid, is also very, very important, and it is a good choice.

Mr. Green, I look forward to working with you over the coming years to ensure that USAID has the tools and the resources it needs to advance USAID's critical mission for America and in the world.

With that, I would like to recognize our Ranking Member, Senator Menendez, for his opening remarks.

STATEMENT OF HON. ROBERT MENENDEZ,
U.S. SENATOR FROM NEW JERSEY

Senator MENENDEZ. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

And thank you, Administrator, for your service to our country and appearing before the committee this morning.

Immense challenges are growing in complexity across the world, but, in the face of human suffering created by both natural and

manmade disaster, it is baffling and disappointing to receive, for the third year in a row, a proposal for draconian cuts to our foreign aid budget from previously appropriated levels. It is hard to understand how your agency would effectively operate with the President's budget requests.

USAID can, and should, be playing a critical role. I applaud your commitment to the people of Venezuela, where an entrenched dictatorship has led to state collapse, the spread of violent crime, a humanitarian crisis, and a massive refugee crisis that is undermining regional economic growth and stability. This should be the model, not the exception.

Across Africa, the Anglophone crisis in Cameroon has taken the country to the brink of civil war, the Russian Government has established a foothold in the Central African Republic, and, before Mozambique could begin to recover from Hurricane Idai, Hurricane Kenneth struck. In Syria, without sustained investment into development, we have no hope of truly defeating ISIS. In Afghanistan, what message would it send as we are negotiating a peace deal, one, parenthetically, about which Members of Congress have been kept in the dark about, to cut the U.S. mission in half?

I know you know this, but it seems to bear repeating at the outset. Development and humanitarian relief investments by USAID are not charity. These programs and these funds advance U.S. national security while helping to lift up the world's most impoverished and build resilient and prosperous communities that, in turn, promote global stability, which is why, perhaps, the President's March 29th announcement to end all foreign assistance to El Salvador, Guatemala, and Honduras is, again, the most illogical we have seen.

Over the last 2 years, the administration has, indeed, touted the effectiveness of our Central American programs that address the driving factors of migration, programs to promote economic development, the rule of law, and that help confront drug traffickers wreaking violence throughout their communities. Yet, the President has requested fewer overall resources and seems to be trying to withhold, reprogram, and call back unobligated and unexpended funds from both current and prior fiscal years. It is as if the President is deliberately exacerbating the crisis. These kinds of cuts in U.S. presence and investment work directly against our interests, including by ceding ground to our adversaries.

Nowhere is this more evident than in the advances China is making with its ambitious One Belt, One Road strategy that exploits host nations while entrenching its economic and political reach. Last year, you announced your Clear Choice Initiative to counter China's growing development influence around the world, something I have been looking forward to. But, so far, I have seen the administration offer nothing meaningful as an alternative to Chinese investment in Africa, Latin America, or elsewhere, beyond rhetoric. Cutting the budget for international development by more than 40 percent is certainly an alternative, but not one that will achieve the outcomes we desire. In fact, I would submit that the administration is providing a clear choice, "Turn to China for foreign investment." Fortunately for American interests, Congress has

twice rejected the President's budget and program proposals, and I expect we will do so again.

Administrator Green, you are a skilled former Ambassador, legislator. You know the value of U.S. international development and promoting democracy in U.S. foreign policy. Your passion for U.S. leadership in delivering humanitarian and disaster assistance are evident. But, the administration continues to propose cutting USAID's budget as the NSC and OMB continue this troubling foreign assistance review that seems nothing more than an effort to slow-walk appropriated funds as the F Bureau systematically delays approving spending plans.

So, from where I sit, the Congress must be more effective in holding the administration accountable for its foreign policy shortcomings and reminding the American people about the importance of ensuring core American values, like democracy, governance, and human rights remain essential components of U.S. foreign policy. It is these fundamental values, along with America's unparalleled strengths, a military second to none, a vital economy driven by innovation and technological ingenuity, a reservoir of goodwill with our allies and partners that provide us the opportunity to define a new role and a new grand strategy on the global stage for the 21st century.

I look forward to today's hearing and hope that we can work together to repair and protect the critical work of your agency.

The CHAIRMAN. Thank you, Senator Menendez.

And now we are going to hear from our witness, Administrator Green, who was sworn in as the 18th Administrator of USAID in August of 2017. Previously, Mr. Green has served as president of the International Republican Institute, president and CEO of the Initiative for Global Development, senior director at the U.S. Global Leadership Coalition, and U.S. Ambassador to Tanzania from 2007 to 2009. He also served four terms in the United States House of Representatives, representing Wisconsin's 8th District. Ambassador Green holds a law and a bachelor's degree from the University of Wisconsin-Eau Claire.

Mr. Green, I meet with lots and lots and lots of different people, and I can tell you, I was impressed with you, as I have been with anyone, about their commitment and passion for the job that you are undertaking, and, more importantly, your pragmatic approach to the kinds of challenges that you face, which are incredibly overwhelming, which anyone would agree to that faces the kinds of things that you face.

So, with that, welcome, and we are anxious to hear your message.

STATEMENT OF HON. MARK GREEN, ADMINISTRATOR, U.S. AGENCY FOR INTERNATIONAL DEVELOPMENT, WASHINGTON, DC

Ambassador GREEN. Thank you. Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Thank you, Ranking Member Menendez, members of the committee. I appreciate this opportunity to summarize my testimony, and I do appreciate all the support that we have received from both sides of the aisle.

In total, the USAID request for fiscal year 2020 is approximately $19.2 billion. It represents $2.4 billion, or 14 percent, more than last year's request. It is an attempt to balance fiscal responsibility here at home with our leadership role and national security imperatives around the world.

Members, in order to capture some of the important work that so many of you have referenced, I would like to touch briefly on a few of my recent travels. I just returned from Ethiopia and Cote d'Ivoire with Senior Advisor to the President Ivanka Trump. While there, we met with women leaders and entrepreneurs to advance the Women's Global Development and Prosperity Initiative. We discussed ways to improve the enabling environment for women entrepreneurs and advance issues like access to credit for woman entrepreneurs at all levels.

Earlier this month, I traveled to Senegal to lead the U.S. delegation to the second inaugural ceremonies for President Macky Sall. Senegal represents what is possible in Africa and elsewhere through a commitment to democracy and inclusive economic growth.

A few months ago, I visited South America as we continue to craft policies regarding Venezuela, a country very obviously moving in a different direction. It is no secret that Nicolás Maduro's ruthless regime has destroyed that country's economy and political institutions. Millions of Venezuelans, young mothers with children, have taken desperate flight. The U.S. has responded with over $256 million in assistance for these migrants and their host communities. At the request of interim President Guaidó, and working with other countries, we have pre-positioned humanitarian assistance in the region for potential delivery into Venezuela; in fact, over 540 metric tons of such assistance. And I will be heading back down there in just a few days.

I have recently visited Jordan, another country where the U.S. is playing a vital humanitarian leadership role. We have been working hard to help reduce strains caused by years of conflict and displacement, and to try to ensure that all people in Jordan can access essential services.

Last year, I visited Burma and Bangladesh. Bangladesh now hosts 1 million Rohingya, most of them there because of Burma's ruthless ethnic cleansing campaign. In Bangladesh, we are urging the government to allow humanitarian organizations to provide migrants with a full range of support and services. In Burma, we continue to call on the government to provide for the safe, voluntary, and dignified return of Rohingya and other vulnerable communities.

While most of our humanitarian assistance goes for manmade, regime-driven crises, we are also responding to terrible natural disasters, like Cyclones Idai and Kenneth in Mozambique, Malawi, and Zimbabwe. We have already mobilized approximately $70 billion in supplies and assistance to help those impacted by the storms.

There is also the Ebola outbreak in DRC, where health officials have reported now more than 1,550 confirmed and probable cases, and now over 1,025 related deaths. As I have said previously, we need to be very concerned about this outbreak and the serious chal-

lenges it presents. We must not take our eye off this ball. I am aware of new legislation that was just introduced on the topic. We welcome it, and we do really appreciate the committee's interest and leadership on this. It is an important matter.

Of course, humanitarian matters are only part of our work. For example, we are working hard to push back on the rising antidemocratic influence of China and Russia. USAID will soon unveil a broad policy framework for countering malign Kremlin influence, especially in Europe and Eurasia. Our 2020 request prioritizes $584 million to support that work. The request also reflects an expansion of our work to help victims of ISIS in the Middle East, especially those targeted for their religious affiliation or ethnicity. We see helping Yazidis and Christians and others as part of defeating the terrorist network, once and for all.

Closer to home, when I last appeared before you, I provided an overview of our transformation plans. We have made great progress, thanks to the support of so many of you, and we appreciate it. I look forward to addressing future questions that you might have as we go forward on this as we try to address some of the remaining congressional notifications.

Finally, and most importantly, I would like to say a quick word about our most precious asset, our human resources, our dedicated Foreign Service Officers, Civil Service staff, Foreign Service Nationals, and other team members who are truly on the front lines of some of the world's most pressing challenges. We are continuing to staff up and to bring our workforce into greater alignment with strategic planning numbers and available Operating Expense allocations. We are planning to hire approximately 140 career-track Foreign Service Officers before the end of fiscal year '20. We have also approved 221 new Civil Service positions and have now selected 10 finalists for the Donald M. Payne Fellowship Program.

Members, I appreciate your support, your guidance, and your ideas. And, Mr. Chairman, thank you again for this opportunity to appear before you. I welcome the opportunity to address questions.

[The prepared statement of Ambassador Green follows:]

PREPARED STATEMENT OF HON. MARK GREEN

INTRODUCTION

Chairman Risch, Ranking Member Menendez, Members of the Committee, thank you for this opportunity to discuss the President's Fiscal Year (FY) 2020 Budget Request for USAID.

The FY 2020 request for USAID fully and partially managed accounts is approximately $19.2 billion, an increase of $2.4 billion, or 14 percent, over last year's request. It requests $6.3 billion for global health and $5.2 billion for the Economic Support and Development Fund. In terms of USAID's humanitarian assistance, it requests $6 billion for the new International Humanitarian Assistance Account, which, combined with all available resources, will allow us to maintain the highest level ever of U.S. humanitarian assistance programming.

USAID remains focused on our core day-to-day work: helping support the world's most-vulnerable populations affected by humanitarian crises; promoting human rights, democracy, and citizen-responsive governance; and improving development outcomes in the areas of economic growth, education, environment, and health worldwide. Every day, our highly professional and dedicated staff work diligently to deliver sustainable development solutions and build self-reliance in partner countries, project American values globally, and advance our foreign-policy and national-security objectives.

I know that I cannot touch upon our work in each country in the limited time afforded me today, so allow me to discuss some of the themes and situations at the forefront of our attention.

OPTIMIZING HUMANITARIAN ASSISTANCE

The budget request reaffirms that Americans will always stand with people and countries when disaster strikes or crisis emerges. The FY 2020 U.S. humanitarian request will provide an average of $9 billion in both FY 2019 and FY 2020 when combined with all available resources, allowing the U.S. to remain the single largest global donor and maintain roughly the highest level ever of USG humanitarian assistance programming. The United States will not only continue our role as the world leader in humanitarian assistance, but we will also call on others to do their part and we will work relentlessly to assure that assistance is delivered as effectively and efficiently as possible.

Over the years, the responsibilities of the two USAID offices that lead the bulk of our humanitarian assistance—Food for Peace and the Office of U.S. Foreign Disaster Assistance (OFDA)—have been sharply increasing. While they have often coordinated, they have worked in parallel, with separate budgets, separate oversight, separate structures, and different strategies.

Our overseas humanitarian assistance, within USAID's new Bureau for Humanitarian Assistance, supports this administration's commitment to optimize USAID humanitarian investments. This will ensure a seamless blend of food and non-food humanitarian USAID assistance, better serving our foreign policy interests and people in need.

The budget also delivers on the President's commitment to optimize the effectiveness of the U.S. Government's outdated and fragmented overseas humanitarian assistance. The proposal maximizes the impact of taxpayer dollars, helps more beneficiaries, and delivers the greatest outcomes to them by consolidating all overseas humanitarian programming in the new Bureau at USAID while retaining State's lead role on protection issues, as well as the U.S. refugee-admissions program.

VENEZUELA

Nowhere is America's leadership in humanitarian assistance more important, or more timely, than in our continued response to the man-made, regime-driven crisis in Venezuela. As you know, the illegitimate dictator Nicolás Maduro has repeatedly blocked outside efforts to provide humanitarian relief to the millions of Venezuelan citizens in need. We continue to monitor the situation in Venezuela closely, where Maduro and his cronies have destroyed the country's institutions and economy, and created the largest cross-border mass exodus in the history of the Americas. Venezuelans could soon become one of the largest groups of displaced people in the world.

In response to Interim President Juan Guaidó's request for assistance that could help him meet some of his people's urgent needs, USAID and State—with support from the Departments of Defense and others—have pre-positioned humanitarian assistance close to the Venezuelan border with Colombia, and Brazil. USAID has also pre-positioned humanitarian assistance inside of the island of Curacao, for eventual delivery into Venezuela. Since February 4, the U.S. Government has pre-positioned nearly 546 metric tons of urgently needed humanitarian assistance, including food aid, emergency medical items, hygiene kits, non-pharmaceutical commodities, water treatment units, and nutrition products.

At President Trump's instruction, we have closely coordinated these efforts with the international community. President Iván Duque of Colombia and President Jair Bolsonaro of Brazil, in particular, have been key allies in our efforts. The United States is grateful for our allies in the region who have stepped up to help the Venezuelan people in their hour of need.

We will continue to support Interim President Guaidó's efforts to deliver aid to his people in Venezuela, and also continue to help Colombia and other countries that are hosting Venezuelans who have fled. To date, the U.S. has provided more than $213 million in humanitarian assistance and approximately $43 million in development assistance for Venezuelans and host communities in the region. That funding has brought urgently needed food, health care, protection, and shelter, to both Venezuelans and host communities. USAID also funds local organizations involved with human rights, civil society, independent media, electoral oversight, and democratic political processes, and the democratically elected National Assembly. We are not alone in this effort.

Many of our close allies have pledged support, and many private citizens have already contributed assistance to Venezuelans in the region, as well.

The United States stands with those who are yearning for a better life and a true democracy. We know the answer to Venezuela's crisis must be human liberty and democracy; Venezuelans deserve a return to democracy, rule of law, and citizen-responsive governance.

We also stand with the Cuban people who have suffered for six decades under an authoritarian regime—the same regime plays a crucial and destabilizing role in supporting Maduro and his cronies. The United States funds democracy programs that help the capacity of independent Cuban civil society, support the free flow of uncensored information to and from the island, and provide humanitarian assistance to political prisoners and their families.

In response to requests by Cuban civil-society activities during the Summit of the Americas in April 2018, USAID identified an additional $750,000 in FY 2017 funds to increase humanitarian support for Cuban political prisoners and their families, and to provide additional communications tools to civil society activists.

TROPICAL CYCLONE IDAI AND KENNETH

USAID mobilized quickly in response to the devastating impact of Tropical Cyclone Idai on Mozambique, Zimbabwe, and Malawi.

Torrential rains covered nearly 900 square miles of land in water—that's an area larger than New York City and Los Angeles combined. Sadly, more than 600 people lost their lives, and 1.85 million people are in desperate need of assistance.

USAID deployed a Disaster Assistance Response Team (DART), which includes experts in health, food security, shelter, and water, sanitation, and hygiene to provide technical advice and make assessments in real time. To prevent the spread of cholera and other waterborne diseases, USAID delivered relief supplies, including water-treatment units, water-storage containers, and latrines, and is working with partners to provide medication and oral rehydration salts. To reach the communities cut off by the storm, we also requested the unique capabilities of the U.S. Department of Defense U.S. Africa Command to provide airlift and logistics support for our humanitarian response. Over the course of their mission, the U.S. military flew 73 flights, and transported more than 782 metric tons of relief supplies, including food, medical supplies, and vehicles, as well as USAID disaster experts and aid workers.

Cyclone Kenneth struck Mozambique in April, just 5 weeks after Cyclone Idai; a total of 41 people were killed, more than 90 people injured, and up to 300,000 people were impacted.

USAID has deployed a team to the affected area to determine additional food, shelter, water, sanitation and hygiene needs.

OUTBREAK OF EBOLA IN THE DEMOCRATIC REPUBLIC OF THE CONGO (DRC)

Since the declaration of the outbreak on August 1, 2018, health officials have recorded at least 1,554 confirmed and probable cases, including 1,029 deaths, in DRC's North Kivu and Ituri Provinces as of May 5, 2019. The U.S. Government deployed a DART to the DRC to augment the ongoing Ebola response efforts. These disaster and health experts from USAID and the U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) within the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services (HHS), are working with partners to provide robust life-saving assistance and support affected populations. The DART is coordinating with the DRC Ministry of Health, the World Health Organization, other donors, and key actors to support a unified effort, encourage sustained resourcing and fair burden-sharing, and ultimately end the outbreak. USAID assistance works to break the chain of transmission, including through preventing and controlling infections, surveillance and case-finding, contact-tracing, case-management, and raising awareness in communities about how the virus is transmitted.

This response is a priority for the U.S. Government, not only because we are committed to supporting those affected, but also because effective efforts to contain and end the outbreak will prevent it from spreading throughout the broader region and beyond, including the United States. I remain concerned that the outbreak is still not contained, however, and am working with colleagues in the interagency to advocate for a more effective global response.

ROHINGYA CRISIS IN BANGLADESH AND BURMA

Bangladesh now hosts 1 million Rohingya refugees from Burma in the world's largest refugee camp. Over 740,000 of these refugees arrived in the wake of an ethnic cleansing campaign conducted by Burmese security forces that began in August 2017. Last May, I went to Bangladesh and Burma's Rakhine State to observe firsthand the daily burdens and suffering facing Rohingya communities. In many ways,

it is the harshest situation I have seen in my time at USAID. The United States is the largest single donor of humanitarian aid to this crisis, and stands as a beacon of hope to Rohingya.

Our efforts continue to focus on measures that will improve the situation for Rohingya in Rakhine State, as well as Rohingya refugees and host communities in Bangladesh. While providing life-saving assistance is critical, we also undertake programming to encourage the Burmese Government to address the underlying causes of tension and violence, which are essential for lasting justice. This is a necessary step if that beautiful country is to fulfill the promise of its far-from-fully-realized democratic transition.

YEMEN

We also remain seriously concerned about the humanitarian crisis in Yemen, which is the world's largest in terms of affected population. Approximately 80 percent of the country—more than 24 million people—require some form of humanitarian assistance. More than 3.6 million people have already been displaced; there have been more than 1.6 million suspected cases of cholera in the last 2 years, and more than 5 million people are one step away from famine. Since FY 2018, the United States has provided nearly $721 million in humanitarian aid to Yemen, and USAID is responsible for nearly $692 million of that assistance.

SUPPORT FOR RELIGIOUS AND ETHNIC MINORITIES

The $150 million in USAID and State Department funding this Budget requests will help us continue our important assistance to those religious and ethnic minorities in the Middle East, and other regions, whom ISIS sought to extinguish. We believe freedom of religion and conscience are an essential part of our national character, and an essential attribute of any country that seeks to be prosperous, democratic, and just.

As evidenced by the heinous attacks in Sri Lanka on Easter morning, religious intolerance is far from limited to the Middle East. The bombings that took the lives of so many, including four U.S. citizens, are a painful reminder that we must remain vigilant against this scourge. USAID extends its deepest condolences to the friends and families of those lost in the attacks, and we will continue our efforts to promote interfaith dialogue and peaceful co-existence in our work across the world.

DEMOCRATIC BACKSLIDING

Another significant challenge we face in many regions is democratic backsliding. Rarely these days do authoritarian leaders oppose elections outright. Instead, as we have seen in capitals from Caracas to Phnom Penh, they use sophisticated tools and methods to bend elections to ensure they can maintain their grip on power. Subverting civil society and independent media, manipulating vote tabulations, and other anti-democratic ploys are all too often undermining hope for everyday citizens to be able to shape their future through the ballot box. USAID will continue to fund programming that aims to counter authoritarian impulses, nurture the capacity of civil society to advocate for an agenda of liberty, and advance fundamental freedoms worldwide.

Many parts of the world have seen an exponential growth of predatory financing dressed up as development assistance. China and Russia have been by far the greatest, though not the sole, sources of such financing. This form of financing often leads to unsustainable debt, eroded national sovereignty, and even the forfeiture of strategic resources and assets.

As part of an agency-wide strategic approach, USAID will soon unveil a Framework to help us counter malign Kremlin influence, especially in Europe and Eurasia. This budget request prioritizes $584 million in State Department and USAID foreign assistance to support that work and our efforts to aggressively communicate the stark differences between authoritarian financing tools and the approach that we and our allied donor nations use.

Our approach is true assistance that helps partner nations build their own self-reliance and a more dynamic, private enterprise-driven future. We aim to help partner countries recognize the costs of alternative models, like those of China and Russia, that can weaken confidence in democratic and free-market systems, saddle countries with unsustainable debt, erode sovereignty, lead to the forfeiture of strategic assets ignore the needs and concerns of local communities, and further the militaristic ambitions of authoritarian actors.

One positive story in our work, both in terms of supporting democratic processes and countering malign Kremlin influence, is in Ukraine. USAID provided support

to the Central Election Commission in the lead up to the recent Presidential elections. According to the most trusted international and domestic monitoring organizations, the election was conducted peacefully and without significant external manipulation—representing the true will of Ukraine's citizens. We look forward to working with President Elect Zelenskiy to continue strengthening democratic processes in the country, rooting out corruption, empowering civil society, building a stronger basis for sustained prosperity, and enhancing resilience to malign Kremlin influence.

INDO-PACIFIC STRATEGY

America's security and prosperity at home is closely tied to a stable and free Indo-Pacific Region, and this request includes over $1.2 billion in State Department and USAID foreign assistance to protect U.S. interests and promote open, transparent, and citizen-responsive governance across the Indo-Pacific.

In Asia, USAID plays a key role in advancing the U.S. Government's Indo-Pacific Strategy (IPS), particularly the economic and governance pillars, and the latter's headlining Transparency Initiative. America's vision for a free and open Indo-Pacific region is one in which all nations are sovereign, strong, and prosperous. Together with our U.S. Government partners, and in coordination with like-minded donor partners, USAID helps advance the IPS by strengthening governance in areas critical to achieving this vision—primarily with regard to bolstering economies and free markets, supporting democratic institutions and transparency promoting human rights and empowered citizens, and fostering incentives that address the region's substantial infrastructure gaps—foremost in the energy, transportation, and digital connectivity sectors. By promoting open, transparent, rules-based, and citizen-responsive governance across Asia, the IPS mitigates the influence of predatory countries while unlocking private-sector-led growth that helps drive sustainable development and increase partner countries' self-reliance. As part of this strategy, USAID is playing a leading role in the interagency.

At USAID, we are proud of our role as the world's premier development agency. We are just as dedicated to ensuring that we maintain that leadership role in the years ahead. To prepare ourselves for the future, in late 2017, we initiated a series of interconnected reforms we call Transformation. Aimed at shaping a USAID that remains worthy of both American investments and the talented, dedicated staff who work for us around the world, Transformation will allow us to strengthen our core capabilities, increase efficiency, and ultimately, improve outcomes while reducing costs. This Budget Request closely aligns with, and supports, the implementation of these plans.

When I last appeared before this Committee on April 24, 2018, I provided an overview of several planned initiatives in our Transformation framework. After nearly 100 consultations with many of you, your staff, and colleagues across Capitol Hill, we have since launched our reform agenda and submitted nine Congressional Notifications related to the Agency's new structure. Our structure is closely tied to other internal reforms, and will provide the necessary enabling environment, within USAID, to ensure this vision takes root. I ask for your support for clearing the remaining Congressional Notifications on our Transformation, and am eager to answer any questions you might have.

COUNTRY ROADMAPS: DEFINING AND MEASURING SELF-RELIANCE

In pursuit of our vision of a day when development assistance is no longer needed, we are now orienting our work around the concept of fostering self-reliance in partner countries. USAID defines "self-reliance" as a country's ability to plan, finance, and implement solutions to its own development challenges. To understand where a country is going in its Journey to Self-Reliance, we need to understand where they are on that journey and how far they have come from. To that end, and after consultations with USAID employees, external partners and other shareholders, we pulled together 17 objective, third-party metrics across the political, economic, and social spheres. They fall into two broad categories: commitment, or the degree to which a country's laws, policies, actions, and formal and informal governance mechanisms support progress toward self-reliance; and capacity, which refers to how far a country has come in its ability to plan, finance, and manage its own development agenda.

We then assembled these metrics, country-by-country, as "Country Roadmaps" for all 136 low- and middle-income countries as classified by the World Bank. We rolled out Roadmaps in August 2018 for socialization with partner governments.

These Roadmaps serve several purposes. First, again, they help us identify approximately where each country is in its development journey, a crucial first step

in orienting our in-country approach around the concept of self-reliance. Second, they help inform our strategic decision-making and resource allocation processes and ensure we better focus USAID's investments. As we better align our strategies and our budgets, we look forward to working with you, and your colleagues, to ensure we have the appropriate mix of resource allocations. Third, because they use objective, open-source data, the Roadmaps provide USAID with a common touchstone for use in dialogues with countries and development partners. Fourth, the metrics help signal to USAID—and the broader U.S. Government—when a country has made enough development progress such that we should pursue a new, more enterprise-centered phase in our partnership.

In October 2018, we published the Country Roadmaps online at USAID.gov. I welcome you to take a look.

DIVERSIFYING OUR PARTNER BASE, AND ENGAGING NEW AND UNDERUTILIZED PARTNERS

Metrics provide us with critical insight, but, ultimately, it is our in-country partnerships that advance our mission. Tapping into the innovation and resources of the private sector, and working with a full breadth of stakeholders, is critical to achieving sustainable development outcomes and building self-reliance. Many local and locally established actors—such as education institutions, non-profits, faith-based organizations and for-profit enterprises—have long engaged in their own efforts to build capacity, increase accountability, and provide services in countries prioritized by USAID. They are natural allies in our development mission, and this Request includes $20 million towards a New Partnerships Initiatives to expand our partner base.

Historically, these groups have often struggled to compete for USAID funding because of burdensome compliance and solicitation requirements, the imposing dollar size and scope of our awards, and unfamiliarity with USAID's terminology and practices. On our end, we have admittedly lacked a sustained commitment to mobilizing new and local partners. The result has been a dwindling partner base. In Fiscal Year (FY) 2017, 60 percent of our obligations went to 25 partners, and more than 80 percent of our obligations went to just 75 partners. The number of new partners has decreased consistently since 2011.

With the launch of USAID's first-ever Acquisition and Assistance (A&A) Strategy last December, we seek to reverse this trend, and tap into the good ideas and innovative approaches we know exist in underutilized partners. Included in the core tenets of our Strategy are more collaborative approaches to partnership, prioritizing innovation, and building the commitment and capacity of new partners. By diversifying our partner-base, we will not only incorporate new ideas and approaches into our tool-kit, but we will also strengthen locally led development—a core component of each country's Journey to Self-Reliance.

STRENGTHENING PRIVATE-SECTOR ENGAGEMENT

While there will always be an important role for traditional contracting and grant-making in our work, we can accelerate and amplify our efforts and outcomes by increasingly applying market- based solutions to the development challenges we aim to address. At USAID, we have long recognized that private enterprise is the most-powerful force on earth for lifting lives out of poverty, strengthening communities, and building self-reliance. But until recently, the Agency lacked a formal, overarching policy to guide and galvanize our engagement with the private-sector.

That changed last December with the launch of USAID's Private-Sector Engagement Policy. The Policy serves as a call to action for all Agency staff and partners to increase and strengthen our work with commercial firms, and embrace market-based approaches to achieve outcomes. We seek ever-greater input from the private-sector to move beyond mere contracts and grants to include more true collaboration—co-design, co-creation, and co-financing.

As part of this greater focus on private-sector engagement, USAID looks forward to a close partnership with the new Development Finance Corporation (DFC) established by the BUILD Act to mobilize financing, and this Request provides $50 million towards the new DFC. With close integration of tools such as the Development Credit Authority (DCA), the Overseas Private Investment Corporation (OPIC), new equity authority and other reforms, the DFC will make private-sector engagement much more effective. We are working closely with OPIC and the White House to make the new DFC a reality. Through collaborative endeavors with our United States Government partners and the private sector, we seek to join up our respective expertise to tackle problems that neither could fully address alone.

We pursue greater engagement with the private sector because it is sound development, it achieves better outcomes, and it leverages the vast, largely untapped resources of commercial enterprise throughout the world. But we also pursue it because it is good for American businesses. The world's fastest-growing economies are largely in the developing world.

USAID's work to promote regulatory reform already helps level the playing field for American businesses, by reducing their barrier to entry in these large markets. Combined with financing support from the new DFC, the United States can help bring these American businesses directly to the table to tackle specific challenges and further expand their opportunities.

This renewed emphasis on private sector engagement has already borne fruit. For example, last November, I signed a Memorandum of Understanding between USAID and Corteva, one of America's great agribusinesses. Together, we will tackle global hunger while simultaneously cultivating new markets for U.S. technology and expertise. I am excited to see what other partnerships emerge in the months and years ahead.

WOMEN'S ECONOMIC EMPOWERMENT

No country can meaningfully progress in the Journey to Self-Reliance if it shuns half its population. The development dividends of greater participation by women in the economy are numerous. Our experience shows that investing in women and girls accelerates gains across the full development spectrum, from preventing conflict to improving food security and economic opportunity.

The President's National Security Strategy clearly recognizes women's empowerment as a top foreign policy priority. On February 7, 2019, President Trump launched the Women's Global Development and Prosperity (W–GDP), and signed a Presidential Security Memorandum that clearly and decisively links the ability of women to participate fully and freely in the economy with greater peace and prosperity across the world. In Fiscal Year (FY) 2018, we allocated $50 million for W–GDP. This year's request goes further, and includes $100 million to support workforce-development and skills-training, greater access to capital, and changes to the enabling environment so that, around the world, all women have greater opportunities to reach their full economic potential.

STAFFING

At USAID, our human resources are our most precious asset. Our professional, experienced, and dedicated corps of Foreign Service Officers (FSOs) are at the frontlines of what we do as an Agency. In recognition of that, USAID will continue to staff up and bring our Foreign Service workforce into greater alignment with strategic planning numbers and our available Operating Expense budget. Specifically, we are seeking to expand our overseas Foreign Service capability to better manage financial risk, increase program oversight, provide critical support for the President's Emergency Plan For AIDS Relief (PEPFAR), and fill technical positions that have been chronically short-staffed. USAID has also selected 10 finalists for the 2019 Payne Fellowship program.

USAID is preparing to hire approximately 140 career-track FSOs between now and the end of FY 2020. Hiring 140 FSOs over the next 2 fiscal years and adjusting for attrition would bring the total FSO workforce by the end of FY 2020 to just over 1,700 FSOs. For USAID's Civil Service, USAID's Hiring Review and Reassignment Board, has approved the hiring of an additional 221 staff to be added to the General Schedule workforce, which stood at 1,181 U.S. Direct Hires (USDH) as of February 2019.

To support USAID's mission, we seek to test a non-career, term-limited personnel system that is more efficient and flexible than our current systems while also better for many program-funded staff, by improving benefits and professional development. Within this budget proposal, USAID is also requesting to pilot an Adaptive Personnel Project (APP) to develop an agile, non-career/at-will U.S Direct Hire personnel system that can rapidly hire, move, and retain a talented, program-funded workforce. APP would be a program-funded, direct-hire mechanism with Federal benefits and inherently governmental authorities. The overall vision is to improve USAID's ability to hire the right talent, at the right time, in the right place, for the right duration of time.

CONCLUSION

Mr. Chairman, Ranking Member, and Members of the Committee, 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 human-

itarian and development assistance, and, alongside the rest of the world, 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.

The CHAIRMAN. Well, thank you very much.

This is an important hearing. And again, I want to stress, to all of our guests and witness, that, as we come and go, please do not take that as any sign that what you are saying here and what we are doing here is not important, but we do have a series of votes that all of us are going to have to attend to as we kind of come and go.

One of the things that you and I talked about recently that is alarming is the situation regarding the Ebola outbreak. And, by the way, we are going to do a 5-minute round to start with here, and then we will go from there. But, I want to talk to you for just a minute about that. You touched on it briefly in your opening remarks. Can you talk a little bit about the time we thought we had a handle on this thing, here we go again. What is going on? What should we be aware of? What keeps you awake at night in that regard? And explain your situation for us.

Ambassador GREEN. Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I really do appreciate this opportunity.

I think the important way of thinking of this Ebola challenge in DRC is that it is not simply a medical challenge. We have had great success in fighting off pandemics before, but this is much more than that. This is a convergence of failures and dysfunctionality, quite frankly. It is a failure of institutions, it is a failure of, in many ways, democracy, with the lack of citizen-centered, responsive governance in the affected areas. There is lots of community distrust. And, quite frankly, we are seeing a deeply disturbing uptick in violence targeted at outsiders, including healthcare facilities. Since January alone, there have been more than 119 violent attacks in the affected areas; 42 of them targeted at healthcare facilities; 85 health workers have been wounded or killed. And that shows you what we are really dealing with.

So, the response that we must have is much more than solely a medical response. But, that, of course, is the core of what we must do. It is rebuilding community trust. It is rebuilding stability and security, such that healthcare professionals can get into affected areas. But, the most important thing is bringing communities together so that they turn to those who can provide the lifesaving vaccines that they need and that we can mobilize in a containment strategy. But, it worries me a great deal, because—and again, we have now seen 4 weeks in a row of record spread of the disease. If it gets towards a couple of key transit population areas, I am very, very worried about it.

Secretary Azar and I have each sent strong messages to the World Health Organization—wonderful organization; Dr. Ted Gross is a friend to all of us—that this outbreak is not under control and that we must have a much more aggressive vaccine strategy. So, it is multifaceted, a number of failures. And I think it will take a broad-based response as a result.

The CHAIRMAN. That is a pretty bleak picture. Are you cautiously optimistic? Are you pessimistic? Where are you on——

Ambassador GREEN. I am always cautiously optimistic. I will say that—and many of you know Admiral Tim Ziemer—for a long time, the head of the President's Malaria Initiative. He is the acting head of our DCHA Bureau with humanitarian assistance. He is there as we speak, and we are just getting reports back from him. He has been able to eyeball some of the challenges, because we really do want to make sure that we have a multifaceted, complete response to this.

You know, it is something that we have been talking about for quite some time. It really burst onto the scene last fall. But, you had intervening factors of elections that, again, from my perspective, were not the hallmark of a truly responsive democracy, in the sense that there were so many problems with them. In fact, the Congolese in the affected area were never able to even vote in these last round of elections. All of that to say that there is lots of distrust by citizens towards officials, institutions. And, unless that is rebuilt, it is very hard to be able to bring people in and apply the vaccine that we know is a key part of preventing the outbreak and the spread.

So, I do not want to sugar-coat it. I think it is a deep challenge, and one that is truly worthy of the committee's attention.

The CHAIRMAN. Thanks for shining a light on that.

I have got some questions about your activities and how they intersect with China's activities out there, but I want to make sure everybody gets a shot at that, so we will come back to that, perhaps, a little bit later with that.

Senator Menendez.

Senator MENENDEZ. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Administrator, I am glad you were talking about the Ebola outbreak and the Eastern Democratic Republic of Congo. As you said, it has killed more than 1,000 people. It is projected to last through the end of this year. Community resistance and insecurity are major obstacles to bringing the outbreak under control. It is my understanding that your agency is pivoting to a new strategy to improve community engagement and trust through development activities to foster access for health workers to treat and prevent the spread of Ebola. I am concerned, however, that the decision to suspend non-humanitarian assistance under the administration's strict interpretation of the Trafficking in Persons and DRC's Trafficking in Persons Tier 3 designation is going to prevent AID from successfully employing the strategy.

Now, yesterday, I introduced legislation to remove any legal impediments to that strategy. So, let me ask you, first, has the White House approved the strategy to reduce community assistance?

Ambassador GREEN. Decisions have not been finalized yet with respect to the TIP designation.

Senator MENENDEZ. What——

Ambassador GREEN. On the designation, sure, but in terms of funding, decisions have not been finalized.

Senator MENENDEZ [continuing]. But, as it relates to the strategy, regardless of funding, for the moment, have they agreed to the strategy that your agency has developed?

Ambassador GREEN. On Ebola?

Senator MENENDEZ. Yes.

Ambassador GREEN. It is still being finalized. I think there is increased awareness, and we are pushing a much more aggressive approach. It has not been finalized yet.

Senator MENENDEZ. What is the holdup?

Ambassador GREEN. The holdup, I think, is making sure that we have full input from all parts of the U.S. Government that will be required.

Senator MENENDEZ. I hope we have a sense of urgency.

Ambassador GREEN. Oh, Senator, I do. And I am not going to tell you that coming before a committee is a great experience that is full of joy and——

Senator MENENDEZ. It is the most——

Ambassador GREEN [continuing]. Pleasure, however——

Senator MENENDEZ [continuing]. Enlightening experience you could have.

Ambassador GREEN [continuing]. However, I will say that, when Senators like yourself come forward with legislation like this Ebola legislation, it is, from our perspective, welcome and helpful, because it does raise the profile of the issue. It points out, I think, very usefully, that a more comprehensive approach will be taken. So, we look forward to working with you on this.

Senator MENENDEZ. Well, I hope we can move forward without the legislation, although I am going to press it, but I think that the right interpretation in pursuit of our own interests would hopefully prevail.

For 2 years, from the President on down, the administration has called for continued engagement in Central America in order to address factors forcing people to flee their countries, including the weak rule of law and high levels of criminal violence. The Secretary of State has submitted nine certifications to Congress confirming that Central American Governments were making progress on these conditions.

Mr. Chairman, I would ask unanimous consent to include the nine certifications and the USAID evaluation for the record.

The CHAIRMAN. So ordered.

[The information referred to above is located at the end of the hearing.]

Senator MENENDEZ. And I hope the President and the Secretary of State review the administration's own records. Its own records.

So, I am not going to ask you whether you agree with the assertions the President has said, that these governments are purposely sending migrants to the north. I am not going to waste time with that. But, I do hope you can share for the committee, one, what are the root causes that we see people fleeing and seeking asylum? And, two, do you believe that the programs that you previously had been engaged in to provide an improved food security, expand economic opportunity, youth gang alternatives, and the other elements of your program to create institutional capacity were headed in a direction that was working?

Ambassador GREEN. Thank you, Senator.

First off, I believe in our programs. The programs—imperfect, we can always do better and always do more—I think have been producing some good results, and I am confident that they will be part of the longer-term answer. It is no secret that we are all frustrated by the upsurge in numbers that we have seen recently. I saw that former Homeland Security Secretary Jeh Johnson said that this was a crisis, by anyone's measure. We believe that our programs are most effective when we have strong partnership from host-country leaders. The steps that are necessary to take, I believe, will involve our programs, but they are only successful, as we have seen in places like Colombia, where we have the full buy-in from the host country and it is taking some of its own steps, oftentimes difficult ones. As you know, the Secretary of State and the F Bureau are in the process of doing a review of all programs and also the conditions under which we will all be able to continue. And we are very hopeful that we can pick up the work.

I will also say there are a couple of things that we have been doing. In recent months, one of the things that we have been doing is looking at apprehension data to make sure that our programs are specifically targeted towards those parts of the region that seem to be producing migrant flows. Secondly, we have been developing performance metrics in our grants and contracts with implementing partners that will make reduction of those numbers a specific performance metric. And so, we will be partnering more closely with our partners, including the private sector, and hopefully bolster innovation. We think it is important work that needs to be done, and look forward to the opportunity to build on success and improve what we are doing.

Senator MENENDEZ. I appreciate that. But, if we do not deal with the root causes, we are not going to meet this challenge.

The CHAIRMAN. Thank you, Senator Menendez.

Senator Young.

Senator YOUNG. Thank you, Chairman.

Welcome, Administrator Green. It is great to have you here at the committee.

I have heard from our military leaders about the unsustainable losses that are facing the Afghan military. And I have also heard that the war is, essentially, at a stalemate. In February, then-CENTCOM Commander, General Votel, said, quote, "Afghanistan continues to suffer from weak institutions and a political environment marked by a lack of unity on core issues." So, that is a frustrating statement for, really, all Americans after 17 years of engagement in Afghanistan, especially when we know our success there ultimately depends on some sort of political resolution.

While some view the peace talks and reconciliation with the Taliban as a positive step, I understand the situation is very complicated, but I am reserving judgment, especially in light of the fact that the Afghan Government is not party to those talks.

Mr. Green, in your view, how is our mission in Afghanistan going?

Ambassador GREEN. Well, first, I would like to take a moment just to pause and express condolences and concerns. There was an attack last night, that we all read about, in Afghanistan. Still learning more about precisely what happened. But, it is a reminder

to all of us of just what a challenging environment that we see there.

The Secretary of State directed us to be part of a posture review in the size of our footprint, State Department footprint, interagency, in Embassy Kabul. And, you know, we have provided information. I know that review is being finalized. We will consult with all of you when that is completed.

You know, we continue to work through the Country Development Cooperation Strategy that all of you have seen and approved of. We view our work as crucial for supporting peace.

Secondly, we think that we need to continue to find ways to strengthen citizen-responsive governance and citizen-centered governance so that people have political and emotional investment in institutions. We are continuing to work to foster private-sector inclusive growth. One of the problems has always been that it is a country that has mineral resources, but does not necessarily produce inclusive growth such that a large number of people are invested.

And then, finally, what is crucial to the success in Afghanistan, in our view, is women's empowerment. So, it is empowering young women and girls to get an education that ties them to their country and the outside world, and gives them skillsets, strengthening the tools for women entrepreneurs so that they have greater control over their own future and, again, produce that economic inclusive growth. So, that is where our work is.

It is hard. It is——

Senator YOUNG. Well——

Ambassador GREEN [continuing]. Extraordinarily——

Senator YOUNG [continuing]. I want to get to brass tacks, because our time is limited. So, you mentioned citizen involvement and inclusive growth and involving working through the private sector, wherever possible. How are USAID's efforts advancing that? You mentioned you are reducing the footprint, but your programming, right now, is advancing citizen involvement through what activities?

Ambassador GREEN. Oh, again, working to strengthen local governance institutions and empowering women to participate in the political process. The great challenge are the security costs.

Senator YOUNG. I just want to point out, and it is not a criticism of you. I actually——

Ambassador GREEN. No, no, no.

Senator YOUNG [continuing]. I think no one is better equipped to have this position than you right now. And it would take a lot to disabuse me of that notion. But, I will say this. We are negotiating with the Taliban. The government is not even involved. The Taliban, I think, has different views on women inclusiveness, women empowerment, than even the Afghan Government does. I know the cultures are very distinct from ours. We do not want to be unrealistic in our goals there and what can be achieved. But, I am going to have to get more clarity from you and your staff about exactly how we are specifically trying to empower women.

In terms of inclusive growth, poppy cultivation, according to the Special Inspector General for Afghanistan Reconstruction, the recent release of the 2019 High-Risk List says USAID will no longer

design or implement programs to address opium poppy cultivation. So, that is their major private-sector, sort of, cash crop, is opium production right now. And clearly we need another alternative. I do not know if anyone has sharpened the pencil just to see if—I know we have tried wheat in the past, substituting wheat, a much lower-margin product than opium.

Ambassador GREEN. And we have, and that is a big part of our work, is working——

Senator YOUNG. Right.

Ambassador GREEN [continuing]. On value chains for agricultural and horticultural products.

In the case of empowering women, the biggest thing, there are 107,000 Afghan women who are educated, who were not before the work that we are doing.

Senator YOUNG. So, I guess the key challenge for this committee as we oversee these activities and try and work with you to ensure that you meet with success in achieving those goals around good governance, citizen involvement, inclusive growth, we need to make sure that, as the United States looks to reduce its presence—and I am hopeful we are thinking critically about reducing our presence, at some point, 17 years in—how we can consolidate those gains we have made on those different fronts.

Ambassador GREEN. Look forward to working with you on it, very much.

Senator YOUNG. I only had 5 minutes. I was generously given 6-plus. And so, Mr. Chairman, thank you.

The CHAIRMAN. Thank you, Senator Young.

Senator Cardin.

Senator CARDIN. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Administrator Green, I think you understand that there is a great deal of confidence in your leadership on both sides of the aisle on this committee, and a desire for this committee to work with you in order for you to be able to carry out your mission. It is extremely frustrating to see the type of budget support that you have received from the administration. And we recognize that, in previous years, Congress has not followed that guideline and has provided you the resources that are more realistic. But, we also recognize we have to figure out strategies in order to carry out our missions. And I appreciate your response to Senator Menendez's comments on the legislation he has filed in regards to the health challenges we have on Ebola. And I appreciate very much Chairman Risch's comments about how we have put a priority on fighting for American values, including fighting against corruption.

Your comment about having the help of host countries is critically important to carry out your mission. We recognize that. But, it has been Congress working with your agency that has set guardrails that helped you. Trafficking in persons is a clear example where we have given you clear guidance on how you have to respond to trafficking. In women's empowerment, with the WE ACT, we gave you clear direction on where you need to work with us. And I think that has been very positive. And I hope this Congress will give you clear direction on fighting corruption—legislation that I have authored with Senator Young, that passed this committee last Congress, that we are working on and filed this week, last

week, too—to give you clear direction that, as you are working with host countries, we cannot tolerate corruption, and that we need good governance. So, we look forward to working with you on those particular issues.

I want to sort of drill down on some of the real challenges that we know we have, and how you are going to be able to respond, recognizing the lack of support you are receiving from, certainly, OMB on the budget numbers, how you are going to use the resources to fight.

This committee authored, in the last Congress, a report on Russia's activities in Europe. We now have the Mueller report that clearly identifies Russia's attack on democratic institutions here in America. We have the One Belt, One Road Initiative from China, where we know, clearly, they are trying to impact democratic institutions, and using their economic power to do that. And then we see the President's budget cut democracy programs by almost 50 percent. And we see the cut in Europe and Eurasia by 54 percent, which is Russia's primary target. We see the cut in East Asia and Pacific of 14 percent, which is China's principal target. Reassure us that we will work together to use the tools that you have to strengthen democratic institutions, particularly in countries in which we have bilateral programs and which Russia and China are targeting for democracy erosion, where we need to strengthen democracy.

Ambassador GREEN. Senator, thank you for the question.

You know, I do view our relationship, the relationship between the agency and all of you, Congress, as extraordinarily important. I believe in the open dialogue. I believe in the constructive discussion of how we develop responses. You have my full commitment. I mean, because it is the only way we succeed.

When it comes to China, Russia, democracy, there are no priorities that are higher for me. So, on the democracy front, I am an old democracy warrior from my IRI days. But, secondly, beyond that, none of our investments are truly sustainable if we are not fostering citizen-responsive governance. It will not last. And so, we have to focus on that. We develop clear metrics in the roadmaps we have, country by country, that focus on democracy. We are elevating democracy in our work with one of the new bureaus. Terrifically important.

We will unveil, in a few weeks' time, our Countering Malign Kremlin Influence Framework. And what we are trying to do is to counter that country-by-country predatory strategy that the Kremlin undertakes, looking for weaknesses, particularly in Europe and Eurasia. You are right. So, we focus on such things as independent media and media literacy, energy independence, so we can help these countries not be so dependent upon Moscow. We look to help fight corruption and foster transparency so citizens have greater trust in their government.

And, when it comes to China, you know, I have been very clear. I push back on the notion that some have put out there that this is the era of great-power competition. I do not like that term, because it suggests that this is a game and we are on the same field and playing by the same rules and looking for the same goals. It is not true. We do foreign assistance and development. They do

predatory financing. We try to partner with countries and help lift them up so they can join us as fellow donors. And the sooner that can happen, the better. They, of course, are looking for the opposite. They hope to make countries subservient and forever dependent. And I do not think we can talk about it often enough. And so, from the Indo-Pacific strategy to the work that we will do as an Agency in our messaging, you have my commitment to work with you on this. I think it should be one of our Nation's highest priorities.

Senator CARDIN. I thank you for that response.

The CHAIRMAN. Thank you.

Mr. Green, that was about as clear an enunciation of where we are, as far as our relationship with China today. Thank you so much for that.

Senator Isakson.

Senator ISAKSON. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

I want to associate myself with all the remarks you made about Mr. Green. He is an outstanding individual. I worked with him in the House as a Member of Congress. I worked with him in Africa. I have worked with him everywhere. He is terrific.

And I want to commend you on coming up with a new name, "predatory"——

Ambassador GREEN. Predatory financing.

Senator ISAKSON [continuing]. "Predatory financing." As a real estate developer, I know what that means, but I now also know what it means in food security and other things like that, as well.

But, let me be real quick, because we do have a couple of votes that I need to get to. Number one, food security is something I have worked on a long time. I know that you are a big supporter of food security and understand the global challenges we have on food security. I also notice that, in the proposal here, USAID's food security program will be combined with other programs to form a new Bureau for Resilience and Food Security. Will that help us in delivering our deeply needed help of food security around the world?

Ambassador GREEN. It will. It will make us more nimble, more responsive. You know, we are the largest humanitarian donor in the world, by far. And no one else is close, particularly on the food security side. What we have been trying to do, and we will do with the new bureau, is also add to it some of the resilience elements that, hopefully, get those countries to a place where they are less dependent upon our humanitarian food assistance. And part of that is some of the very successful tools that come from the last administration on Feed the Future, some of those investments, where we harnessed the expertise of U.S. academic institutions and agribusinesses. If we can apply those to some of the challenges, I think it helps us all, in the long run, get away from having to perpetually be a humanitarian donor, and can help these other countries take care of themselves.

Senator ISAKSON. Well, fighting hunger is a tremendous asset in bringing about security and independence and a good life for people around the world who do not have it, so I am a big supporter of that, and I hope this will help in doing so.

On Ebola, I want to go back to your alarm, stated calmly, but distinctly. I am worried, too. I represent a state that has Hartsfield International Airport in it, so many places—we have CDC, we have Emory University. The first Ebola outbreak, most recently, in Liberia, we were at the headwaters of that and were successful in stopping it. I get the distinct message, not necessarily subliminally, but directly, that, because of the conflict in the DRC, because of the lack of security in the DRC, the lack of coordination in the DRC, we are at real risk of having an outbreak that will get larger and bigger before it gets smaller. Are there things that we can do to help stop that or make that situation less likely?

Ambassador GREEN. Yes. First off, as a confidence-building message, let me be clear that we work very closely with the CDC. Their medical expertise is second to none. And so, we are closely working with them in the field. I think also part of the answer are some of the measures that the Chairman has talked about and are in Senator Menendez's bill, or at least referred to, and that is taking a kind of a comprehensive approach.

When you are fighting a pandemic in a setting like this, you need to build trust in a community so that they are willing to come forward and to rely on those tools that we provide. If people are not willing to come forward, or if people go in the opposite direction when we show up or anyone else shows up, we will never get the pandemic under control. So, it is going to require that kind of a response. That is why CDC, USAID, and State have to be joined together. We each bring tools to this. And we need to work closely together. And I think you would hear from Dr. Redfield at CDC that we are in constant communication. And both of our teams are there right now, trying to do a full-on assessment——

Senator ISAKSON. I have heard——

Ambassador GREEN [continuing]. That we will come back to with and give you a further briefing on.

Senator ISAKSON [continuing]. I have heard just that from Mr. Redfield, and I appreciate you-all's cooperation and coordination on that, because it is critically important to see to it that we do what we need to do in the future.

And I want to end by just making a comment. I watched you at work in Tanzania, when you were our Ambassador, and I watched your work with PEPFAR, and putting people to work and getting partnership attitudes between two countries and two governments to deliver PEPFAR throughout that country at a less expensive, more effective rate than anywhere in Africa, to begin with. So, your natural ability and inherent like for partnership is going to be the asset that brings us, in food security and health security, a long way. And I appreciate your service. If we can help in any way, please let us know.

Thank you, Mark.

Ambassador GREEN. Thank you. Would not be there without the tools that all of you have provided, quite frankly. Thanks.

Senator RUBIO. [presiding]: Thank you.

Senator Shaheen.

Senator SHAHEEN. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

And thank you, Administrator Green, for being here today, and for your service to the country.

One of the prime recipients of USAID in Europe has been Ukraine since the Russian seizure of Crimea in 2014. And one of the areas of our focus has been on trying to address corruption there. As you have so rightly pointed out, a stable, prosperous democracy is the best way for countries to better use assistance that we are providing and that other countries are providing. But, I was really troubled recently to see high-ranking Ukrainian officials, such as Prosecutor General Yuriy Lutsenko, publicly criticize our leading diplomats, and further troubled to see his false allegations begin to circulate, not only in Ukraine, but in rightwing media here in the United States. So, how does USAID ensure that U.S. foreign aid in Ukraine supports legitimate reformers who are really working to fight endemic corruption?

Ambassador GREEN. Thank you, Senator.

First, as a general matter, what I often point out, the best way to push back on the Kremlin is success in Ukraine and in the neighborhood. That is the one thing that his people cannot tolerate, and that is seeing democracy and markets work, and women's empowerment.

In terms of our programs, focusing on tackling corruption is the central piece to our work, because it is creating that investment—as you know from these last elections, people spoke pretty clearly, and they were absolutely fed up with corruption and lack of responsive institutions. They want to see change. We are helping to power that change. E-governance is a big part of what we have been able to do. And also, we have a success story from the elections, themselves. USAID funded some cybersecurity tools that helped the Election Commission in Ukraine push back against intrusions from Moscow into the elections that we all knew were likely to occur. I had an opportunity to meet with the mayor of Kiev yesterday, Vitali Klitschko, and we were talking about ways—first off, he has helped to foster some anticorruption institutions, transparency-based, but looking for new ways—the more we can use e-governance, the more we can push back on old institutions and bureaucracy, I think that is crucial if we are going to see popular support for the reformers in Ukraine, and also their continued success in moving towards Europe.

Senator SHAHEEN. Well, I hope you will also help push back against false stories like the ones that have been circulating out of Ukraine about our diplomats.

I want to go on. I appreciated very much your comment to Senator Young about the importance of women's empowerment and stability in Afghanistan, and particularly, post any peace negotiations, the important role that women will play. I had the opportunity yesterday to sit down with Ivanka Trump and review the administration's forthcoming Women, Peace, and Security Strategy that is the result of legislation Senator Capito and I sponsored that was signed into law in 2017. And it now requires that we have a strategy for having women at the table in any post-conflict negotiations. One of the things that I hope you will support is the importance of having women at the table as we look at any peace negotiations that go on with respect to the Taliban and the Afghan Government. And hopefully you are prepared to do that and you are

prepared to officially implement this Women, Peace, and Security Act.

Ambassador GREEN. Senator, thank you. And yes, we are in the final stages of its approval, the strategy released publicly. But, you are precisely right, history tells us that the best way to produce sustainable, lasting peace and effective governance is to make sure that women have their seat at the table. So, we certainly agree.

Senator SHAHEEN. I just got back from Afghanistan, and I met with a number of women leaders. And they said two things to me that I thought were very powerful. First, they want peace. There is no doubt about it. As you know, Afghanistan has had 40 years of war. But, they do not want to lose their rights. They said, "We want to see the Afghan constitution that was put in after the overthrow of the Taliban that preserves human rights for all Afghans, but particularly for women. We do not want to go back to that time when women could not work, when there was no freedom of movement, when women could not go to school, when girls could not go to school. That is not a future stable Afghanistan."

Ambassador GREEN. Moving back to the past of those days and that kind of demeaning of women and marginalization of women all restores the very conditions that led to the crises that started all of this. So, we are with you. We are proud of the work that we have done to empower women, economically, educationally. And that is the work we plan to keep doing.

Senator SHAHEEN. Thank you. Thank you very much for your effort.

Thank you, Mr. Chair.

Senator RUBIO. Thank you.

Senator Murphy.

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

Good to see you, Mr. Ambassador. Thanks for spending some time in my office with me. We discussed the humanitarian plate in Yemen in my office, and I wanted to follow up, on the record, with a question or two.

As I noted to you, in my recent trip with Senator Romney to the region, all of the partners that work with you in Sanaa flew into Amman, Jordan, to meet with our delegation to give us some devastating news. And that news was that there are 250,000 Yemenis who are so sick and so malnourished that they are beyond saving. A quarter-million Yemenis are likely to die in the coming months because of the famine and the spread of disease that exists both in Houthi-controlled territories and in coalition-controlled territories. We have been a major humanitarian partner in the efforts to save these lives, notwithstanding the conflict, $720 million in assistance over the last 2 years coming from the U.S. Treasury. But, this FY–2020 request specifies only $41 million in total bilateral aid to Yemen.

Help me understand that number and whether I am reading the budget request wrong. Are we going to see a diminution in our humanitarian assistance to Yemen in the coming year?

Ambassador GREEN. Senator, I do not have the precise budget figure on Yemen, but let me say this. We will not walk away from our humanitarian role there. Again, as you know, as you rightly pointed, $721 million in humanitarian assistance in Yemen, $692

million of that comes from USAID. We continue to work closely with all the NGOs that are working there. I met, yesterday, with Carolyn Miles, from Save the Children. And yet, today, at the end of the day, I will be meeting, as I do regularly, with all the international NGOs that are working in Yemen. And, a few days ago, I spoke with the World Food Programme by phone, just on another assessment there. All of the dark things that you have characterized there are true. I mean, this is a humanitarian catastrophe. And, in some cases, the level of suffering, you know, is not irreversible—or is not reversible. It is not something that we can immediately turn back on, and it will have long-term consequences that are dark and sad. We will not walk away from our humanitarian role.

Senator MURPHY. And you had testified, in the House, that the conflict itself was what is blocking humanitarian assistance. I would tend to agree. And our humanitarian partners tend to agree. But, I would just reinforce what we discussed in private, which is that, notwithstanding the settlement of the conflict, there are steps that both sides can take in order to improve the situation for Yemenis on the ground. I will say, though, that we are only party to one side of the conflict. And so, we have much more impact over the side of the conflict of which we are a member, and there are certainly steps that our partners can take to release money into the economy, to free up the bureaucratic hurdles that still exist to this day on humanitarian assistance getting into the Red Sea ports. We can take steps, even notwithstanding the political process, to ease the flow of humanitarian aid into that country, correct?

Ambassador GREEN. Senator, yes. So, first off is a point of clarification. The $41 million—just had a note given to me—it is the development assistance part of our request, does not reflect the humanitarian assistance that we will, naturally, provide.

But, secondly, you are correct, in that both sides have steps to take. That is absolutely true. Part of the reason that we meet with—Deputy Secretary of State John Sullivan and I—regularly with representatives of all the key international NGOs and U.N. family, quite frankly, is to learn about those impediments that weaken the effectiveness and raise the costs. And then what we try to do—and State obviously takes the diplomatic lead, here—is to push those to ease the burdens in delivering assistance.

Senator MURPHY. Mr. Chairman, I had a question that I wanted to ask about the impact of the cuts to the Palestinian Authority that is probably too complicated for the time that I have remaining, so I will make it for the record.

I will just use my final 20 seconds to note that, on this trip, Senator Romney and I also visited Iraq. And there is a great fear, in Iraq, that the failure to resettle displaced populations and to rebuild the portions of the country that were destroyed in our fight, along with the Iraqi army and militias, to root out ISIS will be, in fact, the ultimate invitation for these Sunni extremist groups to reemerge. And there are rumors that we are going to cut our humanitarian assistance and development assistance into the country. It still represents only about 20 percent of our total spend there, which seems to me to be an unthoughtful apportionment of dollars. But, I will just state the imperative of continuing and increasing

our development and reconstruction assistance to Iraq. If we do not make that commitment, if we do not signal our long-term commitment to that funding, it will provide an impetus for an already-strengthening ISIS inside Iraq to make the case to Sunni populations that it is its only protector.

Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Senator RUBIO. Thank you.

I have you all to myself. We are in the middle of votes, as I am sure they have told you; so, hence, all the movement.

So, let me start, just take off from the point of Yemen. I think we are all concerned about the humanitarian crisis there, and recognize—I think we are upwards of $230 million or so that we have provided so far. And what is the number?

Ambassador GREEN. In Yemen, it is $721 million.

Senator RUBIO. Oh, wow. Okay, perfect.

So, my question to you is the following. It is still an active conflict zone. Theoretically, just as an example, if the Houthis, I would suspect, or I would know, at the direction, let us say, of the IRGC and the Quds Force and Soleimani, were to conduct attacks, say, in Saudi Arabia—against Saudi Arabia, as they have done in the past, or against U.S. interests in the region—for example, the U.S. Navy or even commercial shipping vessels—that would elicit, necessarily, a military response. If you could describe—I think we could all sort of sense what that would do for the humanitarian efforts that are going on there—but any sort of active attack by the Houthis, especially at the direction of Iran, against either Saudi interests, which would elicit a Saudi response, and, God forbid, against U.S. interests, which would elicit a devastating response, would dramatically exacerbate and, I would imagine, significantly impede, if not stop, efforts to provide aid to the people who so desperately need it.

Ambassador GREEN. Mr. Chairman, I guess, a couple of points. Obviously, as to the diplomatic and security situation, I would defer to the State Department. They are the ones who can give you the best characterization of where they see the posture of that situation. However, on the humanitarian front, we all recognize that, even at best, what we are trying to do is treatment, not cure, that a long-term political settlement, a cessation of hostilities, (a) is crucial to being able to get in to provide lifesaving medicine, to provide lifesaving food assistance. And some have characterized very effectively how dire the need is. But, in the long run, it is getting in to restore some reemergence of the social compact between citizens and leaders of ministries and local institutions that will provide some kind of stability and predictability. So, humanitarian assistance, or the humanitarian assistance agency, but we recognize that diplomacy and development and, obviously, security, in a secure setting, are the only way we can produce long-term——

Senator RUBIO. Yeah, I guess the point I was trying to drive at is, if the Houthis truly care about humanitarian assistance reaching the people who desperately need it, attacking the United States on the orders of Iran, or allowing the IRGC to operate from space they control, is not the best idea, if, in fact, they care about humanitarian assistance.

Ambassador GREEN [continuing]. We need a cessation of hostilities, including missile and UAV strikes from Houthi-controlled areas. I mean, we just have to have that. And then, subsequently, the coalition airstrikes must, obviously, cease in all populated areas. Those are the two steps that we need to be able to effectively deliver humanitarian relief.

Senator RUBIO. And an escalation of the conflict by the Houthis, by targeting targets inside Saudi Arabia or targeting the United States, would run counter to a cessation of hostilities.

Ambassador GREEN. An escalation of hostilities is a very bad thing for innocent people on the ground who are trying to desperately get those medicines.

Senator RUBIO. Pivoting to Venezuela, I know you have spoken about it in your opening statement. It is my understanding—and perhaps the numbers have been updated—that, last year, Colombia spent over a billion dollars dealing with well over a million migrants. They are our strongest counterdrug partner in the region, one of our strongest allies in the region. How would you describe, whether in numbers or in just general terms, the impact that the instability in Venezuela is having on Colombia, both from a cost and societal perspective?

Ambassador GREEN. Sadly, it is one of the most undercovered and underappreciated aspects to this conflict. I have seen reports suggesting that Colombia's economic growth, while still positive, has been reduced by .8 percent just on the basis of the burden of the uncontrolled migrant flow. But, I am heading back down to the region in a couple of days' time. There are so many things that we are working with President Duque on that we are going to raise the profile of, but this is a dark cloud that certainly threatens their future. As we talk about humanitarian crises, we have the obvious ones that we all recognize, and then we have the narcos running around the place. So, we have, on top of everything else, this extraordinarily unstable situation in which the Venezuelans are providing safe harbor to bad guys who impact the ability of Colombia to take on some of their longstanding governance challenges for peace and reconciliation. So, it is a terrible threat to Colombia. I am very impressed with President Duque. I am impressed with his plans. I am impressed with what they are trying to do, and their generosity and hospitality towards Venezuelans. But, they need our help desperately.

Senator RUBIO. One of the things I am growing increasingly concerned about is a number of Venezuelan military and national guard defectors that are currently located inside of Colombia, and the Colombians have shouldered the cost of housing and providing for them. But, we get mixed reports that they were evicted from the hotel, that these folks stepped forward and did the right thing in supporting the constitution. What are the plans or what discussions are occurring, in terms of dealing with that group, particularly, of the military defectors that now find themselves inside of—I say "defectors"—military officials that have joined, rank-and-file soldiers and guardsmen and police officers that have joined the legitimate government—who is taking care of them? What plans are in the works to address providing for them a way forward?

Ambassador GREEN. Senator, in terms of formal plans, they have not been completed or finalized yet, so I do not have much to tell you on that front. What I can say is that we are in touch with Guaidó's people all the time, continuously, and it is something they are very much aware of, as are the Colombians with whom we speak continuously. So, we are working to forge plans driven by them that deal with this challenge and others.

These are obviously changing numbers all the time, but it represents another uncertainty that impacts the situation.

Senator RUBIO. Yeah, I would just say the United States, it is my view, has an obligation to contribute to that effort, and I hope we can work with you and with the administration to make it happen. Multiple administration officials, Members of Congress, myself included, actively called for these individuals to do what they did, which is not to kill innocent civilians, and to come forward. They did so, at great personal risk, in many cases, at great personal price for their families that were left inside of Venezuela. And I just personally believe that we do have a moral obligation to contribute not just money, but some plan for them to have a way forward, and not just simply that they would be stuck there on the Colombian side with no sort of future prospects.

I see that I have been—you ready? All right. Senator Kaine.

Senator KAINE. Thank you, Senator.

And thank you, Administrator Green. I share comments raised by others, that you have the confidence of this committee. We are very appreciative of your work. But, my questions are going to focus on what I think is difficult about your job right now.

March 28, 2019, Thursday, the DHS put out this press statement, "Secretary Nielsen Signs Historic Regional Compact With Central America to Stem Irregular Migration at the Source, Confront U.S. Border Crisis." And I am just going to read the first paragraph of the press release, "Secretary of Homeland Security Kirstjen Nielsen traveled to Tegucigalpa, Honduras, where she met with security ministers representing the countries of Guatemala, Honduras, and El Salvador. The multilateral discussions marked the continuation of a multiyear diplomatic process and the signing of a historic memorandum of cooperation on border security cooperation in Central America."

I would like to introduce this press statement of DHS for the record.

Senator RUBIO. Without objection.

[The information referred to above is located at the end of the hearing.]

Senator KAINE. That was Thursday, March 28th.

Friday, March 29, at Mar-a-Lago, President Trump said he was mad at the Central American nations for not doing more to stop a border crisis, and he said, "We are not going to give them any more money."

On Saturday, March 30th, Reuters, the title, "U.S. Ending Aid to El Salvador, Guatemala, Honduras Over Migrants"—"'The United States is cutting off aid to El Salvador, Guatemala, and Honduras, known collectively as the Northern Triangle,' the State Department

said on Saturday, a day after President Trump blasted the Central American countries for sending migrants to the United States."

I would like to introduce this article for the record, if I might.

Senator RUBIO. Without objection.

[The information referred to above is located at the end of the hearing.]

Senator KAINE. Two days. The DHS announces a historic memorandum of cooperation with the three nations, and the press release goes on to cite all of the elements of cooperation that we are going to be engaging in with these nations to stop the border crisis. Within 24 hours, the President said he is mad at these nations and we are going to cut off funding. And then, on Saturday, 2 days later, March 30, the State Department announces all funding to these nations are being cut off.

Mr. Green, I have got a series of questions about this. As USAID Administrator, were you aware of the fact that DHS was involved in lengthy discussions with the Governments of the Northern Triangle countries around a memorandum of cooperation to stop migration flows?

Ambassador GREEN. We had some awareness. We did not participate in those discussions, but we certainly had awareness.

Senator KAINE. Obviously, that is in the DHS side of the family. You are in more of the State Department side of the family. But, you were aware of those discussions. And I do not think it would be unfair to say that, if you were aware of those discussions, it is likely the case that the Secretary of State was also aware of the discussions that the DHS was engaged in. Is that fair?

Ambassador GREEN. I cannot speculate, but I would assume he was aware.

Senator KAINE. Sounds reasonable. Do you know whether the President was aware of the discussions or the signing of the historic accord that his own Cabinet Secretary put out this statement about on March 28th?

Ambassador GREEN. I do not know. I do not know. I do not have awareness.

Senator KAINE. I have been very critical of this administration for blowing up diplomacy. I think backing out of the Paris Accord was a bad idea. I think backing out of the U.N. Global Compact on Migration was a bad idea. I think backing out of the JCPOA was a horrible idea, potentially leading us closer to an unnecessary war. But, I have, I think, been wrongfully asserting that the administration wants to back out of diplomatic deals that were deals done under President Obama's tenure. This is an example. When, on Thursday, March 28th, the Trump administration announces a compact with the three Central American nations, and, in less than 24 hours, the President is announcing that he is suspending all funding to those nations to do exactly what we want them to do, I have deep questions about how decisions are being made by this administration. I have confidence in you. You are going to make the best out of what you are given. And you have, testified, in response to Senator Menendez's questions earlier, that you are not backing away from any of the programs. And, hopefully, we will find a way to continue these programs. But, the suspension of aid

to these nations within 2 days after we reached a—in President Trump's administration's own words, it is an historic accord to stop immigration. And we suspend funding? I conclude that this President must be pro-caravan. He likes to say he is against caravans, but maybe he actually likes caravans, because it gives him something to run his mouth about and run his Twitter account about.

If this administration was against migration flows from Central America, they would not blow up their own diplomatic deal within 48 hours after announcing it, following a multiyear process with these nations. And it raises real questions: why would you, as another nation, want to partner with the United States? If you will sign a historic deal with the United States, and the United States will unplug it within 48 hours, why would you want to be a partner of ours to stop migration or do anything else?

I do not have any other questions, Mr. Chair.

The CHAIRMAN. [presiding]: Thank you, Senator.

Senator Cruz.

Senator CRUZ. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Welcome.

Let us start by talking about Sudan. As you know, last month in Sudan, President al-Bashir was removed from power after three decades of brutal repression. There are worrying signs, however, that Sudan's new rulers are going to drag out any transition to true democracy, and perhaps indefinitely. In your judgment, what is the role of development assistance in building up Sudanese institutions?

Ambassador GREEN. We are obviously very supportive of a transition to a peaceful and democratic Sudan. We think that the people of Sudan have spoken loudly and clearly. They want a return to civilian government. And we look forward to, hopefully, the day where we are able to support and strengthen just that.

Senator CRUZ. Do you anticipate any significant problems distributing aid or promoting USAID's mission under Sudan's current governance?

Ambassador GREEN. We do provide humanitarian assistance now. We are the largest donor to the people of Sudan, in terms of humanitarian assistance. We provided over 250 million of humanitarian assistance in 2018. But, again, as I have said before, humanitarian assistance is treatment, not cure. And that obviously is not the long-term answer. The long-term answer is fostering citizen-responsive governance. And we think that is what the people of Sudan have been protesting for. And we are all very, very hopeful, but also deeply concerned, as you have characterized. We need to see that transition occur. I think it is important for Sudan, and it is important for all of us.

Senator CRUZ. Yeah, I agree.

Let us shift to Nicaragua. I am also deeply concerned about the political trends in Nicaragua and the Ortega regime. Last year, I passed legislation, along with Senator Menendez and Congressman Ros-Lehtinen, to impose targeted sanctions and restrictions on loans to Nicaragua and to mandate a civil-society engagement strategy. The legislation was signed into law December 2018. Assistance plays an important role in our Nicaragua strategy, including democracy assistance. What is USAID's strategy for ensuring

that our development assistance in Nicaragua is used in a way that promotes our priorities and values?

Ambassador GREEN. Thank you, Senator. And thank you, quite frankly, for raising the issue of Nicaragua and focusing on it. We agree with you very strongly. Ortega is a brutal tyrant who has clearly shown no regard whatsoever, not only for democratic rights, but for the well-being of his own people.

First, I think we all need to salute the extraordinary courage of young Nicaraguan activists and democracy voices. Under the harshest of crackdowns, they have continued to be loud and clear on calling for democracy. We see ourselves as a crucial lifeline to them. And so, in the last year, we have provided support directly to the Nicaraguan people, $17.6 million for Nicaragua through OTI, as we call transition initiatives, first off, to provide some civil-society support and reinforcement, but provide some relief for these folks. Also, our voice has been consistent in calling for justice, rule of law, and a restoration to democratic order. We will not back down, just as the young people of Nicaragua will not back down.

Senator CRUZ. Thank you.

Let us shift to Venezuela. The history of development assistance in Venezuela has been a complicated one. For decades, Chavez, Maduro, and their thugs have used foreign aid as a political weapon. Meanwhile, the country has spiraled into catastrophe, which has required USAID to coordinate with other agencies and assets in the region, including SOUTHCOM. In your judgment, what steps can USAID take, both in Venezuela and elsewhere, to ensure that badly needed aid is not diverted by regimes like the one in Venezuela?

Ambassador GREEN. Thank you. As to Venezuela and assistance, I guess I would offer a couple of things.

First, I want to thank all of you. I want to thank the members of this committee and this body for its support for our democracy assistance work in Venezuela over the years, both sides of the aisle. The first time that I met Juan Guaidó face to face—I had spoken to him once on the phone, but face to face—he thanked me for that. That is what he thanked me for. He thanked me for the support that we have provided to civil society, but, in particular, the National Assembly. He is, of course, the leader of the National Assembly, and thus, the interim President. And that is a reminder to all of us of just how important these investments are. We need to stay engaged and support democracy, civil society, young democratic voices. And, so, first and foremost, we would not be here if not for those investments. And I am grateful.

On the humanitarian side, it is an extraordinarily difficult situation, obviously. As we have mentioned, we have pre-positioned assistance in a number of places. We welcome the announcement by the International Red Cross/Red Crescent that they are trying to find ways to see that assistance can be delivered in-country, not subject to diversion from Maduro and his regime. And I can tell you more in a different setting. But, we will make sure that our assistance does not get politically weaponized, as assistance has too often in the past by Maduro. He has used it to punish enemies, to reward friends. And obviously, we are not going to let that happen, in terms of our assistance.

Senator CRUZ. Thank you.

The CHAIRMAN. Thank you. And we thank you for your focus on that particular point that you made at the end. That is incredibly important.

Senator Coons.

Senator COONS. Thank you, Chairman Risch, Ranking Member Menendez.

Thank you, Administrator Green. It is great to be with you again.

Let me continue on that point about the fragility of democracy in the world and the important efforts that we make to support it, not just in Venezuela, but in lots of countries around the world. We spoke briefly at the IRI event last night. IRI is one of those organizations that is supported by taxpayer funds in order to help ensure that democracy and governance are advancing around the world. NDI and the other National Endowment for Democracy programs, I think, are well worth our continuing to support.

I am concerned about election security and ways in which increasing capacities for surveillance by authoritarian-leaning states' ability to turn off the Internet, ability to use biometric databases to monitor and surveil their population makes exactly the sort of work that we have done for decades through IFES, one of those key organizations, more freightening because we are literally handing regimes, now, a biometric database of all their constituents. We had long thought that the places where we most needed to invest in elections and democracy were the least developed countries that had the most ground to cover. In some areas, like Southeast Asia, for example, or Eastern Europe, we are seeing interference in elections by the Chinese, by Russians, by other actors, that gives me real pause.

Are we developing election security toolkits? Are there things within democracy and governance we should be doing, in light of the ways in which our own last presidential election was put at risk? And what is your view on whether our democracy and governance funding overall is robust enough?

Ambassador GREEN. Senator, I think you have captured some really important decisions that we have to make and important challenges that we have to explore. You know, it is interesting—and I am a democracy warrior from way back—you know, you look at 20 years ago, and the battle we had was against authoritarians who opposed elections. They no longer oppose elections. Everybody supports elections. They had to steal them and bend them and manipulate them, such that, long before you ever get to election date, it is over. And that is a challenge for us. I have asked my team, including my Statutory Advisory Council, which has representatives of the various democracy institutions in town, to develop a new framework to help us go after this. A lot has changed in those 20 years. The bad guys have tools. The bad guys are strategic. Notice that one of the first things Maduro did during those protests is shut down CNN en Espanol and close off the Internet, wherever he could. We need to have a better response to that.

The most important things have not changed. And what I mean by that is, you could see it with the courage of those Venezuelans and the Nicaraguans and so many others. People want democracy.

People want transparent governance. People want to have freedom of choice in their own future. As long as we have that element, we can figure this out. But, we need to develop a different framework than we have got. I worry that if we continue to operate in the old framework—okay, we look at election day, and we will, you know, the last couple of months, fund election observers—we are not going to be very satisfied.

So, I am getting the institutions to help us develop a series of benchmarks that help us evaluate, long before we get into the home stretch of an election. If we do not, we are going to continue to see—particularly China, with the closed-Net election systems and software they provide—they are going to continue to be satisfied, and we are not.

Senator COONS. Thank you for your answer and your focus on this. I have two more questions. I will ask them and then use what time you have left to answer, if you would.

First, I am just interested in the implementation of the BUILD Act, the transition to a Development Finance Corporation. I think it was a significant legislative accomplishment by this body in the last Congress in the Trump administration. And I just returned from a visit to China during the Belt and Road Conference. Having an American-led response to the infrastructure needs of the developing world, I think, is urgent. I think it would be worth the time of this committee to have you and David Bohigian and others who are actively involved in this come back and testify to us about how well we are doing at making it a Development Finance Corporation, one that has measurable and responsible risk, that is going to be good stewards of taxpayer dollars, but also deploy significant new amounts of private capital with a development focus. I would be interested in your views on how that is laying out.

And then, last, I understand you have already spoken about Ebola and the DRC. I just wanted to commend you for your focus on Tropical Cyclones Idai and Kenneth, and the responses in Mozambique, and express my real concern about the fragility of the DRC and the region, and my gratitude to Senator Menendez for stepping forward and taking on a leadership role on tackling Ebola. Anything you care to respond to in what I suspect is 30 seconds. Thank you.

Ambassador GREEN. Thank you, Senator. As always, thank you.

On Mozambique, as I said, we have mobilized about $70 million. I sent a team there, a 17-person Disaster Assistance Response Team, as well as my counselor, Chris Milligan, who has deep experience in the region. A long way to go, but we are working on it.

An additional challenge in Mozambique in the north, the insurgent attacks are beginning to restrict our ability to get into some of those most affected areas by Kenneth, so we are watching that.

In terms of the DFC, I am like you, I am a believer in the DFC, and I was long before I got to USAID. You have been very eloquent. And I think you have been on the mark. I think the most important questions that we need to answer—we are working closely with OPIC, but, as we go forward—to make sure that we have clear development impact so that these tools, which we now use, Development Credit Authority, which are a vital part of bringing the private sector to bear on some of our great challenges, building

capacity and accelerating private investment, but also making sure that we do not duplicate, unnecessarily, institutions. We want to make sure that we continue to—USAID and the 80-plus missions that we are in around the world—you know, we want to help identify projects, evaluate them, make sure that they have development impact, and then bring them to the DFC with all of the financial tools and expertise that it has. So, the integration, I think, is going to be key, and that is what we are going to be working on in coming weeks. If we do this right, it is a major tool in the toolbox.

One thing I will say. It is not about the money, in the sense of number-to-number with China and Belt and Road. It is what it produces. We believe in self-reliance. We want private enterprise, we want countries to lead themselves, in the long run. China obviously does a very different thing. So, you know, we are not trying to mimic China. We are trying to do a very different model. And that is what I think we can get to.

Senator COONS. Thank you. Thank you very much, Mr. Administrator.

Thanks for your patience, Mr. Chair.

The CHAIRMAN. Thank you, Senator Coons.

Senator Markey.

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

On climate change, I have been appreciative of USAID's programs that have sought to improve resiliency among countries in the face of climate change. However, the administration's fiscal year '20 budget does not include funds for the global environmental facility and an international environmental donor fund we have historically supported, and does not identify any environment- or climate-related priorities. The Secretary of State's unwillingness to say if he prioritizes climate change in U.S. foreign policy and decisions by the State Department to remove references to "climate change" from international declarations, including this week's Arctic Council statement, reflects the administration's disregard for integrating climate change into how we address conflict mitigation, migration, and displacement, and other humanitarian questions.

Do you believe that climate change is a foreign policy priority that needs to be tackled?

Ambassador GREEN. Senator, I will let Secretary Pompeo, our top diplomat, talk about foreign policy leadership. But, what I can say: we recognize, (a) that climate is changing, and (b) that we need to help countries deal with its consequences. So, in our roadmaps that we use as, sort of, guideposts in our Journey to Self-Reliance work, we have key metrics on biodiversity and the environment. We think it is awfully important.

Secondly, we continue, in so many parts of the world, to develop tools, as you pointed to, resilience tools and others, to help countries deal with the fallout from changing climate and how it affects governance, self-sufficiency, and so on and so forth. That priority will continue for us.

Senator MARKEY. And I am very much in respect of your commitment to foreign assistance, but I think that the budget request actually reflects a lack of commitment to working on this issue and giving these countries the help they need to deal with the climate crisis. I mean, it is a crisis for them. And for the United States not

to even make some kind of a statement, in terms of its foreign policy objectives, I think, is something that is heard overseas, and I think it is important for us to remedy that in our national statements.

And let me just move on quickly. Despite some signs of progress in countries like Malaysia and Indonesia, we are seeing a number of troubling indicators on the democracy front in the Indo-Pacific. Election interference by the junta in Thailand, the persecution of the Rohingya in Burma, or human right abuses in the Philippine drug war, increasing restrictions on press freedom—are all signs of democratic backsliding.

In previous East Asia Subcommittee hearings, Cory Gardner and I highlighted the challenges posed by China's repressive authoritarian model, and that model is now being exported around the region. The administration's budget request for foreign assistance resources for the Indo-Pacific is to double the budget request from the previous fiscal year. However, it is still nearly $200 million less than the amount dedicated to the region in 2018. How can we effectively counter antidemocratic efforts in the region if we still do not have robust funding to promote democracy and human rights in the Indo-Pacific?

Ambassador GREEN. Thank you, Senator. And particularly as you stated the question early on in surveying the scene in Asia, I do not disagree with you. I mean, those are, I think that captures well some of the challenges that we are seeing.

The Indo-Pacific strategy, our piece of the Indo-Pacific strategy, is focused on three objectives: fostering economic growth, obviously, but improving management of natural resources—that goes hand in hand with economic growth—but strengthening democratic systems. And so, we are working to develop tools on media integrity and literacy. We are working to support a civil society. The missing voice of civil society, quite frankly, in parts of Burma, I think is one of the great challenges. And, I think, also being very clear about what we see, from the imprisonment of the Uyghurs to—in my view, nothing has caused me more despair than the Rohingyas who have been left behind in places like Sittwe. I think we should be clear-throated on those challenges.

Senator MARKEY. I will tell you that Senator Gardner and I are concerned, because, ultimately, these trends are being exacerbated. And, you know, we were able to pass, and the President signed, the ARIA legislation last year. And we know how robust China is going to be. And if we are not robust ourselves, then you do not have to be a genius to figure out how this whole thing plays out. So, by underfunding a lot of these programs, then we just wind up with the officials in these countries wondering: do we really care? And the money itself is, in fact, a statement that we would make. So, I would just encourage the administration to consider its commitments and ensure our funding is sufficient to match the magnitude of the challenge, because, otherwise, I am afraid it is a losing strategy.

Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

The CHAIRMAN. Thank you, Senator Markey.

Senator Menendez.

Senator MENENDEZ. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Administrator, back in our February hearing, you expressed initial support for the importance of convening an international donor summit and for coordinating a truly international response to Venezuela as humanitarian and refugee crisis. Why has this not happened yet?

Ambassador GREEN. It is still something that I personally support and think we should be doing. Two things. We continue to be in close contact with Guaido's government, and want to make sure that they prioritize it, as well. Beyond that, we are still working with our partners at the State Department to get them fully on board. But, as you know, I think it would be a useful step.

Senator MENENDEZ. Yeah.

Ambassador GREEN. I think it is——

Senator MENENDEZ. I am sorry to cut you off, only because I know we are going to have to go to vote. But, internationalizing a donors conference so that we send a message to the Venezuelan people that there is a hope after——

Ambassador GREEN [continuing]. We have 53 other nations joining this——

Senator MENENDEZ [continuing]. More than recognize Guaidó. They need to be part of it. So, I will press it with the Secretary.

Let me move to Ethiopia, quickly. Assuming office just over a year ago, Prime Minister Abiy Ahmed undertook some pretty sweeping political reforms in the most populous country in the Horn of Africa. He freed thousands of political prisoners and journalists, he lifted the state of emergency, he allowed political opposition parties to return to the country. I mean, it is pretty remarkable. However, the transition remains fragile. If we continue to fail to support Abiy's efforts, the most profound political transformation on the continent may fail. What are USAID's conflict mitigation programs, activities related, in certain areas in conflict zones in Ethiopia? What are the goals of these activities? How many people are they reaching? Give me a sense of what we are doing there.

Ambassador GREEN. Thank you, Senator.

And it is interesting. If you would have told me, a year ago, that we would be looking at the Horn of Africa as being the opportunity area in Africa, I would have thought you were crazy. But, you are right. So, in Ethiopia, we have been moving quickly. Obviously, we continue to provide humanitarian assistance. We have 8 million people who are food insecure. But, we have a number of programs that we are pursuing with the invitation of Prime Minister Abiy. We have additional funding that we have put in for democracy, governance, human rights programs. We are also providing technical support to the attorney general and supreme court to expand those institutions so they are more independent in their decision-making and oversight capacity. We also have been supportive of civil society groups like IRI and NDI. They are now returned to Ethiopia. That is fairly recent. And they are trying to go back to their longstanding work to strengthen the democratic ethos at the community level.

One of my great concerns is the fragility of Ethiopia, politically. There are still ethnic tensions, as you know very well. And so, we are looking to support institutions that promote reconciliation but

also give people the opportunity to sort of weigh in and have a constructive investment in government.

Senator MENENDEZ. Well, we want to follow up with you on that.

And then, lastly, I am going to submit, for the record, a series of questions about rescissions. I am deeply concerned that, even though the Congress keeps rebuffing the administration on spending, we see program funds that are frozen in the Northern Triangle, in Syria, in the West Bank, in Gaza, in Pakistan, and a whole host of other things. So, this thwarts the congressional intent that money is to be spent for these programs. And I am concerned about where rescissions are going. So, I am going to ask you that question, and I would like to get an answer in writing.

Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

The CHAIRMAN. Thank you, Senator Menendez.

Mr. Green, thank you so much for being here today. This has been one of our more enlightening hearings in the—even though the foreign assistance budget is one of the smallest slivers of the United States entire budget, the Federal budget, it really cannot be measured in dollars, and its impact is critical for America and for American interests around the world. We need your agency to be strategic, efficient, effective, and accountable, and we are glad to have you there because we know you pursue in those goals, just as we do.

So, with that, for the information of members, the record will remain open until close of business on Friday.

Senator Menendez, is that long enough for you to——

Senator MENENDEZ. Absolutely.

The CHAIRMAN. All right.

We will leave the record open until close of business on Friday. We would ask if you would get your responses in as quickly as possible, as it helps us as we move forward.

So, with that, if I can find the gavel, we will close the hearing today. Thank you much.

The hearing is adjourned.

[Whereupon, at 11:25 a.m., the hearing was adjourned.]

ADDITIONAL MATERIAL SUBMITTED FOR THE RECORD

RESPONSES OF HON. MARK GREEN TO QUESTIONS SUBMITTED BY SENATOR JAMES E. RISCH

CHINA'S ROLE IN AFRICA

Question. Chinese economic projects—both in the physical and digital realms—continue to proliferate on the African continent as Beijing aggressively pursues its "One Belt, One Road" initiative around the world. Many of these China-funded projects are conducted under the auspices of development, but instead often result in crippling debt. How is USAID operating in this environment, particularly where partner countries are working with the Agency on their journeys to self-reliance, while also becoming increasingly reliant on Chinese financing?

Answer. In an era of intensifying competition among global powers, including the People's Republic of China, the U.S. model for development is one of independence, self-reliance, and growth—not dependency, domination, and debt. We emphasize that our approach is true assistance that helps governments, civil society, and the private sector in our partner nations build self-sufficiency in a more dynamic future in which private enterprise drives economic growth. We aim to help governments and the public in our partner countries recognize the costs of alternative models, like those of China and Russia, that can weaken confidence in democratic and free-

market systems, saddle countries with unsustainable debt, erode sovereignty, lead to the forfeiture of strategic assets, ignore the needs and concerns of local communities, and further the ambitions of authoritarian actors. Through programs such as Prosper Africa, Feed the Future, and Power Africa, the U.S. Agency for International Development (USAID) counters Chinese influence by providing mutually beneficial, alternative methods of development while encouraging private-sector investment.

The administration not only will encourage African leaders to choose sustainable foreign investments, but also promote a grassroots approach that engages citizens in these decisions. USAID champions citizen-responsive, democratic governance and building strong communities to mobilize Africans to advocate for their own interests. As USAID works to foster overall self-reliance in a partner country, we will ensure we build the capacity of governments, civil society, and the private sector to make informed decisions about their choice of development partners.

HUMANITARIAN ASSISTANCE

I strongly support aid reforms that will help us stretch dollars farther, save more lives, and advance key interests, but I'll need a lot more information about the proposed reorganization of humanitarian assistance before I can throw my weight behind it.

Question. Mr. Administrator, how is the proposed State-USAID humanitarian assistance coordination structure meant to function? Will USAID will need to get the Department's approval before responding to food crises or providing assistance to internally displaced persons, which are currently within your area of responsibility?

Answer. The President's Budget Request for Fiscal Year (FY) 2020 proposes the consolidation of all overseas humanitarian aid in a new, single, flexible International Humanitarian Assistance (IHA) account and the new Bureau for Humanitarian Assistance (BHA) at the U.S. Agency for International Development (USAID), with a new high-level, dual-hat leadership structure under the authority of the Secretary of State. These changes would allow the U.S. Government to respond seamlessly to the ongoing and emerging humanitarian needs of the most-vulnerable displaced people, including refugees, victims of conflict, stateless persons, and migrants worldwide. With this proposed structure, the U.S. Government would have a single, unified voice and message with the international donor community and implementing organizations to optimize outcomes in humanitarian crises.

Question. Who is meant to lead the response in areas where there are both internally displaced persons and refugees, such as Colombia?

Answer. With the changes proposed in the President's Budget Request for FY 2020, the responsibility for the implementation, administration, and management of all overseas humanitarian-assistance programming, including for both refugees and internally displaced persons (IDPs), would lie with USAID's new BHA, under the new IHA account. The IHA account would finance overseas assistance currently funded through the International Disaster Assistance (IDA) and MRA accounts, and under Title II of the Food for Peace Act. The IHA account would maintain all the IDA's authorities and receive expanded ones to cover all overseas refugee operations, including those currently funded through the Migration and Refugee Assistance (MRA) account. As such, USAID would remain the U.S. Government's lead Federal coordinator for responding to international disasters and would not need to seek the Department of State's approval before mobilizing in a crisis. The State Department would continue to manage programs to resettle refugees in the United States funded by the (MRA) account.

Question. Do you believe the consolidated request for humanitarian assistance accurately reflects current needs and U.S. interests?

Answer. We anticipate humanitarian needs will remain at unprecedented levels around the world. The President's Budget Request for FY 2020 reflects this reality, and includes $5.968 billion for the new IHA account. The Request takes into account resources requested in prior Fiscal Years in the current IDA and MRA accounts, and would enable USAID to maintain a level of resources comparable to that appropriated in the recent past. The amount requested through the IHA account would allow the United States to remain the largest single humanitarian donor to crises around the world, while asking other donors to contribute their fair share.

Question. Are you anticipating major changes in humanitarian conditions in place like Iraq, Syria, Yemen, Venezuela, Congo, South Sudan, Central African Republic,

Northern Nigeria, Burma, and Bangladesh that would support such a sizable reduction in U.S. humanitarian assistance?

Answer. Our view is that this new model would leverage the comparative advantages of the State Department and USAID to assist and advocate for people in greatest need. The new proposed structure would enable the U.S. Government to execute consistently a response that monitors the performance of implementers, including United Nations agencies, in a uniform way; eliminate duplication or gaps in aid; and deploy a seamless and effective assistance strategy for all affected people.

Question. What other donors have stepped forward to fill the void?

Answer. The U.S. Government generously provided approximately one-third of global humanitarian funding in FY 2017. Along with the State Department, USAID is working on diversifying the global humanitarian donor base and bringing new contributors into the current international system, including foreign governments and the private sector. The strategy is working, as other donor governments have recently increased their humanitarian contributions. For example, France's 2018–2022 Humanitarian Strategy aims to make the French one of the top three European donors of humanitarian aid, and one of the top five donors globally, by increasing annual donations to Ç500 million ($560 million) by 2022. Canada's 2018–2019 budget represented the largest increase in Canadian foreign aid in 16 years, and included $738 million for humanitarian assistance. The Republic of Korea increased its humanitarian assistance by 50 percent from 2015 to 2018.

AFRICA

Question. Ethiopia. The budget request identifies Ethiopia—which is currently undergoing a democratic transformation—as a priority country for assistance. How is USAID supporting this transition, and how is that reflected in the FY20 request?

Answer. At a time of full-spectrum transition in the Federal Democratic Republic of Ethiopia, we are working closely with the new Government of Prime Minister Abiy Ahmed Ali to ascertain its highest-priority needs and target our technical assistance to maximize our impact. We are focused on tangible and timely interventions to produce measurable results in a dynamic and fluid operating environment while attempting to balance funding for Ethiopia against an increasing number of global strategic imperatives.

The President's Budget Request for Ethiopia for Fiscal Year (FY) 2020 represents an increase from the Budget Request for FY 2019, which reflects the administration's recognition of the need for greater investments in democracy, rights, and governance during this time of transition. Moreover, we have funded many of the rapid-response interventions we have pursued through centrally managed funds and awards, which has expanded our capability to provide just-in-time technical assistance in key reform areas. We continue to consider the use of central funding to take advantage of rapid windows of opportunity in Ethiopia's democratic transition.

Through these efforts and careful coordination with the international donor community, the U.S. Agency for International Development and the U.S. Government are well-positioned to provide catalytic support to the Government of Ethiopia and the Ethiopian people as they move toward a more inclusive and democratic future.

Mozambique. Mozambique was just beginning to recover from Cyclone Idai—a disaster likened to Hurricane Katrina here in the U.S—when it was hit by a second, even stronger Cyclone Kenneth. USAID has mounted a robust response to both disasters: You've launched a DART, called in DoD to provide critical lift, and released nearly $60 million for relief in Mozambique, Zimbabwe, and Malawi.

Question. What have we learned about disaster preparedness in the region? What were the key impediments to a more timely response?

Answer. In light of changing weather patterns, the entire Mozambican coastline is now susceptible to cyclones, including areas historically shielded from storms. To increase preparedness for disasters in the region, the pre-positioning stocks of emergency relief and food commodities for immediate post-disaster distribution in cyclone-prone areas is critical. In addition, investments and improvements in SMS-based early-warning systems are needed to communicate effectively with populations in disaster-prone areas. Lastly, building codes and improved design plans must play a factor in the construction of cyclone-resistant structures.

Question. Private donations are notably low for this response, as compared to other recent international disasters. Why? How can we help raise awareness of this plight?

Answer. The U.S. Government experienced few impediments in its response to Cyclones Idai and Kenneth. An initial challenge, quickly overcome, was clearing incoming relief supplies at Mozambican airports. Additionally, after issuing a request for international assistance the Government of Mozambique (GoM) should facilitate the entry of humanitarian staff by conceding visas more rapidly, including upon arrival.

Question. How has Cyclone Kenneth affected the already unstable Cabo Delgado region? Can humanitarian actors safely operate, given the presence of armed extremist groups in the region? Do you agree with the Government of Mozambique's insistence on sending security forces to "protect" humanitarian operations?

Answer. To date, Cyclone Kenneth has not had any major impact on stability in Cabo Delgado Province. Humanitarian agencies have put in place safety and security procedures that allow them to continue responding safely to needs in the Province. Lack of access by road and helicopter currently poses a larger challenge than the presence of extremist groups. The GoM no longer insists on providing armed escorts to accompany distributions of humanitarian assistance; relief agencies themselves can decide whether to use these escorts. Humanitarian actors are also coordinating their movements and distribution plans with the GoM's police forces.

SUDAN

Question. Sudan. What is USAID doing to facilitate a democratic transition in Sudan? Are you planning to assist the transitional government in preparing for elections? How much and what forms of assistance is available to help enable Sudanese citizens to finally realize their desire for an open and democratic society?

Answer. The transition underway in the Republic of Sudan represents a significant shift in the relationship between the Sudanese state and its people. As we closely monitor negotiations between Sudanese protest leaders and the Transitional Military Council on the formation of a Transitional Government, the U.S. Agency for International Development (USAID) is exploring ways to adjust our posture to help influence events in a positive direction. Should a path toward a democratically elected government emerge from this process, USAID stands ready to support.

For many years, USAID's modest development assistance in Sudan has focused on building civic capacity to engage in community-level conflict-mitigation in areas that have long suffered the devastating effects of violence (Darfur, the Nuba Mountains region, and Blue Nile state), supporting engagement by civil society in political processes, and building grassroots capacity for peace-building and community resilience to social and economic shocks. Our flagship conflict-mitigation program, which focuses on community development and supporting civil society, is now in its fifth year, and will continue to be an important vehicle for our efforts in Sudan.

On May 17, 2019, USAID participated in a meeting of like-minded international partners, the African Union, and the United Nations, hosted by the U.S. Department of State, to discuss how to influence the trajectory in Sudan in a positive way and begin to explore how to address the myriad economic and political crises Sudan faces. These discussions are ongoing in the hope that an interim, civilian-led government will soon be in place, and will inform USAID's thinking on next steps in Sudan.

As the largest donor of humanitarian assistance to the people of Sudan, USAID continues to provide robust aid to address the emergency needs of the most-vulnerable Sudanese, and to press authorities in Khartoum and the state capitals to remove all obstacles to humanitarian access. Much of the country remains in desperate need of life-saving assistance because of protracted displacement and the impact of the economic crisis. However, our teams are continuing to explore opportunities to strengthen the resilience of the poorest.

We also continue to seek creative ways to work with other donors in Sudan, including the Department for International Development (DFID) of the United Kingdom. For example, we are expanding the reach of a program in nutrition and livelihoods funded by DFID that encourages communities that are emerging from conflict to use agriculture and other sustainability methods to improve their resilience.

MIDDLE EAST AND NORTH AFRICA

Question. Iraq and Syria. The necessary fight against ISIS left vast areas of Iraq and Syria devastated. Shortly after the liberation of Raqqa, the CENTCOM Commander spoke of the need to "consolidate gains" in areas liberated from ISIS control. I know you worked closely with CENTCOM on aspects of this. Specifically, he spoke about the need to reconnect people to their governments, address basic needs, and prevent conditions that led to the rise of ISIS in the first place. The administration

has engaged the international community for donations. However, what is our strategy to achieve stability in areas liberated from ISIS? I'd like you to speak to preventing conditions that will lead to more instability and violence.

Answer. The approach of the U.S. Agency for International Development to helping areas liberated from the so-called Islamic State in Iraq and Syria (ISIS) achieve stability focuses on the following:

1. Helping Communities Heal and Restore:

- Addressing Immediate Needs: Working with our partners, we provide drinking water, shelter materials and household items, medical care, psycho-social support, food, and cash transfers to help displaced families and those who are seeking to return home;
- Promoting Stabilization: We fund community-led efforts to address local priority concerns, such as removing rubble and erasing ISIS's propaganda; and
- Restoring Essential Services: We improve access to health care, education, water, electricity, legal aid, and other essential services through funding for staff, training, supplies, and other needs.

2. Promoting Economic Recovery:

- Rehabilitating Critical Infrastructure: We repair electrical infrastructure (power substations, transformers, transition lines), water infrastructure (treatment plants, pumps, wells, water networks), schools, health facilities, and other key public infrastructure;
- Creating Access to Jobs and Markets: We provide vocational training, job-placement, and support to start businesses; and
- Assistance to Small and Medium-Sized Enterprises: We support the development of small and medium-sized businesses to increase competitiveness and create jobs.

3. Preventing Future Atrocities:

- Strengthening Dialogue: We convene local, faith-based and national leaders to address the barriers to the sustainable return of those displaced by ISIS back to their homelands; and
- Supporting Justice and Reconciliation: Working with civil society and the Iraqi Government we strengthen policies and processes that address systemic issues that face disaffected populations and promote justice.

In addition, the Iraq Governance Performance and Accountability (IGPA) program funded by USAID provides technical assistance to the Government of Iraq (GOI) to improve its economic management and support Iraqi-led decentralization. The GOI has identified the decentralization of authorities and responsibilities from Baghdad to the Provincial Governments as a way to improve responsiveness to Iraqis' basic needs. Our programming also makes investments in the development of local civil-society organizations, which are key to facilitating improved linkages between Iraqi citizens and their governing authorities through advocacy.

WESTERN HEMISPHERE

Question. Venezuela. What contingency plans, if any, does USAID or the broader U.S. Government have in place now that security forces aligned with the Maduro regime have not allowed the delivery of international humanitarian assistance inside Venezuela?

Answer. The United States is closely monitoring the situation in Venezuela and continues to apply all diplomatic, economic, and financial pressure possible in an effort to support the people of Venezuela to restore their freedom. We are committed to helping those in Venezuela who are suffering so needlessly because of the man-made, regime-driven crisis.

We are working with Interim President Guiadó's administration and the international humanitarian community to determine ways to safely deliver aid to people in Venezuela. Through decades of experience, the humanitarian team at the U.S. Agency for International Development (USAID) has learned that working with impartial, independent, and civilian-led aid organizations is the safest and most-effective way to reach people in need without putting them in danger.

The United States also continues to provide robust funding for response efforts throughout the region as the growing impact of Venezuela's crisis spill into neighboring countries. As of May 8, 2019, the United States has provided more than $256 million in humanitarian and development assistance to support emergency efforts in affected countries and build the long-term capacity of their institutions and communities to host the approximately 3.7 million people who have fled Maduro's repression and chaos in Venezuela since 2014.

Of this $256 million, USAID has provided more than $94 million in humanitarian assistance to support Venezuelans in the region as of May 8, 2019. USAID's assistance primarily targets activities in health, nutrition, water, sanitation, hygiene, shelter, and food.

Question. What are the challenges for humanitarian organizations operating in such a highly politicized environment? What are the potential security concerns and risks?

Answer. A major challenge for humanitarian actors is that parties to a conflict can seek to interfere with, undermine, or foster suspicion about, the delivery of assistance. The illegitimate Maduro regime's narrative that any humanitarian assistance is a pretext for regime change politicizes aid in a way that puts workers at risk of harassment or arbitrary arrest. In addition, Maduro's insistence that no humanitarian crisis exists in Venezuela has led his venal regime to restrict access to data on health and food security and other statistics that would allow aid organizations to plan a response to verified needs more assuredly. Additional challenges in politicized environments in general include bureaucratic impediments imposed by corrupt regime officials and non-state armed groups, logistical and infrastructure limitations, high levels of insecurity, and intrusion by state security services. In Venezuela, symptoms of the ongoing economic collapse have a negative impact on the operations of aid agencies, including hyperinflation; frequent, unpredictable blackouts; and shortages of fuel.

When working in challenging environments worldwide, the U.S. Agency for International Development, in collaboration with our implementing partners, ensures robust risk-mitigation measures are in place to safeguard U.S. taxpayer dollars appropriately.

Question. To date, how much international humanitarian assistance has been delivered inside Venezuela through the United Nations and other organizations?

Answer. As of May 8, 2019, the United Nations (U.N.) has approved $9.2 million through the Central Emergency Response Fund (CERF) for humanitarian assistance inside Venezuela. As of the same date, non-U.S. international donors have contributed more than $70 million to the response in Venezuela, according to the U.N.'s financial-tracking system.

DEMOCRACY DIVIDENDS

During the last administration, USAID adopted a policy of disengagement from democracy and governance programs in "closed" and "closing" spaces.

Question. What role does USAID now play in advancing democracy and good governance in "closed" and "closing" spaces? How does this budget reflect your personal commitment to democracy?

Answer. The U.S. Agency for International Development (USAID) continues to carry out our mandate as the lead democracy-assistance Agency for the U.S. Government, and we are fully committed to programming where democracy is at risk. USAID invested two-thirds (66 percent) of our bilateral assistance in democracy, human rights, and governance (DRG) in Fiscal Year 2018 in restrictive or challenging environments characterized as "closed autocracy" or "electoral autocracy." We also are addressing emerging challenges, such as democratic backsliding and resurgent authoritarianism that threaten U.S. influence, prosperity and national security. USAID consistently has led the U.S. Government's response to democratic openings, including rapid support to the 2017 political opening in the Republic of The Gambia, as well as more recent, swift, and targeted interventions to support the unprecedented reforms in the Federal Democratic Republic of Ethiopia. Additionally, USAID spends hundreds of millions of dollars to build the capacity of civil society and human-rights defenders globally.

USAID is a recognized leader in difficult environments, and I want to keep it that way. Last year, I scrapped the previous policy guidance on programming in "closed and closing spaces" because it was discouraging us from being bold in our defense of freedom. Our new global program on enabling and protecting civic space is spearheading efforts to understand and respond to emerging challenges to the freedoms

of association, assembly and expression, including by piloting the use of machine-learning to forecast restrictions on civic space and test programmatic interventions to boost the resilience of activists.

The President's Budget Request for Fiscal Year (FY) 2020 of $1.2 billion (in the proposed Economic Support and Development Fund) for assistance in DRG represents a slight reduction of 2 percent compared to the proposal from FY 2019, consistent with an overall reduced Request. Nevertheless, the Budget Request will allow USAID to expand the number of countries where it is investing DRG resources, while at the same time focusing them on the democratic institutions and processes most critical to advancing self-reliance. The President's Budget Request for FY 2020 includes new DRG funding for 13 bilateral programs not included in FY 2019, including six in Africa and four in the Indo-Pacific region, as well as funding increases in other regions.

Question. How could State and USAID better capitalize on opportunities to support democratic transitions in places like Sudan and Venezuela, including through the delivery of "democracy dividends?"

Answer. USAID has long experience with funding stabilization activities in transitional environments like the Republic of Sudan and Venezuela. These activities provide visible support for governments' engagement with citizens on local priorities and finance the implementation of community-driven development projects. Rapid and flexible technical assistance can enable citizens to participate in devising local development plans with government officials, conduct community consultations and oversight, and help establish much-needed infrastructure to provide services for citizens.

The changes underway in Sudan represent a significant shift in the relationship between the Sudanese state and its people. As we closely monitor negotiations between Sudanese protest leaders and the Transitional Military Council on the formation of a Transitional Government, USAID is actively exploring ways to adjust our posture to help influence events in a positive direction. Should a path toward a democratically elected government in Sudan emerge from this process, USAID stands ready to provide funding, including for civil society; conflict-mitigation; and other efforts to rebuild democracy, such as constitutional development. In Venezuela, USAID's existing programs fund civil society and independent media to ensure the Venezuelan people have a voice and have access to information free from the malign influence and propaganda of the Maduro regime. USAID also is funding the only legitimately elected democratic institution in the country, the National Assembly, to help support Venezuela's return to democracy.

RESPONSES OF HON. MARK GREEN TO QUESTIONS SUBMITTED BY SENATOR ROBERT MENENDEZ

TIP REPORT SANCTIONS

In countries where authoritarianism is gaining ground that also happen to be designated Tier 3 countries under the Trafficking Victims Protections Act . . .

Question. Do you believe USAID programs that promote democratic freedoms and the exercise of fundamental human rights like freedom of speech, assembly and association should be suspended? Are these programs being suspended under the administration's pretext of being tough on human trafficking? Is there a specific USG written policy on what programs/funding to cut in Tier 3 sanction countries? Is there written guidance for missions and program staff? Is there oversight over what programs missions are cutting?

Answer. The U.S. Agency for International Development (USAID) strongly believes that improving democratic, citizen-responsive governance in a country bolsters its long-term stability and economic prosperity. As part of our emphasis on building self-reliance, USAID views investments in democratic institutions, citizen-centered processes, and fundamental freedoms as key drivers of strengthening the commitment and capacity of governments, civil society, and the private sector in partner countries to take on their own development challenges.

Human trafficking threatens public safety and our national security. The administration seeks to implement the restrictions on foreign assistance mandated by the Trafficking Victims Protection Act (TVPA) in a way that holds governments accountable for failing to meet the minimum standards to eliminate trafficking in persons.

The TVPA exempts from restrictions programs that do not involve the governments of countries on the Tier Three list in the annual Trafficking in Persons Report published by the U.S, Department of State, and our activities limited to en-

gagement with non-governmental organizations (NGOs) in those countries are continuing. In some cases, we are de-scoping programs away from governmental institutions, or to exclude governmental participants, so the activities may continue with NGOs only.

The President's determination not to grant waivers under the TVPA provides the policy basis for the administration's implementation of the Act. Consistent with the President's determination, the U.S. Government will not provide assistance that is subject to the restrictions under the TVPA during Fiscal Year (FY) 2019. The U.S. Department of State and USAID have provided guidance to Bureaus, Missions, and Embassies on the application of the restrictions under the TVPA as they relate to existing and planned programs. In some cases, however, the administration has explored the use of available notwithstanding and other authorities to continue life-saving assistance and protect other foreign-policy and national-security priorities that would otherwise be subject to the restrictions under the TVPA.

CENTRAL AMERICA ASSISTANCE CUTS

The administration has called for continued engagement in Central America in order to address driving factors forcing people to flee their countries—including weak rule of law and high levels of criminal violence.

Question. What do you believe are the root causes and motivations for migrants and asylum seekers from the Northern Triangle?

Answer. Many push and pull factors drive attempted illegal immigration to the United States from Central America. Lack of opportunity, hunger and food-insecurity, widespread crime and violence, and high levels of corruption and impunity at all levels of government all play a significant role in people's decisions to leave their homelands.

Question. Do you believe USAID's development assistance programs to improve food security, expand economic opportunity and provide youths alternatives to gang involvement are effectively addressing the root causes of migration?

Answer. The development-assistance programs in Central America funded by the U.S. Agency for International Development (USAID) have improved food security, expanded economic opportunity, and provided young people with alternatives to criminal gangs in the communities in which we work. However, the President has made clear that the Governments of El Salvador, Guatemala, and Honduras have not done enough to prevent illegal immigration to the United States. The U.S. Government has urged them to make needed reforms to improve the security of their citizens, increase economic growth, and fight corruption and impunity. The administration is developing specific, additional steps to propose that the three Governments take to improve the security of their borders; combat human smuggling and trafficking, especially of children; receive and reintegrate their returned citizens; and further dissuades illegal immigration to the United States.

Question. Are you confident that USAID's development programs are implemented effectively in the regions and communities where migrants and asylum seekers are fleeing from?

Answer. The U.S Agency for International Development (USAID) is refining our programs continually to ensure we are addressing the areas of El Salvador, Guatemala, and Honduras with the highest rates of out-migration. We rely on data provided by the International Organization for Migration and Customs and Border Protection (CBP) within the U.S. Department of Homeland Security to target our programs more precisely to the areas of highest out-migration and thereby enhance their impact. When funds become available, USAID will continue to use these data to refine our investments so they address the factors people themselves say are causing them to immigrate illegally to the United States, including by developing performance metrics that will make the reduction of relevant migration numbers a specific performance benchmark for our implementing partners.

Question. Is there data supporting the suspension of all foreign assistance to Northern Triangle countries as an effective strategy for curbing migration?

Answer. I am not aware of any relevant study or data that examine this particular question.

Question. What is USAID communicating to our implementing partners, host country governments and assistance recipients on how this policy is being implemented? Will you confirm that the Secretary of State submitted to Congress numerous certifications affirming that Central American Governments are making progress addressing the drivers of migration?

Answer. At the instruction of the Secretary of State, we are carrying out the President's direction regarding foreign assistance in El Salvador, Guatemala, and Honduras. The current review of all foreign-assistance funding from the U.S. Department of State and the U.S. Agency for International Development from Fiscal Year (FY) 2017 is intended to provide detailed data to the Secretary to determine the best way forward pursuant to the President's direction. Activities already planned or paid for under existing contracts, grants, and cooperative agreements funded by resources from FY 2017 are continuing during the review period, although the Department of State and USAID will not initiate any new activities.

Question. In your testimony you mentioned that new review, that is serving as the pretext for the freeze on all foreign assistance to the countries of the Northern Triangle, aims to examine host country commitments ... aren't the 7045(a)(4)(B) certifications, for which the Secretary of State has submitted nine to date (the most recent in September of 2018), granted on the basis of the host countries' commitments? If so, how will this separate review be different, or justified as necessary outside the certification process? Will you confirm that the Secretary of State submitted to Congress numerous certifications affirming that Central American Governments are making progress addressing the drivers of migration?

Answer. I refer you to the U.S. Department of State for more information.

Question. USAID published a report in May 2018 documenting how your programs are successfully advancing U.S. national interests by contributing to decreased homicides and improving governments' capacity to uphold the rule of law. Can you provide us with an overview of achievements?

Answer. The U.S. Agency for International Development (USAID) has funded efforts in Central America to combat rampant crime and violence, reduce corruption and impunity, disrupt the activities of transnational criminal organizations, and provide greater economic opportunity. Examples of the results from these investments in Fiscal Year 2018 include the following:

- USAID's assistance enhanced local economies by boosting private-sector exports and domestic sales by more than $73 million, and helped businesses generate more than 18,000 new jobs;
- USAID's assistance strengthened the rule of law through support to more than 600 local civil-society organizations; the training of more than 1,200 human-rights defenders; improving case-management in more than 300 local courts; and training more than 4,600 judicial personnel; and
- Along with investments from the host-country governments, other donors, the private sector, and civil society, U.S. assistance is contributing to dramatic decreases in homicide rates in El Salvador and Honduras, including through cutting-edge programming to prevent crime and violence, such as after-school and pre-employment services and support to more than 140,000 at-risk youth across the region.

Question. Did this report take into account, or identify, the regions and communities of Guatemala, Honduras, and El Salvador where many, if not most, migrants and asylum seekers are coming from? If not, why not?

Answer. The U.S. Agency for International Development has used, and continues to use, data on apprehensions at the U.S. Southern border from Customs and Border Protection within the U.S. Department of Homeland Security and other sources to target our programs in the geographical areas of Centra America responsible for the highest out-migration to the United States.

Question. If so, why does the new review, that is serving as a pretext for freezing all assistance to the Northern Triangle, need to be done again?

Answer. The President has made clear that the Governments of El Salvador, Guatemala, and Honduras have not done enough to prevent illegal immigration to the United States. Over the past 3 years, the U.S. Government has urged them to make needed reforms to improve the security of their citizens, increase economic growth, and attack corruption and impunity. The administration is working to develop additional steps to propose that the three Governments take to improve the security of their borders, combat human smuggling and trafficking, and further dissuade illegal immigration to the United States.

Question. Who is conducting this new review? (OMB? State Department's F Bureau? National Security Council?) What is USAID's involvement or engagement in this review? What inputs or opinions are you providing? Will the diplomats and development experts at the U.S. missions to these countries be consulted for opinions and analysis based on their experiences?

Answer. The President has made clear that the Governments of El Salvador, Guatemala, and Honduras have not done enough to prevent illegal immigration to the United States. Based on consultations with our Missions in these countries, the U.S. Agency for International Development (USAID) has provided detailed information on all of our programs in Central America to feed into a review of all foreign-assistance funding sub-obligated into current agreements and awards by the U.S. Department of State and USAID during Fiscal Year 2017. This review is intended to provide detailed data to the Secretary to determine the best way forward pursuant to the President's direction. Once the review is complete, we will be able to share more information on the funding and programs implicated.

SYRIA STABILIZATION

The President's FY20 budget zeroed out Syria Stabilization programs. These are programs that support efforts to provide safe drinking water, restoring schools, rubble removal, and demining areas so that Syrians can safely return to their communities.

Question. Is working towards stabilizing Syria in the U.S. national interest?

Answer. Stabilization is in the U.S. national interest, as it helps prevent the reemergence of the so-called Islamic State in Iraq and Syria. Stabilization assistance restores essential social services, such as water, electricity, health care, and education; provides for the removal of explosive remnants of war; supports local civil society and first-responders; and restores livelihoods and agriculture.

Question. Is there a military solution to defeating ISIS?

Answer. We defer to the U.S. Department of Defense to respond to this question.

Question. Will ISIS ever be defeated without sustained diplomatic and development investments?

Answer. The Coalition to Achieve the Enduring Defeat of the Islamic State in Iraq and Syria (ISIS) has much work left to do. Sustained diplomatic and humanitarian assistance is necessary to mitigate the conditions that could lead to a resurgence of ISIS.

Question. Do you believe these programs were effective in countering violent extremism in Syria?

Answer. The stabilization programming managed by the U.S. Agency for International Development (USAID) plays a demonstrable role in countering violent extremism, as evidenced by the inability of the so-called Islamic State in Iraq and Syria (ISIS) to reconstitute in Northeast Syria. USAID's focus is on enabling our partners in the local community and building the capabilities of local governments to take command of their own future. USAID's activities help prevent a void for malign actors to fill, and also mitigates grievances that drove people to ISIS in the first place.

ROHINGYA

Question. In your written testimony to the committee, you referred to the Rohingya in Bangladesh as refugees. However, in your opening statement you referred to the Rohingya in Bangladesh as migrants, saying: "In Bangladesh, we are urging the government to allow humanitarian organizations to provide migrants with a full range of support and services." In your view, are the more than 800,000 Rohingya that have fled to Bangladesh since August 2017 refugees or migrants?

Answer. The more than 800,000 Rohingya who have fled to the People's Republic of Bangladesh since August 2017 because of state-sponsored violence in Burma are refugees.

STAGE SETTING FOR 2019 RESCISSION PACKAGE

The decision to freeze funds or end programs in the Northern Triangle, Syria, West Bank and Gaza, Pakistan, or via TIP sanctions, along with an ongoing "Foreign Assistance Review" conducted by OMB and the NSC, begs the following questions:

Question. What other funds or programs is OMB and F Bureau looking to suspend?

Answer. We refer you to the Office of Management and Budget and the Office of Foreign Assistance Resources at the U.S. Department of State.

Question. What is the universe of FY18 USAID Spend and Operations Plans awaiting approval from F Bureau?

Answer. The U.S. Agency for International Development (USAID) monitors the approval of Spend and Operational Plans (OPs) as part of how we plan, deliver, assess, and adapt our programming in a given region or country to achieve more effective and sustainable results, advance U.S. foreign policy, and support the Journey to Self-Reliance. As of May 17, 2019, 11 OPs still require approval by the Office of Foreign Assistance Resources at the U.S. Department of State. (See table below.)

Status of U.S. Department of State and U.S. Agency for International Development Operational Plans (OPs) for Fiscal Year 2018

	Operating Units (OUs) with OPs Approved	OUs with Outstanding OPs	OUs with OPs Partially Approved
Africa	28	2	12
Asia	17	4	6
Europe and Eurasia	14	-	1
Latin America and the Caribbean	12	5	4
Middle East	10	-	1
Pillar Bureaus	5	-	1

Question. Can you give this committee any assurances that OMB will not send Congress a rescission package this year?

Answer. We refer you to the Office of Management and Budget for questions on a possible recession.

RUSSIA

Question. Senator Graham and I have a bipartisan bill called the Defending American Security from Kremlin Aggression Act or DASKA. DASKA includes a reauthorization of the Countering Russia Influence Fund, which would provide assistance to European countries vulnerable to Kremlin interference. Would you support such an effort? From your perspective, what types of programs are necessary to address Putin's malign influence efforts?

Answer. The U.S. Agency for International Development (USAID) appreciates your leadership on the Defending American Security from Kremlin Aggression Act, and we look forward to working with you on this legislation. This measure complements USAID's efforts to counter malign Kremlin influence in the region through the Countering Russia Influence Fund and other related programs. USAID views malign Kremlin influence as the single-greatest challenge that threatens development progress in Europe and Eurasia.

Guided by the Development Framework for Countering Malign Kremlin Influence (CMKI), USAID's programming in Europe will strengthen the democratic and economic resilience of countries targeted by Moscow and work to mitigate Russian-sponsored attempts to undermine a range of key European institutions. Experience has shown that the Kremlin's malign tactics in different countries evolve in response to perceived vulnerabilities. The Framework focuses on key sectors for development in Europe and Eurasia, including democracy, the information space, and the economic and energy sectors. Examples of current programs that counter malign Kremlin influence include providing additional resources to central election commissions to strengthen their cyber defenses against Russian-backed hacking attempts; supporting investigative journalists to expose corruption instigated by the Kremlin; bolstering independent media networks and enhancing media literacy; promoting the diversification of energy resources; and encouraging transparent business and financial regulation to reduce opportunities for corruption.

AFGHANISTAN

Last month, Reuters reported that Secretary Pompeo is accelerating a plan to cut up to half of the workforce at the U.S. Embassy in Kabul. This comes alongside negotiations with the Taliban where their main demand is U.S. withdrawal from the country.

Question. Coming in the middle of negotiations, what signal would you say a large embassy drawdown sends to the Taliban, the people of Afghanistan, and to our allies who have fought side by side with us for 17 years?

Answer. The U.S. Agency for International Development (USAID) is reviewing our current assistance program in Afghanistan, and has notified Congress of a change in our staffing posture in Kabul consistent with the Secretary's direction to align our presence with core U.S. national-security interests and achieve our most-important objectives. These core objectives include supporting the Afghan peace process and preserving the flexibility to invest in the implementation of an eventual peace settlement; preserving state stability, including by bolstering citizen-responsive, democratic governance to guard against the conditions that enable the creation of terrorist safe havens; assisting the transition to Afghan self-reliance by promoting growth focused on exports and led by the private sector; and helping civil society to deliver core functions customarily provided by government. Our goal is to refine our portfolio of core activities to align with these priorities more tightly, to respond nimbly to changing needs in Afghanistan.

Question. Will this reduction in the workforce at Embassy Kabul be coupled with a reduction in foreign assistance to Afghanistan?

Answer. We will determine the precise levels for future assistance and the exact programs that will make up our streamlined portfolio in Afghanistan in the coming months, after internal consultations within the U.S. Government, discussions with the Afghan Government, and conversations with Congress. Our initial analysis indicates that it should be possible to support our primary goals and still lower assistance levels responsibly and strategically over the next few years. The U.S. Agency for International Development and the U.S. Department of State will brief the Committee in detail once this review process is complete.

Question. If so, how will you pay for the peace deal?

Answer. The U.S. Government interagency supports the peace process in Afghanistan with the tools that pertain to each institution's respective responsibilities and portfolio. Overall efforts at the U.S. Embassy in Kabul, led by Ambassador Bass, benefit from the coordination of the Peace and Reconciliation Working Group (PRAG) and the Embassy's Peace and Reconciliation (PARS) Section, which includes representatives from all relevant parts of the Embassy. As part of the posture adjustment, the Embassy assessed assistance programs and funding to ensure they could respond flexibly to emerging priorities related to peace and reconciliation.

Question. What signal does a reduction in personnel and resources send the Afghan Government and public?

Answer. This review is in line with President Ghani's January 2019 letter to President Trump that called for a review of U.S. assistance in Afghanistan. The U.S. Government consistently has messaged throughout the review that our commitment to Afghanistan remains steadfast, and that its purpose is to ensure our assistance is focused and productive.

Question. Can you explain how reducing the U.S. footprint in Afghanistan, ahead of the conclusion of peace negotiations, services the strategy for reaching a peace deal?

Answer. The U.S. Agency for International Development (USAID) recommends a continued, but reduced assistance portfolio, which will support the Afghan peace process by creating the conditions necessary for lasting stability, including in newly secured areas. By empowering women, strengthening civil society, and addressing the delivery of basic social services, health, and education, USAID will help the Afghan Government to demonstrate accountability to its citizens while preventing backsliding into conflict. To ensure USAID is well-positioned to contribute to these outcomes, our subject-matter experts are identifying lessons-learned in recent programming in peace and reconciliation in other countries, such as Colombia, to inform the design of future post-peace projects; reviewing our current and planned portfolio to help the Mission modify and adapt our investments to prepare for peace; and identifying any gaps in our current peace-support programming.

ORPHANS AND VULNERABLE CHILDREN

The President's Budget request proposes to eliminate funding for orphans, and otherwise vulnerable children, even including those who are blind or otherwise disabled.

Question. What is the rationale for eliminating assistance for orphans and vulnerable children? How many children are supported with current funding? What activities are the agency currently implementing which USAID will no longer execute if Congress appropriated FY20 President's Request, or lack thereof, for orphans and vulnerable children?

Answer. As in the past, the President's Budget Request for Fiscal Year (FY) 2020 does not propose funds specifically for orphans and vulnerable children.

However, under Congressional direction, programs funded by the U.S. Agency for International Development (USAID) that support orphans and vulnerable children have achieved significant results. For example, in FY 2018, USAID directly financed services for over 38,000 vulnerable children and 23,000 caregivers. In 2018, we also trained close to 39,000 providers and strengthened over 1,400 organizations that offer services to vulnerable children.

USAID also works to strengthen child-protection and social-service systems more broadly to better serve all children in need. The Child Blindness Program supports approximately 800,000 children a year through the continuum of pediatric eye care, which includes screening for vision impairment, the provision of eyeglasses, sight-restoring surgery, education and rehabilitation services, and the development of breakthrough solutions and technologies to prevent and treat child blindness.

USAID is using our current funding for vulnerable children to support the three objectives of the new Advancing Protection and Care for Children in Adversity: A U.S. Government Strategy for International Assistance: 1) Build Strong Beginnings; 2) Put Family First; and, 3) Protect Children from Violence. Across all objectives, the Strategy promotes strengthening families as one of the best investments to eliminate extreme poverty, boost economic growth, promote healthy societies and human dignity, and help people emerge from humanitarian crises.

INSPECTOR GENERAL FUNDING

Question. For the last 2 years, USAID's Inspector General has noted that the amount provided in the President's budget request is not sufficient for the Office of the Inspector General (OIG) to properly execute its oversight duties. According to the Inspector General, the proposed $4 million cut to the OIG in the President's FY 2020 Budget request would require the OIG to reduce the number of audits it conducts and recommendations it makes. This is especially concerning considering that for every dollar Congress invests in agency inspector generals, their offices recover $17 in cost savings. Given this assessment, what steps are you taking to ensure USAID's Inspector General office is properly resourced and that we maintain accountability in our foreign assistance programs?

Answer. I refer you to our Office of the Inspector General for your question on its resources.

NAGORNO-KARABAKH

Question. Last year, I supported $6 million in assistance to support pressing humanitarian needs in Nagorno-Karabakh and to find a peaceful solution to the frozen conflict between Armenia and Azerbaijan. With regard to demining activities, the humanitarian group HALO Trust estimated that the region is likely achieve mine-free status this year—so it is critical to ensure that U.S. assistance continues for this life-saving work. How is USAID supporting these humanitarian needs and supporting peace in this region?

Answer. The U.S. Agency for International Development (USAID) continues to work with the U.S. Department of State on solutions to advance peace in Nagorno-Karabakh (NK) and sustain gains following Armenia's political transition last Spring. Currently, USAID's assistance to victims of the conflict in Nagorno-Karabakh (NK) focuses solely on supporting demining through Halo Trust.

As a direct result of USAID's assistance, Halo Trust claims that an estimated 97.9 percent of the known mined areas within the boundaries of traditional NK (the former Soviet oblast) are now mine-clear as of September 2018.

ROLE OF DEVELOPMENT IN THE ADMINISTRATION'S AFRICA POLICY

In remarks at the U.S. Institute for Peace last year, then Under Secretary of State Tom Shannon articulated the administration's four strategic purposes in Africa: Advancing Peace and Security; Countering the Scourge of Terrorism; Increasing Economic Growth and Investment; and Promoting Democracy and Good Governance.

Question. Increasing Economic Growth and Investment and poverty alleviation are not necessarily one and the same. What role does development play with regards to the administration's four strategic purposes? What do you see as USAID's role in countering terrorism and violent extremism? How does this budget support that role?

Answer. Carefully designed development assistance from the U.S. Agency for International Development (USAID) is critical to the administration's four strategic purposes in Africa. At the U.S. Institute for Peace, former Under Secretary Shannon specifically mentioned easing the way for economic growth and investment, which includes USAID's work through three regional Trade and Investment Hubs. In addition, with the roll-out of the White House Strategy for Africa in December 2018, the U.S. Government will be implementing a new initiative, Prosper Africa, which looks to increase significantly two-way trade and investment between the United States and countries in sub-Saharan Africa. Sustained economic gains anchor USAID's promotion of democracy and citizen-responsive governance, and demonstrate positive impact for the citizens of our partner countries. In a similar vein, reducing the threat of terrorism maintains the conditions for economic activity while fostering opportunities for youth and marginalized communities to engage more fully in economic opportunities.

Many of the biggest external security threats the United States faces—including terrorism, pandemics, and transnational organized crime—incubate and thrive in weak, failing, and failed states. USAID promotes U.S. national security by strengthening institutions and citizen-responsive governance, improving the delivery of basic social services, fostering women's empowerment, and promoting economic and social resilience.

As noted in USAID's policy titled, The Development Response to Violence Extremism and Insurgency, the Agency has a distinct and critical role in addressing the national-security issues related to countering violent extremism. USAID designs and deploys development tools to respond to the drivers of violent extremism and terrorism in parts of Africa, such as the Horn, the countries of the Sahel, and the Lake Chad Basin, where the threat of terrorism is growing. As the United States pushes to counter the so-called Islamic State, Boko Haram, Jama'a Nusrat ul-Islam wa al-Muslimin, and others, defeating them militarily on the battlefield is not enough; we must also address the ideology and tactics these groups employ to attract new recruits, as well as the underlying social, political and economic conditions that fuel radicalization to violence. USAID reduces vulnerability to violent extremism by strengthening the capacity of African institutions, amplifying credible moderate voices, and increasing community cohesion in areas that are at greatest risk of falling under the sway of radical influence.

USAID has demonstrated a commitment to countering violent extremism in Africa over the years through the budget process. USAID's investments provide a sustained approach and build trust and partnerships with key actors at the national, local, and community level across the African continent. The President's Budget Request for Fiscal Year 2020 proposes $41.8 million in funding to counter violent extremism in Africa.

The current National Security Strategy further elaborates on the promoting Democracy and good governance in Africa, stating that, "We will encourage reform, working with promising nations to promote effective governance, improve the rule of law, and develop institutions accountable and responsive to citizens . . . " However, the administration's request for the past two fiscal years has been less than half that amount ($330 million) appropriated in FY17.

Question. How do you propose to achieve the stated policy goals of the administration for Africa with such a drastic reduction in the democracy and governance budget? What could we realistically expect to achieve with this limited investment if Congress were to appropriate the levels that the administration has requested?

Answer. The administration's Strategy for Africa and the President's Budget Request for Fiscal Year (FY) 2020 promote democracy, human rights, and good governance in sub-Saharan Africa. While lower than previous years, the Budget Request's proposed level for democracy, human rights, and governance in FY 2020 as a percentage of overall funding for Africa is equal to or greater than the ratios from FY

2011–FY 2016. The proposal reflects the administration's recognition of the importance of citizen-responsive governance to the success of all development efforts in Africa within a constrained budget environment.

We will continue to work with our partners to leverage the U.S. Government's investments and ensure continued support for democracy and human rights, including the promotion of citizen-responsive governance across to help guarantee progress in economic growth, health, and education. For example, many Missions of the U.S. Agency for International Development (USAID) in sub-Saharan Africa have developed close working relationships with other donors, which have led to jointly funded activities. We will continue to seek out these opportunities and build new partnerships with international and domestic organizations to support governments, civil society, and the private sector in African countries on the Journey to Self-Reliance.

The President's Budget Request will enable USAID to advance democracy and citizen-responsive governance in sub-Saharan Africa by promoting the rule of law, credible and legitimate election processes, a politically active civil society, and accountable and participatory governments. USAID collaborates closely with colleagues at the U.S. Departments of State and Defense to ensure our funding addresses the democratic deficiencies that contribute to transnational threats, fragility, conflict, and instability. For example, USAID's programs complement diplomatic efforts that strengthen governance institutions and protect the democratic and development gains made across the continent. The Budget Request will also enable USAID to continue funding upcoming political processes in countries across sub-Saharan Africa, including in the Democratic Republic of Congo and the Republics of Mali, Nigeria, and Zimbabwe, all of which are facing pivotal transitions. This includes programs that will improve the transparency and accountability of electoral institutions, and engage all stakeholders—parties, candidates, civil society, and voters—to participate in political processes and use appropriate channels to resolve disputes peacefully.

PROMOTING EFFECTIVENESS THROUGH STRONG ENVIRONMENTAL AND SOCIAL SAFEGUARDS FOR USAID PROJECTS

Question. Sustainable and effective development is only possible when project design and implementation properly accounts for environmental, social, and human rights risks. This includes not just analysis at the project approval stage, but also ongoing monitoring as well as accountability and remedy if negative impacts occur. Although USAID has some environmental and social standards, the agency lacks a comprehensive set of safeguard policies. Considering the proposed 2020 USAID budget, what steps will you take to address this gap and ensure that USAID projects follow strong environmental and social safeguards?

Answer. The U.S. Agency for International Development (USAID) remains committed to strong environment and social safeguards in all our programming. Specifically, USAID fully implements the environmental safeguards required by Section 117 of the Foreign Assistance Act, as amended, and Section 216 of Title 22 of the Code of Federal Regulations, in accordance with Executive Order 12114 and the environmental-impact principles of the National Environmental Policy Act of 1970. In accordance with operational guidance under Chapter 204 of USAID's Automated Directives System (ADS), "Environmental Procedures," USAID's Activity Managers, Contract Officer's Representatives, and Agreement Officer's Representatives, in consultation with the Agency's officers who perform environmental-impact assessments, ensure our Operating Units consider, monitor, and mitigate effectively the potential adverse environmental and social impacts of our funding actions. Furthermore, USAID is in the process of revising ADS 204 to improve and advance our continued commitment to analyzing and mitigating the possible impact of our programs on the environment and local communities.

ENSURING ACCOUNTABILITY FOR USAID'S PROJECTS

Question. Ensuring accountability throughout USAID's operations has been one of your top priorities as USAID Administrator. However, USAID, unlike OPIC and the soon-to-be operationalized U.S International Development Finance Corporation, currently does not have a grievance office, also known as an independent accountability mechanism, to receive complaints from communities that may have been negatively impacted by USAID's activities. An accountability mechanism for USAID would help facilitate remedy for harmed communities and enable people to productively move forward, which furthers USAID's development mandate, strengthens its institutional legitimacy, and protects the U.S. image abroad. Will you commit to developing an accountability mechanism for USAID in the next fiscal year?

Answer. Accountability is essential to all of our programming at the U.S. Agency for International Development (USAID). As such, USAID uses multiple avenues to ensure accountability in our programming to beneficiaries, stakeholders and taxpayers. In addition, USAID adheres to robust principles of monitoring to ensure the ongoing and systematic tracking of data and information relevant to our strategies, projects, and activities.

For our programs to be effective and to further our development mandate, I agree USAID must be able to adapt in response to changes and new information. Adaptive management in Missions and Bureaus requires different tools, depending on the programmatic context. For example, USAID has developed Guidelines on Compulsory Displacement and Resettlement in USAID Programming, which describe best practices and tools intended for use by USAID's Operating Units and their partners at all stages of the Program Cycle when USAID's programming leads to the displacement and resettlement of legitimate landholders who do not have the genuine right or ability to refuse. Ensuring that compulsory displacement and resettlement avoids, minimizes, and mitigates the risk of impoverishment of affected legitimate landholders is critical to achieving good development outcomes. The Guidelines are consistent with international good practices established over several decades.

Further, USAID's Environmental Compliance Procedures (22 CFR 216) identify resettlement as a class of action with a "significant effect" on the environment, which requires either an Environmental Assessment (EA) or an Environmental-Impact Statement (EIS). Each of these documents forces our staff to consider the impact of development upon communities and demonstrates how USAID's programming incorporates these considerations into our work and mission.

In addition, the hotline operated by the Office of the USAID Inspector General (OIG) continues to accept tips, allegations, and disclosures from all sources about potential fraud, waste, abuse, or mismanagement in USAID's programs and operations.

Ultimately, USAID's programs advance freedom and dignity by assisting governments and citizens to establish, consolidate, and protect citizens-responsive, democratic institutions and values. Participatory and accountable governance, the rule of law, authentic political competition, civil society, human rights, and the free flow of information are the keys to strengthening communities' ability to engage productively in their own development.

FULFILLING USAID'S NATIONAL ACTION PLAN ON RESPONSIBLE BUSINESS CONDUCT COMMITMENTS

Question. You have often touted the importance of engaging the private sector in international development. For private sector-led development to be effective and sustainable, private sector actors need to follow best practice regarding environmental, social, and human rights standards as well as develop mechanisms for negatively impacted communities to seek redress. How are you ensuring that USAID effectively promotes responsible business conduct in development and fully implements (and exceeds) its National Action Plan commitments?

Answer. In alignment with the National Action Plan on Responsible Business Conduct led by the Office of Commercial and Business Affairs at the U.S. Department of State, the U.S. Agency for International Development (USAID) published a new Private-Sector Engagement (PSE) Policy in December 2018. The Policy includes a focus on promoting responsible business practices, and states: "This policy complements U.S. and international initiatives focused on responsible business conduct, including the United Nations (U.N.) Guiding Principles on Business and Human Rights; the Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development's Guidelines for Multinational Enterprises; and the U.N. Global Compact. In implementing this policy, USAID will promote the importance of responsible, environmentally friendly, inclusive, and transparent business practices, and seek to collaborate with those companies that serve as global leaders in bringing shared value to, and acting responsibly in the communities where they do business. Moreover, USAID will examine these considerations when we conduct due diligence and assess reputational risks."

USAID's PSE Policy defines "PSE," in part, as "holding the private sector accountable for making inclusive business investments that have a positive social and environmental impact on communities," and it requires that all USAID staff and partners who engage in PSE conduct due diligence when establishing formal partnerships: "In conducting due diligence, USAID should carefully consider issues of additionality and shared ethics, including upholding responsible business practices, environmental protection and respect for human rights."

As USAID implements this new Policy, the Agency continues to have a strong focus on implementing and exceeding its commitments to the National Action Plan on Responsible Business Conduct. Examples of that work include the following:

- *Addressing Illegal, Unreported, and Unregulated Fishing*: Through our Regional Development Mission for Asia, USAID is working with the private sector to increase transparency in seafood supply-chains as a strategy for countering illegal fishing, improving labor conditions on fishing vessels, and improving the sustainable management of fisheries. This work has involved a partnership with Thai Union, the third-largest seafood company in the world. In Indonesia, USAID is working with Bumble Bee and Anova Seafoods to pioneer new blockchain technology to enable DNA barcoding and smart contracts that give specific resource rights to communities or fishers. While blockchain is still in its infancy, this partnership is advancing technological innovation that not only is changing the way goods travel around the world, but also having a positive impact on ecosystems and the lives of people in source countries. In this way, USAID is turning negative externalities into positive ones for development through private-sector partnerships that increase the commercial viability of environmentally sustainable fishing practices.
- *Addressing Wildlife Crime*: USAID works with the private sector to keep illegal wildlife and wildlife products out of legitimate business lines. Our ROUTES partnership with the transportation sector, coordinated by TRAFFIC, reduces the use of businesses in the illegal transport of wildlife and wildlife products. The partnership provides targeted data analytics about flight routes used by traffickers, builds the capacity of airline and airport personnel by giving them the necessary tools and information to detect crime, raises awareness among staff and clients, and embeds best practices in combating wildlife trafficking within the existing policies of transport companies. USAID also works with the technology sector to detect and remove illegal wildlife products advertised for sale on social-media platforms.
- *Promoting Responsible Trading of Minerals*: USAID's Responsible Minerals Trade (RMT) Program works to break the link between conflict in the Eastern Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC) and the minerals trade, in coordination with other U.S. Government Departments and Agencies, the Congolese Government, other donors, the private sector, and civil society. In 2010, the U.N. reported that almost every mine site in Eastern DRC was under the control of armed groups. Since that time, USAID has supported the validation of more than 600 artisanal and small-scale mine (ASM) sites as conflict-free. USAID, along with the U.S. Departments of State and Labor, also established the Public-Private Alliance for Responsible Minerals Trade (PPA), a multi-stakeholder initiative that promotes the responsible sourcing of gold, tin, tantalum, and tungsten in the DRC and the Great Lakes Region. By 2017, an estimated three out of four tin, tantalum, and tungsten sites in the region were free of the control of armed groups. In addition to the security improvements, the conflict-free supply-chains have also generated an important legal source of revenue. In 2018, validated conflict-free mine sites in the DRC legally exported approximately 15,800 tons of tin and tantalum worth over $285 million. In 2019, USAID supported the very first export of conflict-free gold to the United States from the Eastern DRC through a private-sector-led gold supply-chain that involves only U.S. companies.

  USAID's current programming is scaling-up the export and sale of conflict-free, artisanal gold from the Eastern DRC by developing market linkages between end-users and ASM cooperatives to benefit economically disadvantaged communities, encourage legitimate international mineral trade from the DRC, and reduce conflict. USAID is also refitting and improving current methods of validating mine sites to ensure long-term, verifiable, and transparent conflict-free supply-chains from the DRC. USAID continues to be part of the multi-sector Public-Private Alliance for Responsible Minerals Trade (PPA) to encourage responsible sourcing from the region by end-users and other supply-chain actors.
- *Promoting Responsible Land-Based Investment*: An emerging global consensus holds that responsible agricultural investment requires businesses and governments to recognize and respect local land and resource rights. USAID played a leading role in working with the global community through the U.N. Committee on World Food Security to develop guiding principles and best practices for promoting responsible agricultural investment and respecting and protecting legitimate tenure rights. Through training and technical assistance, research and evaluation, policy reform, and pilot projects, USAID is committed to imple-

menting the Principles for Responsible Investment in Agriculture and Food Systems (RAI) and Voluntary Guidelines for the Responsible Governance of Tenure of Land, Fisheries, and Forests (VGGT). These instruments create important standards of practice that protect people and communities and create an enabling environment that promotes broad-based economic growth and reduces extreme poverty.

As a result, USAID developed the Operational Guidelines for Responsible Land-Based Investment, a tool to provide more specific and practical guidance to execute the guiding principles of the RAI. The document describes USAID's recommendations for best practices related to due diligence for, and the structuring of, land-based investments, with the goal of reducing risks and facilitating responsible projects that benefit both the private sector and local communities. The Guidelines also can help companies identify practical steps to align their policies and actions with provisions of the VGGT; the International Finance Corporation's Performance Standards on Environmental and Social Sustainability; and other relevant instruments, including the U.N. Guiding Principles on Business and Human Rights (UNGP).

In addition, USAID is currently working with local communities and the private sector to strengthen land rights and support responsible land-based investment projects in the Republics of Ghana, Kenya and Mozambique.

RESPONSES OF HON. MARK GREEN TO QUESTIONS
SUBMITTED BY SENATOR BENJAMIN L. CARDIN

CENTRAL AMERICA

The President's budget requests a nearly 30 percent cut in foreign assistance over 2018 enacted levels and now the White House has suspended aid to El Salvador, Guatemala, and Honduras entirely.

Question. Given that the administration has identified Central American migration as a top priority, how can we cut off the funds that address the root causes of this migration?

Answer. As I said during my testimony, the situation at the U.S. Southern Border frustrates me. We have been working with the U.S. Department of State to implement the administration's policy related to out-migration from Central America. The President has made clear that the Governments of El Salvador, Guatemala, and Honduras are not doing enough to prevent illegal immigration to the United States. Over the past 3 years, the U.S. Government has urged these Governments to make needed reforms to improve the security of their citizens, increase economic growth, and address corruption and impunity. We are engaging actively with the three Governments to identify specific, additional steps they can take to improve the security of their borders, combat human smuggling and trafficking, and further dissuade illegal immigration to the United States. The U.S. Agency for International Development (USAID) is working hard to develop new metrics specifically tied to out-migration so that our programs in Central America can be more targeted and effective. USAID is confident that we are part of the answer to address the situation, but our assistance is most effective when we see buy-in from host-country governments.

Question. Much of this funding goes to supporting efforts to combat gangs and drug trafficking. What effects will reducing law enforcement capacity have on gangs' ability to operate?

Answer. The U.S. Department of State is reviewing all of the foreign-assistance funding from Fiscal Year 2017 that its Bureaus and the U.S. Agency for International Development (USAID) sub-obligated into current agreements and awards in El Salvador, Guatemala, and Honduras. This review is intended to provide detailed data to Secretary Pompeo so he can determine an appropriate way forward pursuant to the President's direction. Once the review is complete, we will be able to share more information on the funding and programs implicated.

Question. Foreign assistance is not a gift. Very little of it flows through central governments and much of our funding supports non-profits which help citizens hold their governments accountable. How does cutting off this assistance provide incentive to Central American Governments to more fully cooperate with the United States?

Answer. This administration desires a prosperous, safe Central America. Migration flows from the region continue to increase, and tens of thousands of people arrive at the U.S. Southwest Border every week, according to data from U.S. Customs

and Border Protection within the U.S. Department of Homeland Security. President Trump determined the Governments of El Salvador, Guatemala, and Honduras are not doing enough to prevent illegal immigration, and the Secretary of State has directed the U.S. Department of State and USAID to cease obligating new funds for those three countries and to reprogram funds from Fiscal Year 2018 to other administration priorities. The Department of State is actively engaging the three Governments to urge them to increase their efforts to enhance the security of their borders, increase efforts to combat human smuggling and human trafficking, receive their returned citizens, implement public-information campaigns to dissuade illegal immigration to México and the United States, improve economic growth and citizen security, and strengthen governance and judicial capacity.

Question. As USAID reviews these programs, can you please explain how missions in those countries have been consulted for their expert, on-the-ground perspectives on whether those programs have been effective in reducing poverty and violence?

Answer. The Missions of the U.S. Agency for International Development (USAID) in El Salvador, Guatemala, and Honduras have provided detailed information on all of our programs in the three countries to contribute to a review of all foreign-assistance funding from Fiscal Year 2017 sub-obligated into current agreements and awards by the U.S. Department of State and USAID. This review is intended to provide detailed data to the Secretary so he can determine an appropriate way forward pursuant to the President's direction. Once the review is complete, we will be able to share more information on the funding and programs implicated.

VENEZUELA

The administration has requested authority in FY2020 to transfer up to $500 million to support a democratic transition in Venezuela and respond to related needs in the region.

Question. What type of support would this assistance entail and from what accounts would the aid be transferred?

Answer. The proposal for transfer authority for assistance in Venezuela included in the President's Budget Request for Fiscal Year (FY) 2020 reflects the need for flexibility, given the rapidly changing situation. We will continue to coordinate closely with the U.S. Department of State, Congress, Interim President of Venezuela Juan Guaidó, international donors, and other governments in the region on the most-appropriate use of any such funds to bring about a democratic transition in Venezuela and to respond to needs in the region. The needs of the Venezuelan people range from immediate food and medicine to assistance with free and fair elections. We look forward to continued collaboration on this important issue.

Question. What contingency plans, if any, does USAID or the broader U.S. Government have in place now that security forces aligned with the Maduro regime have not allowed the delivery of international humanitarian assistance inside Venezuela?

Answer. The United States is closely monitoring the situation in Venezuela and continues to seek all appropriate means to support the Venezuelan people. We are committed to helping those who are suffering so needlessly because of this man-made crisis.

As of May 8, 2019, the United States has provided more than $256 million in humanitarian and development assistance to support the emergency efforts of the governments and civil society in affected countries and build the long-term capacity of communities to host approximately 3.7 million people who have fled Maduro's repression and chaos in Venezuela since 2014. Of this $256 million, the U.S. Agency for International Development (USAID) has provided more than $94 million in humanitarian assistance to support Venezuelans in the region. USAID's assistance primarily targets activities in health, nutrition, water, sanitation, hygiene, shelter, and food.

As Secretary Pompeo announced in January of this year, the United States is prepared to provide more than $20 million in initial humanitarian assistance to support response efforts within Venezuela, as conditions allow.

USAID is working with Interim President Guaidó's administration and the international humanitarian community to determine ways to deliver this aid to people in Venezuela safely. Through decades of experience, USAID's humanitarian team has learned that working with impartial, independent, and civilian-led humanitarian organizations is the safest and most-effective way to reach people in need without putting them in danger. As is the case all over the world, USAID is working on ways to deliver assistance inside Venezuela through international and local hu-

manitarian partners, and in a way that is safe, efficient, and ensures the aid reaches those who need it most, without being hijacked by the illegitimate Maduro regime. This planning includes considering options for safely providing assistance under a number of contingencies that would help create a political and security environment conducive to the principled and accountable delivery of aid.

COLOMBIA

Senator Blunt and I recently introduced a resolution commemorating the U.S.-Colombia strategic partnership and relaunched the Atlantic Council's Colombia Task Force. At great cost and sacrifice, Colombians have worked to partner with the U.S. in Colombia and elsewhere to fight armed groups, halt narcotics trafficking, and help stabilize the region. They now face the added challenge of a crisis next door in Venezuela and more than a million Venezuelans who are now in Colombia.

Question. How is USAID contributing to an increased presence of the civilian Colombian Government in historically conflictive rural areas, as foreseen by Chapter 1 of the 2016 peace accord? (Lack of government presence strongly correlates with the presence of armed groups and coca.)

Answer. The U.S. Agency for International Development (USAID) strategically coordinates our Plan Antioquia with the Government of the Republic of Colombia (GOC) to increase its presence in conflicted rural areas. Plan Antioquia links former coca-growing communities to licit markets, and assists the Colombian private and financial sectors to reach small businesses and help entrepreneurs expand their operations. This "whole-of-government approach" has enabled the U.S. Embassy in Bogotá to work in close coordination with regional officials to help reduce a geographic area's production of coca. The GOC has established Strategic Operational Centers (CEOs) in nine important coca-growing regions to expand upon security gains. The CEOs are the security portion of a "three-legged stool" (along with eradication and alternative development) within a given area where the region is secure, where a functioning government exists, and where legal economic development is taking place.

Question. With 13,000 former FARC members scattered around the country, and often participating in Colombian Government-sponsored development programs, how does USAID manage to avoid violating the "material support to FTOs" statute? Is there a need to reinterpret this statute to make it less applicable to situations involving lower-level demobilized guerrillas who are participating in the peace process?

Answer. The investments of the U.S. Agency for International Development (USAID) in the Republic of Colombia focuses on assisting the Government of Colombia (GOC) to build its capacity to advance the sustainable implementation of the peace plan. USAID's programs work in areas of the country that are emerging from armed conflict, to target victims and others who the GOC has verified to have severed ties with the Revolutionary Armed Forces of Colombia (FARC). Such assistance does not trigger the prohibitions on the provision of material support to a Foreign Terrorist Organization. USAID conducts a thorough analysis of risk and creates a plan for mitigating any risk identified for each activity. USAID works closely with GOC counterparts and implementing partners to ensure all activities comply with all applicable U.S. and international sanctions.

Question. How does the administration plan to help Colombia address the Venezuela crisis without detracting from Colombia's own efforts to consolidate peace and security?

Answer. The U.S. Government is the largest donor of assistance in the Republic of Colombia in response to the man-made crisis in Venezuela. As of May 8, 2019, the U.S. Department of State and the U.S. Agency for International Development (USAID) have contributed over $256 million in assistance in response to the Venezuela regional crisis. Of this, the U.S. Government has provided more than $128 million in funding to help Colombia accommodate Venezuelans migrants, including $91 million in humanitarian assistance and $37 million in economic and development assistance. This development and economic assistance helps Colombian communities manage the challenges of displaced Venezuelans, including to build the long-term response capacity of national and local institutions. All of these activities are in addition to USAID's ongoing investments that support the implementation of the peace accord at planned levels.

Question. Part of the success of Plan Colombia was that it balanced counter-narcotics and security assistance with support for development, governance, and human

rights to address the root causes of conflict and crime in the country. Why does the administration plan to cut more than $80 million dollars in economic support and development funding to Colombia at this critical moment?

Answer. The President's Budget Request for the Economic Support and Development Fund for the Republic of Colombia for Fiscal Year 2020 requests resources to foster reconciliation; expand the presence of the Colombian state, citizen-responsive governance, and human rights to regions historically under the control of the Revolutionary Armed Forces of Colombia; and to promote rural economic development in marginalized communities—an important counterpart to the U.S. Government's programs to eradicate coca and interdict shipments of cocaine.

CARIBBEAN ENGAGEMENT

We have seen the importance of engaging the Caribbean as related to the Venezuela crisis, narcotics trafficking and migration, countering violent extremism, and votes in the U.N. and OAS.

Question. Does the administration have a strategy to more effectively engage with Caribbean nations?

Answer. Yes. The administration's blueprint for engaging with governments, civil society, and the private sector in Caribbean nations more effectively is through the Caribbean 2020 Strategy, A Multi-Year Strategy To Increase the Security, Prosperity, and Well-Being of the People of the United States and the Caribbean. Through the Strategy, the administration focuses its engagement with the Caribbean region in the areas of security, diplomacy, prosperity, energy, education, and health.

Question. The president's budget proposes zeroing out assistance to the Eastern Caribbean, the Dominican Republic, and the USAID Caribbean development program. What effects will that have on Caribbean countries ability to respond to these challenges or support U.S. positions in the U.N. or OAS?

Answer. The Operating Units of the U.S. Agency for International Development (USAID) in the Caribbean likely will continue to receive funding through regional programs, such as the Caribbean Basin Security Initiative (CBSI) and the U.S. President's Emergency Plan for AIDS Relief (PEPFAR). USAID remains committed to engaging with the governments and people of Caribbean nations. For example, I will be traveling to Trinidad and Tobago and St. Lucia in later this month to meet with host-country leaders and tour USAID-funded sites.

Question. Will you and/or your staff meet with my office to discuss the current challenges facing the Caribbean, identify priority countries, and examine the resources required to address these challenges?

Answer. Yes. We would be pleased to meet with your office to provide a briefing on our current portfolio in the Caribbean, as well as on the challenges that are facing the region.

MEXICO—COMBATTING CORRUPTION

Mexico's president Lopez Obrador has said he would make combatting widespread corruption a center piece of his administration. Increased efforts are urgent. In the past decade, 22 former governors have been investigated for corruption in Mexico, some of them for colluding with the organized crime groups that are largely responsible for rising violence—but only three have been sentenced for a crime. USAID has supported Mexico's efforts to reform its judicial system to increase its investigative and prosecutorial capacity, it has also funded civil society efforts to combat corruption.

Question. How is USAID engaging with the Lopez Obrador administration on anti-corruption efforts?

Answer. The U.S. Agency for International Development (USAID) is continuing to provide ongoing technical support to key institutions within the National Anti-Corruption System (NAS) of the United Mexican States. Core counterparts include the legally mandated Citizen Participation Committee and the system's Executive Secretariat. USAID also engages with the National Transparency Institute to improve access to information and fiscal transparency. Under Mexican law, all 32 Mexican States must replicate the NAS, and USAID is supporting state-level anti-corruption actors, including audit institutions, internal-control units, and specialized anti-corruption prosecutors.

Question. Will USAID continue to support civil society and journalists who are working to promote transparency and accountability and uncover corruption scandals?

Answer. Yes. The U.S. Agency for International Development (USAID) continues to provide robust support to local Mexican civil-society organizations and journalists to advance their anti-corruption priorities. USAID is working in direct partnership with leading Mexican civil-society organizations, supporting locally led efforts to investigate corruption and advocate for policy reforms. These partnerships cover diverse themes, including procurement integrity, ethics for private-sector and government employees, budget transparency and citizen participation, as well as advocacy and technical support for the full implementation of Mexico's National Anti-Corruption System. In August 2018, USAID launched a new activity to assist Mexican investigative journalists that provides ongoing technical training, fosters networks between Mexican and international reporters, and supports the sustainability of Mexican independent media outlets. USAID also funds training opportunities for Mexican journalists on physical and digital security, which helps them to operate more safely in a dangerous environment. In addition, USAID continues to provide funding and technical assistance to the Special Prosecutor for Crimes Against Freedom of Expression (FEADLE) and the Government of México's National Protection Mechanism, which protects journalists and human-rights defenders.

MEXICO—DISAPPEARANCES AND EXTRAORDINARY MECHANISM FOR FORENSIC IDENTIFICATION

Question. Over 40,000 people have disappeared in Mexico since 2007, many at the hands of organized criminal organizations as well as security forces working in collusion with these groups, almost 2,000 mass graves have been uncovered in the country. This crisis has left thousands of families searching for answers about their loved ones and exposed structural weaknesses in Mexico's forensic services given their inability to effectively process and identify remains and produce evidence for prosecutions. USAID is currently present in several states in northern Mexico to support civil society to search for justice in cases of disappearances and increase government capacity to respond to these cases. Given the need to strengthen forensic services in Mexico to contribute to effective criminal investigations, is USAID considering expanding this work to additional states in Mexico or to support the Federal Government's recently announced Extraordinary Mechanism for Forensic Identification?

Answer. Yes. Pending availability of funds and the appropriate political will at the state and federal level, the U.S. Agency for International Development (USAID) envisions geographic and programmatic expansion of our work to help strengthen criminal investigations and prosecutions in the United Mexican States. USAID's funding and technical assistance at the State level in México is designed to assist State Attorneys General to investigate and prosecute cases of forced disappearances more effectively; implement and consolidate forensic databases and registries as mandated by the 2018 General Law on Disappearances; and catalyze broader interest and action on these gross violations of human rights. USAID's activities in the States of Chihuahua and Nuevo León marry international forensic expertise with local knowledge, networks, and context, and work with local civil-society organizations, collectives, and State authorities to identify remains and develop state-level DNA and missing persons databases. USAID's partners also engage in the States of Jalisco, Coahuila, and Veracruz in cases of gross violations of human rights and disappearances, particularly regarding the implementation of the General Laws against Torture and Disappearance.

At the Federal level in México, USAID recently assisted the National Search Commission to clean up redundancies and inaccuracies in the National Registry of Missing Persons. Through a cross-check of dozens of official databases, the registry now contains 38,954 unique, accurate records of missing persons.

NICARAGUA

Question. Over the past year, the Ortega regime has violently repressed peaceful protests, resulting in hundreds of deaths and thousands wounded and/or fleeing into exile. The Trump administration has stressed its intention to support civil society and promote human rights in Nicaragua. Please explain how you will fulfill that pledge if assistance to Nicaragua—more than half of which was for democracy assistance in FY2018—is cut from $10 million to $6 million, as proposed in the current budget.

Answer. The U.S. Agency for International Development (USAID) remains committed to helping the Nicaraguan people, including civil society, as they demand a more open, transparent, and accountable government. USAID's programs strengthen the capacity of civil society and youth leaders to promote and defend democracy and transparent and accountable governance at the local and national levels, and assist independent media to report truthful information against a backdrop of oppression and censorship. Cross-cutting themes for the portfolio include the engagement of young people, digital security, and human rights. For example, USAID sponsors digital-security experts and local trainers to assist civil-society leaders, new stakeholders, and independent media on safe practices for secure communications and the storage of data. USAID also funds local organizations that document and elevate human-rights abuses to regional and international platforms.

Should conditions in Nicaragua allow for a political opening to re-establish democratic order, USAID would be positioned to support free, fair, and transparent elections. When the Ortega regime ends, USAID will assist the Nicaraguan people with a peaceful transition, undertaking institutional reforms, and strengthening civil society.

DEMOCRACY, HUMAN RIGHTS AND GOVERNANCE

I believe it is absolutely critical to the success of U.S. national security strategy to advance democracy and human rights around the globe, combat corruption, and strengthen good governance and rule of law. Supporting democracy, human rights, and good governance helps keep America safe, minimizes migration, and allows our businesses to more effectively compete in global markets. Yet, for far too long U.S. foreign policy has treated governance issues as a secondary consideration. I applaud the administration's willingness to apply Global Magnitsky sanctions against corrupt officials and human rights abusers, but am alarmed by the proposed 50 percent cut to democracy programs, the 40 percent cut to DRL programs, and 60 percent cut to the National Endowment for Democracy.

Question. How does this proposed budget reflect American values?

Answer. The President's Budget Request for Fiscal Year (FY) 2020 for global democracy programs reflects the notion-articulated in the National Security Strategy and the Joint Strategic Plan of the U.S. Department of State and the U.S. Agency for International Development (USAID)-that respect for human rights, democracy, and inclusive governance is more likely to produce peace, stability, and prosperity at home and abroad, and is therefore critical to U.S. interests. At USAID, we know that programs aimed at combating corruption, supporting accountable, citizen-responsive governance and ensuring respect for human rights reflect American values; assist governments, civil society, and the private sector in our partner countries on the Journey to Self-Reliance; and encourage the development of effective democracies that are critical to maintaining U.S. prosperity and security.

Question. How central do you view these issues as being to our foreign and national security policy and how is anticorruption factored into the State Department budget?

Answer. These issues are critical to foreign, national-security, and economic policy. As an Agency, we know that corruption undermines national development; perpetuates poverty and dependence; imperils critical humanitarian and relief efforts; destabilizes democratic societies; and fuels transnational crime and the trafficking of drugs, arms and people. For these reasons, fighting corruption and promoting good governance around the world continue to be a key priority for the United States, as affirmed in the National Security Strategy, the Joint Strategic Plan of the U.S. Department of State and the U.S. Agency for International Development (USAID), and the draft Democracy, Human Rights, and Governance Strategy of the National Security Council. The President's Budget Request for Fiscal Year 2020 does include $581.8 million for Department of State and USAID to strengthen the enabling environment for citizen-responsive governance in many of the countries in which we work.

Question. My Combatting Global Corruption Act, which I reintroduced last week with Senator Young, would allow the U.S. to take stock of where our anti-corruption programming and could be most beneficial. Given how critical these issues are to the long-term success and sustainability of our global engagements, what and where are the trade-offs between being able to pursue good governance and other diplomatic or security considerations?

Answer. Globally, the U.S. Agency for International Development (USAID) views the pursuit of citizen-responsive governance as fully compatible with diplomatic and

security considerations. Often mischaracterized as zero-sum choices, these are actually mutually reinforcing objectives. The reality is that pervasive corruption and a lack of accountable governance sabotage the political and economic systems in countries around the world. These problems affect every sector—denigrating ecosystems, worsening health and education outcomes, discouraging private investment, increasing disease, preventing children from reaching their potential, and feeding the drivers of conflict and citizen insecurity. Building the capacity and commitment of governments, civil society, and the private sector in countries around the world to enhance transparency, accountability, and citizen-responsive governance is not at odds with, but rather safeguards, overarching U.S. diplomatic and national-security objectives.

This is particularly true in countries with weak political and economic institutions and with partial or fledgling accountability systems, including post-conflict nations and those with transitional regimes. Through strengthening self-reliance at the national and community level, USAID's programs take a multidisciplinary and integrated approach to combating corruption and building accountability and integrity throughout the governance system and across sectors, including all branches and levels of government; oversight, audit, and law-enforcement institutions; public-sector agencies; the private sector; and civil society.

In practice, we balance citizen-responsive governance with other diplomatic or security considerations in the Integrated Country Strategies developed by the U.S. Government interagency at each U.S. Embassy.

Question. Do DRL, INL, and the Bureau of Economic and Business Affairs (EB) have the staff resources they need to expeditiously research, vet, and apply sanctions?

Answer. I defer to the U.S. Department of State.

Question. Given the violence and instability we see caused by autocratic regimes like Syria, Venezuela, Nicaragua, and Iran, what is the rationale for cutting these valuable programs?

Answer. The President's Budget Request for Fiscal Year 2020 will allow the U.S. Agency for International Development (USAID) to expand the number of countries where we are investing in democracy programs. Additionally, USAID's programs will focus resources on the democratic institutions and processes most critical to advancing self-reliance in our partner countries, to ensure programmatic impact. USAID is also committed to focusing our resources to address emerging challenges, such as democratic backsliding and resurgent authoritarianism that threaten U.S. influence and prosperity.

COUNTERING RUSSIAN INFLUENCE

We recently received a redacted version of Special Counsel Robert Mueller's report regarding Russian interference in the 2016 U.S. presidential election. As Deputy Attorney General Rod Rosenstein recently said, "There was overwhelming evidence that Russian operatives hacked American computers and defrauded American citizens, and that is only the tip of the iceberg of a comprehensive Russian strategy to influence elections, promote social discord, and undermine America, just like they do in many other countries." I believe that the Senate Foreign Relations Committee can and must play a leading role in responding to the findings of the Mueller report by holding hearing s on the findings and continuing to work on legislation to hold Russia accountable for their malign behavior and interfering in our democracy.

Question. For FY2019, Congress appropriated $275 million in foreign assistance (to be made available from funds appropriated under other headings) for the Countering Russian Influence Fund (CRIF), intended to counter malign Russian influence, propaganda, and aggression in Europe and Eurasia. How does USAID's proposed FY 20 budget address Russian aggression and support civil society—such as journalists, human rights defenders, and others—who are working to counter Russian propaganda and other malign influence in the Europe and Eurasia region?

Answer. The Countering Malign Kremlin Influence Development Framework of the U.S. Agency for International Development (USAID) informed the President's Budget Request for Fiscal Year (FY) 2020. The first two pillars of that strategy focus on 1) countering efforts to undermine democratic institutions and the rule of law; and, 2) resisting the Kremlin's manipulation of information. The Framework, which orients and guides USAID's use of resources to respond to malign Kremlin influence, focuses on the strengthening of democratic institutions, including civil society and independent media outlets.

The President's Budget Request will support the capacity of civil-society organizations to serve as legitimate representatives of citizens and to safeguard their interests, to allow them to counter external malign efforts to marginalize and stigmatize them. Additionally, USAID's regional and bilateral programming with civil society will fund a broad range of civic actors, including human-rights defenders, journalists and independent media organizations, and civic groups. Specifically, our programming will enable organizations to advocate for improved legislation and regulations and empower groups to engage in high-level policy discussions. Programming will also finance advocacy and "watchdog" organizations to track and report on both domestic and foreign efforts to discredit the sector, to undermine democratic institutions and processes, or to interfere in the democratic processes of countries in Europe and Eurasia. For example, in Georgia, USAID launched an online dashboard that reviews data from 70 sources of Georgian-language anti-Western propaganda, most of which originate in Russia, and analyzes their main themes, popularity, and other dimensions in real-time.

To counter Russian disinformation campaigns, USAID is leading efforts to bolster professional, competitive media outlets in Europe and Eurasia to produce engaging and credible news and information and build public trust in the media. Our programming also funds enhanced media literacy, not only to teach critical thinking skills and improve analytical capability, but to give citizens a better understanding of the watchdog role of the press; the power of media messages to shape domestic and global events; and the role the public can, and should, play in informing policymaking.

USAID's efforts in countries like Ukraine and the Republics of Armenia and Moldova focus on teaching these skills inside and outside of the classroom across a variety of age groups. In particular, activities like political satire, and debunking efforts, alongside fact-checking initiatives and more traditional educational curricula, have proven effective across demographic age groups.

Question. How would the President's proposed overall 54 percent cut from FY2018 of all State and USAID assistance for Europe and Eurasia impact the Agency's ability to support such activities?

Answer. While the President's proposed Budget Request for FY 2020 represents greater fiscal restraint, USAID's Missions in the region plan to maintain focus on the administration's key priorities, which include protecting U.S. national security and specifically countering malign Kremlin influence. Prior-year appropriations and the current Budget Request will allow our Missions to continue their current programs to counter this influence.

USAID GENDER POLICY REVIEW

My understanding is that your agency is currently reviewing the USAID Gender Equality and Female Empowerment Policy, including provisions regarding gender integration and gender analysis across USAID's work. As the lead Democratic sponsor of the Women's Entrepreneurship and Economic Empowerment Act, I am keenly interested in ensuring that the Act's requirement for gender analysis remains a key priority for USAID programs, policies, and activities under this review.

Question. Can you explain the steps you personally are taking to ensure that the gender analysis requirement of the WEEE Act is implemented at your agency and preserved under the review of the Gender Equality and Female Empowerment Policy?

Answer. Updates to the Policy on Gender Equality and Female Empowerment of the U.S. Agency for International Development (USAID) will include the requirements and parameters set forth in the Women's Entrepreneurship and Economic Empowerment (WEEE) Act regarding policy outcomes and the integration of equality between women and men and female empowerment in the Program Cycle. The USAID team that is leading the review will ensure that the revised Policy will maintain the gender-analysis requirement of the Act, which reaffirms the Agency's existing mandates.

Question. Can you also explain how your budget request intends to ensure and improve gender integration within USAID, including through advancing your own Gender Equality and Female Empowerment Policy?

Answer. The President's Budget Request for Fiscal Year 2020 will support the implementation of USAID's Policy on Gender Equality and Female Empowerment through expanded training for the Agency's staff to increase their capacity to carry out gender analyses and incorporate findings in programming and technical assistance to our Bureaus, Missions, and Operating Units. The Budget Request will also

fund work in programmatic design and evaluation; the development and delivery of guidance; and tools for the integration of gender, including countering gender-based violence, across every sector in which USAID invests.

WOMEN'S ECONOMIC EMPOWERMENT

Question. Your administration has requested $100 million to advance women's economic empowerment around the world, driven by the Women's Global Development and Prosperity (W–GDP) Initiative. While I am a strong proponent of investments in women's empowerment, this request is out of sync with the overall cuts to foreign assistance proposed. These cuts will impact programs and initiatives that promote the rights and well-being of women and girls globally, including their ability to be healthy, educated, skilled and empowered to participate in the economy. How do you reconcile this? Can you explain how your budget request intends to advance women's empowerment on the one hand, but also seemingly aims to restrict broader funds and programming to advance these goals on the other?

Answer. Promoting the rights and well-being of women and girls globally continues to be an administration priority, as demonstrated in the President's Budget Request for Fiscal Year (FY) 2020, which calls on other donors to build on American investments abroad, and seeks to expand partnerships with the private sector to catalyze U.S. commercial deals. The Women's Global Development and Prosperity (W–GDP) Initiative promotes women's empowerment across its three pillars: 1) advancing workforce-development and vocational education to ensure women have the skills and training necessary to secure jobs; 2) promoting women's entrepreneurship and providing women with access to capital, markets, technical assistance, and networks; and, 3) striving to remove the legal, regulatory, and cultural barriers that constrain women from being able to participate in the economy fully and freely. The work of the U.S. Agency for International Development (USAID) under the three pillars of the W–GDP Initiative benefit the livelihoods of women and their families across all sectors.

W-GDP AND PRIVATE SECTOR ENGAGEMENT

Question. The Women's Global Development and Prosperity initiative—which you discussed during your recent visit to Ethiopia and Cote d'Ivoire—promises to promote women's economic empowerment around the world.

Answer. In furtherance of the goal of the Women's Global Development and Prosperity (W–GDP) Initiative of reaching 50 million women by 2025, we recognize the critical importance of leveraging the ingenuity and resources of the private sector through robust partnerships and collaboration. In accordance with our Private-Sector Engagement policy, the staff at the headquarters of the U.S. Agency for International Development (USAID) will work with our Missions around the world and across USAID's Operating Units to engage in partnerships with the private sector to advance women's economic empowerment and contribute to the efforts of the W–GDP Initiative by offering not only financial resources but also technical assistance in the design, planning, and execution of development projects and activities.

Question. How will USAID's work on W–GDP align with your Private Sector Engagement policy in terms of leveraging new private enterprise to reach the initiative's goal of empowering 50 million women by year 2025?

Answer. The W–GDP initiative also includes a $50 million catalytic fund from Fiscal Year (FY) 2018, which seeks to leverage external sources of capital. The W–GDP Initiative will work with private-sector companies to explore new and innovative ways to address some of the greatest challenges that limit women's full and free participation in the economy. Through these public-private partnerships, the W–GDP Initiative will help scale existing activities to promote women's economic empowerment with proven results and develop new metrics-driven and outcome-oriented programs that are sustainable; effective; and ultimately contribute to USAID's mission of helping governments, civil society, and the private sector in our recipient countries on the Journey to Self-Reliance.

UNFPA

As a result of the State Department's decision to pull funding from UNFPA, $32.5 million appropriated for the agency will be transferred from the International Organizations Bureau to USAID. While I think it is clear that no one can replace the vital work of UNFPA in some of the world's most challenging settings like Yemen

and Venezuela, I want to make sure we are going to continue to support programs like these with these additional funds at USAID.

Question. It is still unclear where FY2018 money has been reprogrammed. Can you share where this funding has been reallocated and specifically what programs it is supporting? Can you assure us that any transferred funds will be going to our existing international family planning and evidence-based reproductive health programs that support access to contraceptives and work to combat child marriage, gender-based violence, and female genital mutilation—all key components of UNFPA's work?

Answer. The U.S. Agency for International Development (USAID) will invest the funds originally available for the United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA) for Fiscal Year (FY) 2018 for voluntary family planning and maternal and reproductive health as required. These investments will contribute to the U.S. Government's commitment to increasing women's access to high-quality health care, and advance progress toward the Agency's Priority Goal under the U.S. Department of State-USAID Joint Strategic Plan for FY 2017–2022 of ending preventable maternal deaths.

HIV/AIDS

The administration aims to achieve AIDS epidemic control in 13 countries by the end of 2020.

Question. How would the 29 percent cut to HIV/AIDS funding for FY2020 impact this goal? Please discuss the administration's request to limit the U.S. share of Global Fund contributions to 25 percent, rather than the 33 percent limit for past contributions. How would that change affect Global Fund operations?

Answer. The President's Budget Request for the Global Health Programs account for Fiscal Year (FY) 2020 of $6.3 billion will finance programs to control the HIV/AIDS epidemic; prevent child and maternal deaths; combat infectious-disease threats; and build healthier, stronger, more self-sufficient nations. This request will allow the United States to continue its leadership role in a sector of demonstrated comparative advantage and success. U.S. investments will leverage resources from other donors, the private sector, and host-country governments to address shared challenges. The Budget Request will enable the President's Emergency Plan for AIDS Relief (PEPFAR) to help control the HIV/AIDS epidemic globally by achieving goals articulated in the administration's PEPFAR Strategy for Accelerating HIV/AIDS Epidemic Control (2017–2020).

This new approach to the Global Fund to Fight AIDS, Tuberculosis and Malaria (Global Fund) will reinforce U.S. leadership while encouraging greater burden-sharing from other donors. The U.S. Government is planning to pledge up to $3.3 billion over 3 years (FY 2020–2022) to the Global Fund's next Replenishment cycle with a commitment to match other donors at a rate of $1 from the United States for every $3 pledged from other donors. This change in the matching ratio of our pledge matching is critical to demonstrating and continuing U.S. global leadership in the fight against HIV/AIDS, tuberculosis, and malaria, while pushing other donors to contribute a greater share of resources to address these public-health challenges.

MEXICO CITY POLICY/PLGHA

In January 2017, the administration reinstated the Mexico City Policy and expanded it so that it applied to all global health programs rather than only family planning activities. In February 2018, the administration indicated in its 6-month assessment that it was too early to determine the impact of the policy and that another assessment would be conducted in December 2018.

Question. Has that assessment been conducted? If not, when will it be done and the findings be published? What effects has the policy appeared to have had on access to care, particularly in remote areas where all health services are provided in one facility? What impact do you expect the further expansion of this policy, announced by Secretary of State Pompeo in March 2019, to have on access to health care in such areas?

Answer. The U.S. Department of State has worked closely with the U.S. Agency for International Development (USAID) and the Departments of Defense and Health and Human Services to implement the Protecting Life in Global Health Assistance (PLGHA) Policy consistently, examine progress in carrying it out, and monitor its effects. The State Department's Six-Month Review on PLGHA, released in February 2018, recommended further analysis when more-extensive experience would enable

a more-thorough examination of the Policy's benefits and challenges. USAID is working with the Department of State and the other affected Departments to complete that review, which will assess the implementation of the Policy, including any effects on the delivery of care.

The PLGHA Policy implements what the administration has made very clear: U.S. taxpayer money should not fund foreign organizations that perform or actively promote abortion as a method of family planning in other nations. The PLGHA Policy does not change funding levels for global-health assistance by one dollar, nor does the Secretary of State's announcement of March 26, 2019.

EBOLA OUTBREAK

Question. The ongoing Ebola outbreak in the Democratic Republic of Congo is continuing to spread. Please describe how current resources are being used to address the ongoing outbreak.

Answer. In September 2018, the U.S. Government deployed a Disaster-Assistance Response Team (DART) to coordinate the Federal response to the outbreak of Ebola in the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC). This expert team—composed of disaster and health experts from USAID and the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) within the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services (HHS)—is working tirelessly to identify needs and coordinate activities with partners on the ground in the DRC. By augmenting ongoing efforts to prevent the spread of disease and providing aid to help affected communities, this work ensures an efficient and effective response by the U.S. Government. USAID is closely collaborating with our interagency partners—like HHS (including both CDC and the National Institutes of Health) and the U.S. Department of State—to battle this disease, along with the Government of the DRC, other donors, the United Nations (U.N.), international partners, and affected communities.

As of May 8, 2019, the DART typically has between 10 and 15 members deployed in the DRC, located in both Kinshasa and Goma. In addition, the DART has five consultants—two in Beni, two in Goma, and one in Butembo—embedded in the operations of the World Health Organization (WHO) to support the local commissions in charge of surveillance and the prevention and control of infections in health facilities and report to the DART.

The outlook for the ongoing Ebola outbreak in the DRC is worsening. As of May 21, 2019, the Government of the DRC has reported 1,847 confirmed and probable cases. As of May 8, 2019, USAID has invested more than $86.9 million into the response to the outbreak. This funding is supporting 12 non-governmental organizations (NGOs), three U.N. agencies, and one public international organization to implement key activities outlined in the U.S Government's response strategy. The DART in the DRC and the USAID Response-Management Team (RMT) in Washington continue to support a more community-based approach that emphasizes assessment/dialogue, increasing local participation, and providing wrap-around humanitarian assistance as part of integrated programs. Increasing insecurity, intense community resistance, ineffective leadership, and poor coordination are major challenges to the response.

USAID sees a number of areas for improvement, and is pressing to make changes at every level as part of a reset endorsed by the U.S. Ambassador to the DRC, the DART, HHS/CDC, and other lead donors. The DART is working with partners to provide vital assistance and overcome some of the key challenges that have made this outbreak difficult to contain. As such, the DART is supporting a multi-pronged approach to: (1) stop the spread of infection and provide vital care to Ebola patients; (2) support programs in community outreach and education to dispel rumors and earn the trust of community members in areas affected by the disease; (3) enhance coordination with international and interagency partners; and, (4) broaden the response to address the long-standing needs of communities not related to Ebola. In addition, in response to the recent troubling uptick in cases, the DART is working to enhance the response's operations and is pushing the U.N. and the Government of the DRC to shift from a top-down approach to one that elevates the community's role and increases local acceptance and ownership of activities.

Question. Considering the persistent increase in cases, what changes, if any, is USAID considering in its response?

Answer. The U.S. Government's reset strategy, endorsed by the U.S. Ambassador to the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC), the U.S. Disaster-Assistance Response Team (DART), the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) within the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services (HHS), and other lead donors [including the World Bank, the Department for International Development of the

United Kingdom, and the Humanitarian Aid Department of the European Commission (ECHO)] includes the following elements:

- *Leadership Changes at the United Nations (U.N.)*: The U.S. Government and other lead donors have urged the U.N. to designate a senior-level leader in the DRC with the authority to lead the U.N.'s part of the response to Ebola as part of the reset.
- *Engagement with Non-Governmental Organizations (NGOs)*: The U.S. Government is pressing the Government of the DRC and the U.N. to provide NGOs and civil society with formal roles on coordination structures at all levels of the response, based on technical competencies.
- *Longer-Term Strategic Planning*: The U.S. Agency for International Development is pressing the U.N. and the Government of the DRC to develop a 6 to 9 month response plan that fully captures the associated costs of the Government, the U.N., NGOs, and civil society necessary to contain and end the outbreak with appropriate financial tracking. The plan should use the model of an inclusive approach to humanitarian funding, as supported by the U.N. Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (UNOCHA) in complex emergency humanitarian responses.
- *Broaden the Humanitarian Response ("Ebola Plus")*: USAID is immediately broadening its response to address non-Ebola needs expressed by communities in hotspot areas: The DART is currently reviewing initial proposals to provide other humanitarian assistance as part of integrated Ebola response programs to gain community trust and acceptance, including livelihoods; food-security support; and water, sanitation, and hygiene (WASH) Please note that International Disaster Assistance funding is necessarily short-term and is not a substitute for broader development and stabilization efforts in the region, which is what communities in the DRC have requested.
- *Localize the Response*: USAID is pressing our partners to increase local hires and partnerships with local civil-society organizations, including faith-based organizations, and to expand the participation of NGOs across the response to Ebola, including community representation at the coordination and sub-coordination levels. This must also include women, as the response to date largely has left out this key constituency, despite their influence and authority. Along the lines of "localizing" the response, USAID has urged the World Health Organization (WHO) to consider reducing international visibility in Butembo to reduce the resentment of the local community.
- *Improve the Operational Response*: The U.S. Government welcomes the recommendation made by the Senior Advisory Committee on Vaccine Use of the WHO's Strategic Advisory Group of Experts on May 7, 2019, and will urge all partners to use the findings to enable a more forward-leaning posture on the use of vaccines, including a geographic vaccine strategy. USAID is working to improve the surveillance of community deaths, as too many new cases are detected post-mortem and are not tracked, isolated, or safely buried. USAID is pressing the Government of the DRC on the use of rapid diagnostic tests (RDTs) to conduct surveillance of community deaths, which has the potential to improve the turnaround time of diagnosis and prevent transmission. USAID funds community-level, event-based surveillance, and is exploring options to expand it. The U.S. Government will also implement the Surveillance Training to Enhance Ebola Response and Readiness (STEER) program, created and led by the DRC Ministry of Health to leverage alumni of the HHS/CDC Field Epidemiology Training Program (FETP) to improve the core knowledge and skills of frontline Ministry health workers in epidemiology and the prevention and control of infections (IPC) in clinics and hospitals.
- *Preparedness*: There is an urgent need to intensify readiness in Goma and the Goma-Butembo corridor to avoid further spread of the outbreak within the DRC and, potentially, across its borders. Therefore, USAID is prioritizing risk-communication, WASH, IPC in health facilities, training for health-care workers, and community outreach. USAID and HHS/CDC will support rapid-response teams and address gaps in coordination, screening, triage, reporting, surveillance, the vaccination of health workers, and screening of travelers at borders.

GLOBAL HEALTH SECURITY AGENDA

The $90 million budget request for global health security is aimed at advancing the Global Health Security Agenda across priority countries.

Question. How many countries is the United States currently supporting through the Global Health Security Agenda?

Answer. The U.S. Agency for International Development (USAID), in partnership with other U.S. Government Departments and Agencies, national governments, international organizations, and public and private stakeholders—seeks to prevent avoidable epidemics, detect threats early, and respond rapidly and effectively to outbreaks of infectious diseases. USAID seeks to strengthen in-country capacities targeted at the places, populations, and practices that contribute to the emergence and spread of infectious-diseases threats, especially zoonotic ones (those that originate in animals). Here are the geographic locations of USAID's activities with Global Health Security and Emerging Threats funds keyed to GHSA focus countries as presented in the congressionally mandated "Fifth Report on the Proposed Use of Fiscal Year (FY) 2018 Global Health Security Funds by the U.S. Agency for International Development (USAID):"

- GHSA, Phase I countries: Bangladesh, Cameroon, Côte d'Ivoire, Ethiopia, Guinea, India, Indonesia, Kenya, Liberia, Sénégal, Sierra Leone, Tanzania, Uganda, and Vietnam;
- GHSA, Phase II countries: Cambodia, Democratic Republic of Congo, Ghana, Jordan, Lao People's Democratic Republic, Malaysia, Rwanda, and Thailand; and
- Countries at high risk for the emergence of global threats: Burma, the People's Republic of China, Egypt, Madagascar, Mongolia, Nepal, and the Republic of Congo.

Please note, the financial and geographic allocations are subject to change, based on consultations and coordination with HHS

Question. How might the ongoing Ebola outbreak in the Democratic Republic of Congo impact the availability of funds for other countries?

Answer. USAID is responding to the ongoing outbreak of Ebola in the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC). USAID is funding these efforts with International Disaster Assistance funds appropriated for Ebola in Fiscal Year 2015. USAID does not anticipate that our on-going response efforts in DRC will affect the availability of funds to help governments, civil society, and the private sector in other countries to prevent avoidable epidemics, detect threats early, and respond rapidly and effectively to outbreaks of infectious diseases.

GHSA Phase I Countries
Bangladesh
Burkina Faso
Cameroon
Cote d'Ivoire
Ethiopia
Guinea
Indonesia
Kenya
Liberia
Senegal
Sierra Leone
Tanzania
Uganda
Vietnam
GHSA Phase II Countries
Cambodia
Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC)
Ghana
Jordan
Laos PDR
Malaysia
Rwanda
Thailand (RDMA)
Other countries with high-risk for global threats and Global Response Activities
Burma
Egypt
Mongolia
Nepal
Republic of Congo

TUBERCULOSIS

Question. In FY2019, Congress appropriated a 16 percent increase for TB programs from FY2018 levels. What did USAID do with the additional funding?

Answer. I launched the Global Accelerator to End Tuberculosis (TB) in September 2018 to support national governments, civil society, and the private sector to meet the targets set at the High-Level Meeting (HLM) on TB of the United Nations (U.N.) General Assembly to treat 40 million people by 2022. By using funding from Fiscal Year (FY) 2019, the Accelerator will expand and target technical expertise to increase the diagnosis and treatment of cases of TB and multi-drug-resistant (MDR) TB. Related efforts include the placement of advisors in Ministries of Health; the increased involvement of local organizations in the response to TB, including community and faith-based groups; the accelerated transition of the funding and management of TB programs to governments and their partners; and improved coordination with other health programs, particularly around co-morbidities, such as diabetes, HIV and undernourishment. The Accelerator focuses on the countries with the highest burdens of TB in which the U.S. Agency for International Development (USAID) already has existing partnerships, and where the Agency could reprogram

funds to align better with local communities and partners to deliver performance-based results towards the global targets from the HLM.

Question. Please explain why the FY2020 budget requests that funding be returned to FY2018 levels. How might a reduction in funds affect ongoing efforts?

Answer. With the increased funding, USAID will also continue to be a major supporter of the Global Drug Facility (GDF) of the Stop TB Partnership, the largest supplier of medicines and diagnostics for TB. USAID's programs will also continue to require national funding for TB drugs through the GDF to broaden the market for quality-assured drugs and increase the sustainability of TB programs in high-burden countries.

USAID has been a catalyst for investment and change in high-burden TB countries, and will continue our efforts to increase the investment of national domestic resources, which already make up over 80 percent of funding to support the global response to TB. The focus of the available funding in FY 2020 would be to provide support in the 23 high-priority countries.

Question. Multi-drug resistant tuberculosis (MDR–TB) remains a concern for many, particularly in countries with high HIV–TB co-infection rates. Please describe how USAID programs address MDR–TB and work to avert further spread of the strain.

Answer. Diagnosing MDR–TB starts with finding TB cases, since around the world clinicians are only finding two-thirds of them. The remaining one-third of TB cases are either not diagnosed or diagnosed but not reported. With the resources already available, USAID is funding interventions to accelerate the detection of MDR–TB, starting with finding the missing cases and improving access to drug-susceptibility testing (DST). We are increasing the active screening of TB and MDR–TB among vulnerable groups by using different strategies, including community-based screening, universal screening, and DST at health facilities

People with drug-resistant TB (DR–TB) can be reluctant to start treatment because the regimens are long and difficult, and can involve serious side effects. To address this issue, USAID is financing the development of new TB-treatment regimens that are shorter and more tolerable to patients. Additional funds would continue to support activities in the National Action Plan on MDR–TB, including clinical trials to evaluate new drugs and ensure that those most in need can have access to them.

STRATEGY AND BUDGET MISMATCH

Question. The administration's National Security Strategy recognizes that America "faces an extraordinarily dangerous world, filled with a wide range of threats that have intensified in recent years" and that we must use all of our national security tools to confront these threats. For the third year in a row, however, the administration has proposed deep cuts to development and diplomacy, indicating once again a strategy and budget mismatch. How do you reconcile this discrepancy in resources with not only the threats we currently face but this administration's own strategy to confront those challenges?

Answer. The President's Budget Request for Fiscal Year (FY) 2020 balances fiscal responsibility with national-security imperatives and prioritizes countries and sectors most-critical to U.S. interests.

The President's Budget Request for FY 2020 proposes strategic investments in development and diplomacy that enable the United States to retain its position as a global leader, while requiring the governments of other nations (both donors and host-countries) and the private sector to make greater, proportionate contributions toward shared objectives that support U.S. national security and advance American interests.

USAID TRANSFORMATION—HUMANITARIAN ACCOUNT CONSOLIDATIONS

Question. Please discuss the proposed consolidation of U.S. funding into a single new global humanitarian account. How might this impact the U.S. Government's funding relationship with implementing partners, particularly multilateral organizations?

Answer. The President's Budget Request for Fiscal Year (FY) 2020 proposes the consolidation of all overseas humanitarian assistance in a new, unified, flexible International Humanitarian Assistance (IHA) account and in the new Bureau for Humanitarian Assistance (BHA) at the U.S. Agency for International Development (USAID), with a new, high-level dual-hat leadership structure under the authority

of the Secretary of State. These changes will allow the U.S. Government to respond seamlessly to the ongoing, as well as new, humanitarian needs of the most-vulnerable displaced people, including refugees, victims of conflict, stateless persons, and migrants worldwide.

The IHA, managed by the new BHA at USAID, will draw on the efficiencies and comparative strengths of USAID and the U.S. Department of State. It will improve coherence and coordination in our funding of implementing partners, including both non-governmental and multilateral organizations. The proposed changes will allow the U.S. Government to monitor the performance of implementers consistently and uniformly, and will ensure no duplication or gaps in aid. The new proposed structure will allow for a seamless and effective assistance strategy for all affected people. Practically speaking, implementers that now have to work with two or three offices with different award systems and reporting, monitoring, and oversight requirements would receive funding from only one Bureau, with one set of parameters designed to optimize outcomes for beneficiaries.

Question. What have been the U.S.-based NGOs' responses to the proposed consolidation?

Answer. InterAction, the alliance of U.S.-based international non-governmental organizations (NGOs), has expressed support for the creation of a unified entity that has authority for all of the U.S. Government's overseas humanitarian assistance to generate greater coherence in the goals and activities of our aid. USAID is committed to working with U.S-based non-governmental organizations through the proposed structure.

Question. Under the proposed FY2020 budget, do you expect other changes in the way the United States responds to humanitarian crises worldwide? If so, in what respects and why?

Answer. The $5.968 billion the President has requested through the IHA account would allow the United States to remain the largest single donor to crises around the world and meet humanitarian needs quickly and flexibly by supporting vulnerable populations affected by conflict or natural disaster. The President's Budget Request for FY 2020 enables USAID to deliver humanitarian assistance more effectively by elevating its role within the U.S. Government; promoting efficiencies through the creation of the new BHA, including the integration of all overseas assistance for refugee at USAID; and ensuring other donors contribute their fair share to address humanitarian crises globally.

HUMANITARIAN OFFICE CONSOLIDATION-INTERAGENCY COORDINATION

Question. How, if at all, do you anticipate the reorganization of offices within USAID will impact coordination between USAID and the State Department? How, if at all, will it affect interagency coordination with DOD in the response to humanitarian crises? Under the consolidated plan, what role do you see for the State Department on U.S. humanitarian diplomacy and leadership?

Answer. The President's Budget Request for Fiscal Year (FY) 2020 consolidates overseas humanitarian-assistance programs and funding in a new International Humanitarian Assistance (IHA) account at the U.S. Agency for International Development (USAID). The proposal recognizes the importance of combining the delivery of humanitarian assistance and diplomacy. As part of USAID's Transformation, the Offices of U.S. Foreign Disaster Assistance and Food for Peace together will combine to create a more seamless and efficient approach to humanitarian assistance and eliminate the artificial divide between food and non-food aid at USAID.

The President's request for a new dual-hat leadership structure will connect humanitarian diplomacy and assistance in a new and more effective way that will improve overall coordination between USAID and the U.S. Department of State. The two institutions are working out the leadership structure, but we look forward to briefing you and your colleagues on this proposal at the appropriate time. Working together with the U.S. Department of State and the Office of Management and Budget, we believe we can create a new model that will leverage the comparative advantages of both organizations to assist and advocate for people in greatest need.

PROPOSED ELIMINATIONS—INTER-AMERICAN FOUNDATION (IAF) AND U.S.-AFRICA DEVELOPMENT FOUNDATION (USADF)

The budget request proposes the elimination of the independent Inter-American Foundation (IAF) and the U.S.-Africa Development Foundation (USADF), asserting

that their small grant programs should be administered through USAID's Western Hemisphere and Africa bureaus.

Question. What benefits, if any, do you see in transferring these activities from specialized independent agencies to USAID? What are the potential drawbacks?

Answer. The consolidation of the small-grants programs will combine regional expertise and programmatic approaches to expand the toolkit the U.S. Government deploys to address complex development challenges. The consolidation will also result in administrative cost-savings.

BUILD ACT IMPLEMENTATION

The BUILD Act passed by Congress in 2018 authorized the establishment of a new International Development Finance Corporation (IDFC) that will include the Development Credit Authority (DCA) that has long been part of USAID. The IDFC is expected to become operational by the start of FY2020.

Question. Do you have any concerns about USAID's access to the DCA as a financing tool when it becomes part of the IDFC?

Answer. Access by the U.S. Agency for International Development (USAID) to the financing tools of the DFC will be paramount to the success of both institutions. Our goal is to ensure strong institutional linkages and easy and full access to the DFC's full suite of financing tools (loans, guarantees, equity investments, risk insurance, and technical assistance) by all our programs and field Missions. To that end, teams at USAID and the Overseas Private Investment Corporation (OPIC) are working closely together on a regular basis to develop the right processes and procedures to ensure this level of access.

Question. Do you anticipate that the shift will result in less development finance expertise at USAID?

Answer. We at the U.S. Agency for International Development (USAID) have approximately 40 positions that will shift to the U.S. International Development Finance Corporation (DFC) from our Development Credit Authority (DCA) when the DFC comes into being at the beginning of Fiscal Year 2020. Our DCA staff makes up a very significant portion of the Agency's in-house development-finance expertise. Therefore, yes, there will be "less development-finance expertise at USAID." One might speculate this transfer of personnel could be a big loss for the Agency, particularly at a time when USAID is expanding our engagement with the private sector; however, throughout the process of creating the DFC, we have emphasized the necessity of building strong institutional linkages between USAID and the new organization, to ensure seamless access to the DFC's large group of specialized financial experts and expanded set of development-finance tools, including equity authority.

Question. As the IDFC implementation process moves forward, are there any outstanding concerns from the USAID perspective that you would like to see addressed?

Answer. We continue to work closely with the Overseas Private Investment Corporation (OPIC) on all transition matters, of which there are many, given the long history of the Development Credit Authority (DCA) within the U.S. Agency for International Development (USAID). OPIC's management has established a process through which USAID may raise all concerns with operational implementation of the DFC, and we are working through them. A very active interagency working group on the DFC surfaces and addresses any policy concerns around the creation of the new organization, and we are an active participant in that group.

We will continue to track our joint efforts closely to ensure the DFC not only maintains but expands the DCA's model of programming driven, funded, and owned by USAID's Missions in the field. We are also pushing to ensure development remains the driving force behind all the DFC's transactions. To this end, we are closely tracking the creation of the position of Chief Development Officer and the DFC's new processes for scoring, monitoring, and evaluating the development impact of transactions.

BILATERAL FOREIGN ASSISTANCE—MENA

For FY2020, the Trump administration proposes to spend an estimated $6.5 billion on total bilateral assistance to the MENA region and proposes to cut bilateral foreign assistance for programs in Syria.

Question. How does the budget request reflect the administration's stance on bilateral foreign assistance and U.S. priorities?

Answer. The President's Budget Request for Fiscal Year 2020 for the Middle East and North Africa supports our Memoranda of Understanding with the State of Israel and the Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan, and continues our longstanding partnership with the Arab Republic of Egypt. It advances efforts to counter Iran's malign influence across the region; bolsters the stability of key friends and allies; expands our support for persecuted religious and ethnic minorities; supports efforts in stabilization and recovery to help ensure the enduring defeat of the so-called Islamic State in Iraq and Syria and other terrorist organizations; and provides the flexibility needed to support a comprehensive, lasting Arab-Israeli peace.

Question. Can you comment on the decision to allocate 91 percent of total bilateral aid requested for the MENA region to Israel, Egypt, and Jordan over countries like Syria?

Answer. The President's Budget Request for Fiscal Year (FY) 2020 maintains our commitments to key allies, including funding for the Memoranda of Understanding with the Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan ($1.275 billion per year) and the State of Israel ($3.3 billion per year). The changes from the President's Request for FY 2019 account for significant accomplishments in the battle against the so-called Islamic State in Iraq and Syria (ISIS), including its territorial defeat, and success in encouraging other donors to support stabilization activities in liberated areas. We are committed to the enduring defeat of ISIS, a political solution to the Syrian conflict in line with United Nations Security Council Resolution 2254, and the removal of all Iranian-led forces in Syria. Efforts to encourage our partners to share the burden of providing stabilization in liberated areas raised over $300 million in Coalition contributions for stabilization and early-recovery activities in Syria last year, including close to $180 million we have invested in contracts managed by the U.S. Government, and we are seeking additional contributions for stabilization in Syria moving forward.

DIPLOMATIC PROGRESS FUND

Question. Many of us have long said that the road to peace between the Israelis and the Palestinians requires both sides to negotiate directly. It also requires not only security cooperation, but also economic progress. We have yet to see full details on the administration's peace plan negotiations, but the details we have heard focus on economic security. Please provide additional details on the administration's proposed "Diplomatic Progress Fund." How, under current law, would entities in the West Bank and Gaza Strip be eligible to receive U.S. assistance?

Answer. The President's Budget Request for Fiscal Year (FY) 2020 includes in the new Diplomatic Progress Fund $175 million in Economic Support and Development Funds, which the administration could use to advance U.S. foreign-policy priorities in the West Bank and Gaza. We will continue to assess where U.S. foreign assistance can advance the administration's policies and priorities and provide maximum value to the U.S. taxpayer. We will take relevant legislation into account in making that determination, including both the Anti-Terrorism Clarification Act and the Taylor Force Act.

CYCLONES IDAI AND KENNETH

Question. In the past month we have seen two major cyclones impact East Africa, with Mozambique suffering the brunt of the damage from both storms. Can you tell us what you're doing to respond to Cyclones Idai and Kenneth?

Answer. The U.S. Agency for International Development (USAID) deployed a Disaster-Assistance Response Team (DART) to the Republic of Mozambique to coordinate the response by the U.S. Government (USG) to Cyclones Idai and Kenneth. The DART conducted needs-assessments and worked with partners to scale up the humanitarian response rapidly to cyclone-affected populations. As of May 8, 2019, the USG has provided nearly $80 million to help affected communities in the Republics of The Comoros, Malawi, Mozambique, and Zimbabwe affected by the cyclones. As part of this package, USAID financed United Nations agencies and non-governmental organizations to provide emergency food assistance to more than 1.6 million people; shelter assistance to more than 225,000 people; safe drinking water, improved hygiene, and sanitation to more than 700,000 people; and supplies to prevent the spread of waterborne diseases such as cholera.

Question.How are you planning to incorporate long-term reconstruction and resilience efforts into the response?

Answer. As humanitarian conditions in Mozambique and the affected neighboring countries continue to improve, USAID is shifting its focus to early-recovery and resilience activities, while continuing to monitor and address emergency humanitarian needs. USAID's staff are conducting assessments of the longer-term impact of the cyclones, and will begin to assist communities to rebuild their livelihoods and improve their resilience to future shocks.

CERTIFICATIONS REGARDING THE CENTRAL GOVERNMENTS OF EL SALVADOR, GUATEMALA, AND HONDURAS AND THE ACCOMPANYING MEMORANDA OF JUSTIFICATION SUBMITTED BY SENATOR ROBERT MENENDEZ

United States Department of State

Washington, D.C. 20520

AUG 25 2017

The Honorable
Bob Corker, Chairman
Committee on Foreign Relations
United States Senate
Washington, DC 20510

Dear Mr. Chairman:

In accordance with section 7045(a)(4)(A) of the Department of State, Foreign Operations, and Related Programs Appropriations Act, 2017 (Div. J, P.L. 115-31), we are hereby transmitting the enclosed certification regarding the central governments of El Salvador, Guatemala, and Honduras and the accompanying Memoranda of Justification.

We hope this information is helpful to you and please do not hesitate to contact us if we can be of further assistance.

Sincerely,

Charles S. Faulkner
Bureau of Legislative Affairs

Enclosure:
As stated.

MEMORANDUM OF JUSTIFICATION REGARDING CERTIFICATION UNDER SECTION 7045(a)(4)(A) OF THE DEPARTMENT OF STATE, FOREIGN OPERATIONS, AND RELATED PROGRAMS APPROPRIATIONS ACT, 2017 (DIV. J, P.L. 115-31)

Section 7045(a)(4)(A) of the Department of State, Foreign Operations, and Related Programs Appropriations Act, 2017 (Div. J, P.L. 115-31) (FY 2017 SFOAA) requires the Secretary of State to make certain certifications prior to the obligation of 25 percent of assistance for the central government of Guatemala to implement the U.S. Strategy for Engagement in Central America, in support of the Plan of the Alliance for Prosperity in the Northern Triangle of Central America. As required under the provision, the certification is being reported to the House of Representatives Committees on Appropriations and Foreign Affairs and Senate Committees on Appropriations and Foreign Relations.

Context:
Consistent with the certification requirements in Section 7045(a)(4)(A) of the FY 2017 SFOAA, the central government of Guatemala is taking effective steps in addition to the steps taken since the certification and report submitted under the corresponding provision in the FY 2016 SFOAA on March 14, 2016, to: inform its citizens of the dangers of the journey to the southwest border of the United States; combat human smuggling and trafficking; improve border security; and cooperate with U.S. government agencies and other governments in the region to facilitate the return, repatriation, and reintegration of illegal migrants arriving at the southwest border of the United States who do not qualify as refugees, consistent with international law.

To inform its citizens of the dangers of the journey to the southwest border of the United States:
Since 2015, the Secretariat of Social Welfare of the Presidency (SBS) developed the campaign "Quédate" (Stay), to inform about the risks of migrating to the north. The campaign targets children and adolescents who are most likely or have tried to migrate. The International Organization for Migration coordinated with the Government of Guatemala to publish materials targeting children and adolescents to raise awareness about their rights, the dangers of illegal migration, and the benefits of regular migration.

The Guatemalan central government implemented public awareness campaigns, and high-ranking officials made numerous public statements, to communicate the dangers of illegal migration and the lack of U.S. immigration benefits for undocumented migrants upon their arrival in the United States. These efforts included a tour of the U.S. border led by Guatemalan President Jimmy Morales and the First Lady Patricia Marroquin in April of 2016, and an official trip to the United States by the First Lady in December 2016.

The First Lady is actively involved in the campaign to discourage irregular migration. In late 2016, she successfully advocated for the expansion of the Repatriation and Reception Center at the Guatemalan Air Force base, as well as a reception center space at the international airport designated for returning minors and family units.

Actions by the Guatemalan government in 2016 led to the arrest of 25 human smugglers, including the leader of the "Lucero" Transnational Criminal Organization (TCO). Operation Lucero is a multilateral criminal investigation targeting TCOs that facilitate human smuggling from El Salvador, Guatemala, and Mexico to the United States. The arrest of the TCO leader was the culmination of Phase-I of a year-long investigation that led to the dismantling of 14 different smuggling routes utilized by TCO human smuggling networks operating in El Salvador, Guatemala, and Mexico.

To improve border security, including to prevent illegal migration, human smuggling and trafficking, and trafficking of illicit drugs and other contraband:
The Presidents of El Salvador and Guatemala met April 12, 2016 and agreed to establish a High Level Security Dialogue to fight transnational organized crime related to drug, human, and arms trafficking. The Northern Triangle Presidents then met privately August 23, 2016, in El Salvador to formalize cooperation on gang investigations. They signed an agreement for the respective national police forces and militaries to share information on organized crime investigations, while increasing joint patrolling of border zones by police and military personnel to curb arms and drug smuggling as well as the movement of gang members.

The Presidents, Ministers of Security, and Directors General of Police from El Salvador, Guatemala, and Honduras met in Honduras November 15, 2016 to launch the Tri-National Gang Force. The Task Force coordinates efforts to combat gang migration, human smuggling, and trafficking of drugs, weapons, and illicit goods. The joint task force is responsible for patrolling a 600-kilometer stretch of the shared border between all three countries, and focuses on pursuing and denying freedom of movement to gang members and other transnational criminal groups in the Northern Triangle.

Guatemala's Ministries of Defense and Government created a total of four interagency task forces (IATF), which work under the authority of the Vice Minister for Counternarcotics, to improve border controls with El Salvador, Honduras, and Belize. The Ministries of Defense and Government also established integrated intelligence cells in IATF Tecun Uman and Zacapa to support intelligence-driven operations. As of June 2017, training needs for IATF Xinca were identified and a training plan was created by the Embassy in conjunction with the Guatemalan government, as scheduled.

In addition to strengthening the IATFs, the Division of Ports, Airports, and Frontier (DIPAFRONT) continues efforts to integrate border security operations with Guatemala and El Salvador. An official agreement was signed in June 2016 between DIPAFRONT, the PNC's anti-drug unit (SGAIA,) and the Guatemala Tax Administration (SAT) to integrate border security efforts between the three entities. In June 2016, SGAIA Officers inspected a container at the Port of Quetzal and seized 400 kilograms of cocaine. This seizure is significant as it was wholly based on Guatemalan government-derived intelligence and operations without U.S. law enforcement involvement. DIPAFRONT conducted an operation in October 2016 to interdict the flow of unaccompanied children (UACs) and other migrants from the Northern Triangle. The quality and number of port inspections have also shown advancements.

data collection on returned persons was finalized in June 2017. In July 2017, equipment to support the system will be procured and the system will be officially transferred to the DGM.

MEMORANDUM OF JUSTIFICATION REGARDING CERTIFICATION UNDER SECTION 7045(a)(4)(A) OF THE DEPARTMENT OF STATE, FOREIGN OPERATIONS, AND RELATED PROGRAMS APPROPRIATIONS ACT, 2017 (DIV. J, P.L. 115-31)

Section 7045(a)(4)(A) of the Department of State, Foreign Operations, and Related Programs Appropriations Act, 2017 (Div. J, P.L. 115-31) (FY 2017 SFOAA) requires the Secretary of State to make certain certifications prior to the obligation of 25 percent of assistance for the central government of Honduras to implement the U.S. Strategy for Engagement in Central America, in support of the Plan of the Alliance for Prosperity in the Northern Triangle of Central America. As required under the provision, the certification is being reported to the House of Representatives Committees on Appropriations and Foreign Affairs and the Senate Committees on Appropriations and Foreign Relations.

Context:
Consistent with the certification requirements in section 7045(a)(4)(A) of the FY 2017 SFOAA, the central government of Honduras is taking effective steps, in addition to the steps taken since the certification and report submitted under the corresponding provision in the FY 2016 SFOAA on March 14, 2016, to: inform its citizens of the dangers of the journey to the southwest border of the United States; combat human smuggling and trafficking; improve border security; and cooperate with U.S. government agencies and other governments in the region to facilitate the return, repatriation, and reintegration of undocumented migrants arriving at the southwest border of the United States who do not qualify as refugees, consistent with international law.

To inform its citizens of the dangers of the journey to the southwest border of the United States:
The Honduran government ran public awareness campaigns throughout 2016 while high-ranking officials issued numerous public statements on the dangers of illegal migration and the fact that children and adults who arrive undocumented in the United States are not eligible for U.S. immigration benefits. President Hernandez, First Lady Garcia de Hernandez, and several government agencies supported messaging on dangers of the journey to the United States. Honduras expanded its nationwide media campaign in 2016 by utilizing DHS Customs and Border Protection-provided materials on the dangers of land-based migration. The Ministry of Foreign Affairs (MFA) disseminated six prevention and awareness campaigns at both the national level and in 18 regions via print media, television, and radio. These ads will run continuously through 2017. Coinciding with the campaigns, members of the Migration Taskforce, including the First Lady, regularly participated in television forums to talk about the dangers of the journey. The Honduran government designated August 2016 as Prevention of Irregular Migration Month, and plans to launch a new campaign in August 2017 that will include talks, educational fairs, and entrepreneurial fairs. The information campaigns are developed and disseminated in parallel with the various reintegration projects the Honduran government implemented in 2016 and 2017.

and denying freedom of movement to gang members and other transnational criminal groups in the Northern Triangle.

Honduras expanded its investment in the Automated Case Management System (NACMIS), continuing to strategically deploy NACMIS terminals to critical border crossings to identify, intercept, and arrest criminals – including human smugglers – crossing Honduras' borders. From July 2016 to June 2017, NACMIS helped the Honduran National Police (HNP) identify and arrest 1,177 persons suspected of homicide, 461 of rape, 181 of drug trafficking, 43 of extortion, 19 of kidnapping, and 11 of money laundering. In addition, in 2016 Honduran law enforcement authorities detained 3,584 individuals at border crossings after NACMIS checks revealed they had pending arrest warrants.

Further, the success of the Grupo de Operaciones Especiales Tacticas (GOET), a 30-person unit that operates mobile traffic interdiction checkpoints around the country's borders, has played an integral role in increasing the visibility on the need for an integrated border security force throughout the country. In 2016 and 2017, these operations led to the rescue of 110 unaccompanied minors and the arrest of five human smugglers as well as the seizure of 25 weapons, 183 kilograms of cocaine, and 649 kilograms of marijuana. As a result, the specially-trained GOET officers will co-train the new Frontier Police; by the end of 2017, the HNP will assign 100 officers to the Frontier Police with the overall goal of 800 throughout the country. The HNP regularly assigns additional officers to support the operations of the 30-person GOET unit at border crossings and check-points. GOET has also been conducting operations and training with Guatemalan police and border agencies, further enhancing the regional approach to border security and information sharing.

To cooperate with United States central government agencies and other governments in the region to facilitate the return, repatriation, and reintegration of illegal migrants arriving at the southwest border of the United States who do not qualify as refugees, consistent with international law:

Honduras agreed to accept up to 10 U.S. repatriation flights per week, and actually receives an average of four to five U.S. repatriation flights per week, with a maximum capacity of 135 individuals per flight. In FY 2016, the United States repatriated roughly 21,000 Hondurans to Honduras. Honduras continues to work to ensure the safe and humane return and socio-economic reintegration of children, families, and adults returned from the United States and Mexico.

The Honduran government continues to invest in repatriation centers. With seized assets and national funds, the Honduran government built a third center in 2016 to receive adult returnees from Mexico. The Honduran government emphasizes the benefits of collaboration with local non-governmental and international organizations in the repatriation centers. The Red Cross and the Catholic Escalabriana Order from Brazil directly administer one center each under contract with the government. With support from the International Organization for Migration (IOM), the MFA Migration Observatory will relaunch its improved public-access website by the end of 2017. The website will include a searchable database with data on demographics and drivers of migration from more than 100,000 individual interviews done with returnees that come through the repatriation centers.

CERTIFICATION PURSUANT TO SECTION 7045(a)(4)(A) OF THE DEPARTMENT OF STATE, FOREIGN OPERATIONS, AND RELATED PROGRAMS APPROPRIATIONS ACT, 2017 (DIV. J, P.L. 115-31)

By virtue of the authority vested in me as the Secretary of State, including pursuant to section 7045(a)(4)(A) of the Department of State, Foreign Operations, and Related Programs Appropriations Act, 2017 (Div. J, P.L. 115-31), I hereby certify that the central government of El Salvador is taking effective steps, which are in addition to those steps taken since the certification and report submitted during the prior year, to:

- inform its citizens of the dangers of the journey to the southwest border of the United States;
- combat human smuggling and trafficking;
- improve border security, including to prevent illegal migration, human smuggling and trafficking, and trafficking of illicit drugs and other contraband; and
- cooperate with United States Government agencies and other governments in the region to facilitate the return, repatriation, and reintegration of illegal migrants arriving at the southwest border of the United States who do not qualify for asylum, consistent with international law.

This certification shall be published in the *Federal Register* and, along with the accompanying Memorandum of Justification, shall be reported to Congress.

AUG 22 2017
Date

Rex W. Tillerson
Secretary of State

#AquíTambiénSePuede (#YouCanMakeItHereAsWell). Their first story was published online March 8.

To combat human smuggling and trafficking:
El Salvador continues to actively combat human smuggling and trafficking, and cooperates with U.S. authorities. In March 2016, a Salvadoran judge authorized the country's first judicial wire intercept of a human smuggling network operating in El Salvador. This case (Operation Mesoamerica) was worked regionally in collaboration with police and prosecutors from Costa Rica, Guatemala, Honduras, Panama, and Mexico. Twenty-seven subjects across Central America and Mexico were arrested June 27, 2016, in a simultaneous enforcement operation effectively dismantling this particular human smuggling network.

The Attorney General's (AG's) Office, Human Smuggling and Human Trafficking Unit charged 69 individuals with human smuggling and trafficking in the first two quarters of 2017. Of the 18 cases tried in 2017, 22 individuals have been convicted.

Salvadoran police conducted a border enforcement operation near San Cristobal, El Salvador, September 29, 2016, that resulted in the recovery of an unaccompanied child (UAC) and the arrest of two Guatemalan nationals and one Salvadoran national for human smuggling. Also in September 2016, Salvadoran courts sentenced three Salvadorans to between three and six years of prison and restitution of up to $4,500 for human smuggling. Police arrested the Mayor of San Miguel Tepezontes and six associates for human smuggling October 31, 2016. The AG's Office accused the mayor of smuggling people to the United States after receiving a complaint from a victim. In June 2017, two Salvadoran nationals were convicted and sentenced to 12 years of prison on three counts of human smuggling; one of the subjects was a mayoral candidate for the city of Apopa.

The AG's Office raided 19 properties belonging to individuals linked to drug and human trafficking networks March 22. Authorities arrested two individuals and seized firearms, ammunition, cash, and seven vehicles. As a result of this operation, two other individuals who are currently serving time in prison and were linked to the (Mexican) Zetas cartel, were notified of new charges.

The Legislative Assembly approved March 29 a reform to the Penal Code to increase prison sentences for convicted traffickers to six to 10 years (from four to eight years). Penalties were increased further in cases of smuggling minors or persons with disabilities, or if victims died or suffered another crime. The first prosecution under the increased penalties was a woman arrested April 24 while she was smuggling a three-year old girl through the San Cristobal border in Santa Ana. A former Salvadoran legislator was arrested May 18 for illicit trafficking of persons.

The Department of State's 2017 Trafficking in Persons Report ranked El Salvador as a Tier 2 country, recognizing the increased efforts compared to previous years by convicting an official who engaged in commercial sex with a trafficking victim, investigating more trafficking cases, prosecuting child sex trafficking crimes, and promulgating regulations to further implement the 2014 anti-trafficking law intended to strengthen its interagency anti-trafficking council.

FM Martinez affirmed his government's commitment to reducing the outflow of migrants and receiving its nationals in an efficient and orderly manner, citing his instructions to issue travel documents to Salvadorans who ICE has shown have no legal impediment to deportation and who provide no evidence to the contrary. The foreign minister also agreed in September 2016 to initiate the bilateral Migration Working Group, consisting of members of the U.S. Embassy and Salvadoran migration officials to resolve outstanding cases. The group continues to meet monthly to address any problematic cases.

On July 11, 2016, the Salvadoran government agreed to invest $264,000 to provide tools, supplies, training and psychological and social attention to repatriated Salvadoran citizens. In September 2016, MFA Vice Minister Liduvina Magarin and General Directorate of Customs and Migration Director Hector Rodriguez agreed to facilitate the repatriation of migrants who refused to be interviewed for travel documents by permitting them to enter without travel documents. The individuals in these types of cases all had a final order of removal and no pending appeals impeding DHS from effecting their administrative removal. The first 22 such cases were returned on a DHS repatriation flight on October 7, 2016.

As of January 2017, DHS reported an increase in compliance by Salvadoran consulates issuing travel documents with 60 days of validity, which avoids the necessity of reissuance of many travel documents prior to their holders' return. The bilateral Migration Working Group continues to make progress by highlighting for the MFA cases which require their attention. The Salvadoran government has been a collaborative partner in the working group and has used the information from the working group to significantly reduce the number of long-pending cases, thereby allowing for quicker removals of Salvadoran citizens from the United States.

FM Martinez and Governance and Territorial Development Minister Ramon Aristides Valencia signed an agreement February 3 for the "Territorial Intervention for Returned People to El Salvador," which seeks to strengthen support to repatriated people through information booths located in the headquarters of the Foreign Ministry in San Salvador and the departmental governorates of San Miguel, Usulután, Santa Ana, and Chalatenango. The support also includes a small amount of seed funds (up to $1,500) for repatriated illegal migrants who acquired technical skills while in the United States so they can start a microenterprise to successfully reintegrate back into their communities.

United States Department of State

Washington, D.C. 20520

NOV 30 2017

The Honorable
Bob Corker, Chairman
Committee on Foreign Relations
United States Senate
Washington, DC 20510

Dear Mr. Chairman:

In accordance with section 7045(a)(4)(B) of the Department of State, Foreign Operations, and Related Programs Appropriations Act, 2017 (Div. J, P.L. 115-31), we are hereby transmitting the enclosed certification regarding the central government of Honduras and the accompanying Memorandum of Justification.

We hope this information is helpful to you, and please do not hesitate to contact us if we can be of further assistance.

Sincerely,

Charles S. Faulkner
Bureau of Legislative Affairs

Enclosure:
As stated.

MEMORANDUM OF JUSTIFICATION REGARDING CERTIFICATION UNDER SECTION 7045(a)(4)(B) OF THE DEPARTMENT OF STATE, FOREIGN OPERATIONS, AND RELATED PROGRAMS APPROPRIATIONS ACT, 2017 (DIV. J, P.L. 115-31)

Section 7045(a)(4)(B) of the Department of State, Foreign Operations, and Related Programs Appropriations Act, 2017 (Div. J, P.L. 115-31) (SFOAA) requires the Secretary to make certain certifications prior to the obligation of 50 percent of assistance made available pursuant to paragraph 7045(a)(2) of the SFOAA for the central Government of Honduras to implement the U.S. Strategy for Engagement in Central America, in support of the Plan of the Alliance for Prosperity (A4P) in the Northern Triangle of Central America (Plan). The certification is being submitted to the House of Representatives Committees on Appropriations and Foreign Affairs and Senate Committees on Appropriations and Foreign Relations. Consistent with the certification requirements in section 7045(a)(4)(B) of the SFOAA, the central government of Honduras is taking effective steps to:

Work cooperatively with an autonomous, publicly accountable entity to provide oversight of the Plan:

The A4P Consultative Council is comprised of the Honduran government and 20 organizations, including representatives of Honduran civil society, the business community, the Inter-American Development Bank, and U.S. Embassy Tegucigalpa. The Honduran government participates in meetings at the Cabinet level. The A4P Consultative Council held three meetings from October 2016 to September 2017. Asociación para una Sociedad más Justa, the local chapter of Transparency International, is drafting by-laws for the Consultative Council. At the August 20, 2017, meeting, the Honduran government described the commitments made at the June 2017 Conference on Prosperity and Security in Central America and summarized the progress it has made implementing the A4P.

Combat corruption, including investigating and prosecuting government officials credibly alleged to be corrupt:

A tribunal of judges found five former public officials guilty of money laundering and using shell companies to divert more than $12 million from the Honduran Social Security Institute (IHSS) June 19. The tribunal also found the former IHSS director guilty on charges of abuse of authority and fraud. The Honduran government obtained 14 convictions in the IHSS corruption scheme from January to June with the support of the OAS Support Mission Against Corruption and Impunity in Honduras (MACCIH). In June 2017, a judicial panel sentenced a former vice president of the now defunct Judicial Council to prison for influence peddling after he corrupted judges hearing criminal cases against two of his relatives who were on trial organized crime. In January, the Public Ministry established an anti-corruption unit with MACCIH's assistance. The 43-person unit is vetted by the U.S. government and includes 11 prosecutors, 14 investigative agents, 10 financial information specialists, four criminal information specialists, and four forensic computer experts. After extensive vetting, initial staff of the anti-corruption unit took oaths of office in September 2017. The Police Purge Commission, created to restructure the Honduran National Police (HNP) and purge corrupt officers, dismissed

Counter the activities of criminal gangs, drug traffickers, and organized crime:

On March 15, Jose Miguel (Chepe) Handal received a 10-year sentence for trafficking 1,670 kilos of cocaine, marking the first time Honduran authorities captured, prosecuted, and sentenced a major drug trafficker. Honduras continues to invest in its National Automated Case Management System (NACMIS), a criminal history and arrest warrant tracking system implemented at all border crossings, mobile checkpoints, and police posts. With NACMIS data, the HNP arrested 1,487 persons accused of violent crimes such as rape (338) and murder (789) from October 2016 to August 2017. From October 2016 to September 2017, Honduran law enforcement conducted seven large-scale operations against organized crime, which resulted in the arrest of nearly 500 suspects, the execution of hundreds of search warrants, and seizures of real estate, cars, and businesses related to ongoing investigations of corrupt public officials. In July 2017, the Office for the Administration of Seized and Forfeited Assets held its sixth auction of seized assets in 2017 and received more than $1 million. On September 11, the Honduran Attorney General's Office executed Operation Avalanche III in three Honduran departments. As part of the operation, Honduran law enforcement executed at least 63 search warrants and seized bank accounts, residences, real estate, and businesses belonging to alleged leaders of the Mara Salvatrucha (MS-13) gang. During this operation, law enforcement arrested 14 MS-13 gang members who are expected to face charges for crimes including money laundering and conspiracy. In addition, Honduran authorities have extradited numerous fugitives, including Honduran nationals to the United States since 2014, including a number of major drug traffickers. From October 2016 to September 2017, Honduras extradited three additional individuals to the United States.

Investigate and prosecute in the civilian justice system government personnel, including military and police personnel, who are credibly alleged to have violated human rights, and ensure that such personnel are cooperating in such cases:

In mid-September 2017, the Police Purge Commission submitted 144 cases to the Public Ministry for prosecutorial review, including 455 police officers implicated in 28 crimes. The Public Ministry reported it charged 73 members of the HNP, seven members of the regular military, and six Military Police for the Public Order (PMOP) soldiers with human rights violations between January and April 2017. As of April 2017, Honduran judges were reviewing 52 cases against police and military officials for human rights violations and issued eight convictions for human rights violations by members of the security forces. On June 13, a judge found probable cause to begin criminal proceedings against four suspects, including one active duty soldier, for the murder of renowned environmentalist Berta Caceres. Honduran authorities have arrested eight suspects in total and continue their investigation.

Cooperate with commissions against impunity and with regional human rights entities:

Since its creation in April 2016, MACCIH has had a number of successes in cooperation with the Honduran government, including the passage of major legislation and corruption convictions. Following the approval of legislation in July 2016 to create anti-corruption courts, the Honduran government worked with MACCIH personnel from June to December 2016 to recruit, evaluate,

committed while on duty, increase salaries, and strengthen human resource aspects of the HNP to foster an environment for greater overall police professionalization.

Protect the right of political opposition parties, journalists, trade unionists, human rights defenders, and other civil society activists to operate without interference:

Challenges in protecting human rights defenders remain, but Honduras continues to take effective steps. President Hernandez announced May 25 plans to create a Ministry of Human Rights by elevating the Vice Ministry of Human Rights to full ministry status. The government outlined the ministry's responsibilities in a decree published September 12. The Honduran government has also made progress implementing the Law for the Protection Mechanism for Human Rights Defenders, Journalists, Social Media, and Justice Operators. It allocated approximately $1 million for its implementation in 2017. A competent director of the mechanism was appointed in October 2016 and the mechanism now has 26 staff members. As of June 2017, of the 150 requests for protection, 103 were accepted and 47 did not meet the criteria required to receive protection under the mechanism. The approved requests for assistance included 77 human rights defenders, 14 journalists, nine justice sector workers, and three social communicators. Of these cases, 60 have been submitted for a detailed risk analysis by the Risk Analysis Unit. Of this total, 29 analyses have been completed and presented to the Technical Committee responsible for authorizing protective measures. The Committee met more than 70 times from January to June 2017. In August 2017, the HNP established a Dignitary Protection Unit charged with risk assessment and personal protection of human and environmental rights activists, among other individuals and entities. This unit will coordinate with the mechanism.

Increase government revenues, including by implementing tax reforms and strengthening customs agencies:

International credit rating agency Standard and Poor upgraded Honduras for the second year in a row, from B+ to BB- with a stable outlook, on July 18. Moody's Investor Service upgraded Honduras from B1 to B2 on September 22. Tax revenue collection continued to increase during the reporting period. Between January and August 2017, the Government of Honduras collected approximately $2.7 billion in taxes, almost 70 percent of its annual target of nearly $4 billion. The International Monetary Fund predicts 4 percent growth in GDP for Honduras in 2017. The Honduran Presidential Commission for Comprehensive Reform of the Customs and Commercial Operators System's preliminary figures for customs revenue from January to June 2017 was more than $86 million, an increase of 16.5 percent over the same period in 2016. On June 26, Honduran and Guatemalan officials launched a customs union to increase regional economic trade and development. The UN Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean estimates the new union may increase GDP growth in Honduras by 1.2 percent and could lift bilateral trade with Guatemala by 2.4 percent. On June 20, President Hernandez announced the creation of a new product registration agency. The product registration process has long been a barrier to trade with Honduras, as U.S. exporters faced delays introducing new products into the Honduran market.

United States Department of State

Washington, D.C. 20520

NOV 30 2017

The Honorable
Bob Corker, Chairman
Committee on Foreign Relations
United States Senate
Washington, DC 20510

Dear Mr. Chairman:

In accordance with section 7045(a)(4)(B) of the Department of State, Foreign Operations, and Related Programs Appropriations Act, 2017 (Div. J, P.L. 115-31), we are hereby transmitting the enclosed certification regarding the central government of El Salvador and the accompanying Memorandum of Justification.

We hope this information is helpful to you, and please do not hesitate to contact us if we can be of further assistance.

Sincerely,

Charles S. Faulkner
Bureau of Legislative Affairs

Enclosure:
As stated.

CERTIFICATION PURSUANT TO SECTION 7045(a)(4)(B) OF THE DEPARTMENT OF STATE, FOREIGN OPERATIONS, AND RELATED PROGRAMS APPROPRIATIONS ACT, 2017 (DIV. J, P.L. 115-31)

By virtue of the authority vested in me as the Secretary of State, including pursuant to section 7045(a)(4)(B) of the Department of State, Foreign Operations, and Related Programs Appropriations Act, 2017 (Div. J, P.L. 115-31), I hereby certify that the central government of El Salvador is taking effective steps, which are in addition to those steps taken since the certification and report submitted during the prior year, to:

- work cooperatively with an autonomous, publicly accountable entity to provide oversight of the Plan;
- combat corruption, including investigating and prosecuting current and former government officials credibly alleged to be corrupt;
- implement reforms, policies, and programs to improve transparency and strengthen public institutions, including increasing the capacity and independence of the judiciary and the Office of the Attorney General;
- implement a policy to ensure that local communities, civil society organizations (including indigenous and other marginalized groups), and local governments are consulted in the design, and participate in the implementation and evaluation of, activities of the Plan that affect such communities, organizations, and governments;
- counter the activities of criminal gangs, drug traffickers, and organized crime;
- investigate and prosecute in the civilian justice system government personnel, including military and police personnel, who are credibly alleged to have violated human rights, and ensure that such personnel are cooperating in such cases;
- cooperate with commissions against corruption and impunity and with regional human rights entities;
- support programs to reduce poverty, expand education and vocational training for at-risk youth, create jobs, and promote equitable economic growth particularly in areas contributing to large numbers of migrants;
- implement a plan that includes goals, benchmarks and timelines to create a professional, accountable civilian police force and end the role of the military in internal policing, and make such plan available to the Department of State;
- protect the right of political opposition parties, journalists, trade unionists, human rights defenders, and other civil society activists to operate without interference;
- increase government revenues, including by implementing tax reforms and strengthening customs agencies; and
- resolve commercial disputes, including the confiscation of real property, between United States entities and such government.

This certification shall be published in the *Federal Register* and, along with the accompanying Memorandum of Justification, shall be reported to Congress.

NOV 28 2017

Date

Rex W. Tillerson
Secretary of State

MEMORANDUM OF JUSTIFICATION REGARDING CERTIFICATION UNDER SECTION 7045(a)(4)(B) OF THE DEPARTMENT OF STATE, FOREIGN OPERATIONS, AND RELATED PROGRAMS APPROPRIATIONS ACT, 2017 (DIV. J, P.L. 115-31)

Section 7045(a)(4)(B) of the Department of State, Foreign Operations, and Related Programs Appropriations Act, 2017 (Div. J, P.L. 115-31) (FY 2017 SFOAA) requires the Secretary of State make certain certifications before 50 percent of the available assistance funds in the FY 2017 SFOAA are obligated for the central government of El Salvador to implement the U.S. Strategy for Engagement in Central America, in support of the Plan of the Alliance for Prosperity (A4P) in the Northern Triangle of Central America (Plan). The certification is being submitted to the House of Representatives Committees on Appropriations and Foreign Affairs and Senate Committees on Appropriations and Foreign Relations. Consistent with the certification requirements in section 7045(a)(4)(B) of the SFOAA, the central government of El Salvador is taking effective steps to:

Work cooperatively with an autonomous, publicly accountable entity to provide oversight of the Plan:
Between January and October, the five Alliance for Prosperity (A4P) Consultative Group subcommittees met 27 times to define a monitoring framework for A4P projects and to continue development of a regional migration observatory. On July 10, 2017, the A4P Consultative Group held its 11th meeting to discuss outcomes from the June 2017 Conference on Prosperity and Security in Central America and approved a plan for developing and reporting on A4P performance metrics and results by December 2017. In July 2017, the Salvadoran government formed an A4P communications working group, which has elaborated a basic communications strategy for the next six months and assigned responsibilities for each activity. On February 10, 2017, the A4P Consultative Group hosted 300 attendees at its first civil society forum.

Combat corruption, including investigating and prosecuting current and former government officials credibly alleged to be corrupt:
The Salvadoran government has taken significant steps to fight corruption. On October 30, 2016, police arrested former-President Antonio Saca (2004-2009) and six of his former staff on criminal corruption charges for embezzlement of millions of dollars in government funds. On May 25, 2017, the Supreme Court ordered the investigation of 43 officials from ex-President Mauricio Funes' cabinet. On December 5, 2016, the Legislative Assembly removed former Minister of Defense General Atilio Benitez' immunity from prosecution for an alleged arms-trafficking scheme, marking the first time the Assembly has removed immunity from an official since 2006. Also on December 5, 2016, a civil court found former head of El Salvador's Social Security agency Leonel Flores liable for illicit enrichment, marking the first time a public official has been sued under the Illicit Enrichment law since it was passed in 1959. The Legislative Assembly amended the Asset Forfeiture Law, which weakened the ability of the Attorney General to pursue those cases, but the Supreme Court ruled the law could not be amended at this time - a final decision is pending.

Implement reforms, policies, and programs to improve transparency and strengthen public institutions, including increasing the capacity and independence of the judiciary and the Office of the Attorney General:
In June 2017, the Legislative Assembly approved a $7 million increase to the Attorney General's budget and on September 26, 2017, it allocated an additional $800,000 from the special security tax to the Attorney General's office for the July - September 2017 period. On September 29, 2017, the government included $76.2 million for the Attorney General in its proposed 2018 budget, which if approved by the Legislative Assembly would be an increase of $6.8 million over fiscal year 2017. The Supreme Court strengthened the Probity Unit, hiring nine staff members between January and October 2017, increasing investigations of public officials for illicit enrichment from 72 in 2016 to 517 as of August 2017, and referring 15 cases to the Attorney General for prosecution. The Institute of Access to Public Information (IAIP) announced in March 2017 it will review the extent to which 42 municipalities have complied with the access to public information law, and has begun training municipalities to better understand that law. In February 2017, the Attorney General's Office and National Civilian Police (PNC) signed Protocols for Coordination on Investigations, laying the foundation for efficient collaboration during investigative processes. On January 25, 2017, the Supreme Audit Authority announced it would begin to audit NGOs that receive public funds. A web-based application for citizens to report corruption was launched January 30, 2017.

Implement a policy to ensure that local communities, civil society organizations (including indigenous and other marginalized groups), and local governments are consulted in the design, and participate in the implementation and evaluation of, activities of the Plan that affect such communities, organizations, and governments:
Since July 2017, the Salvadoran government has promoted the addition and active participation of new government and civil society members on the A4P subcommittees. In February 2017, the first human rights organization (MODES), an association of 60 local development organizations, was allowed to join the consultative group and has provided a strong civil society voice in these meetings. The National Security Council for Citizen Security (CNSCC), led by the Ministry of Governance, continues to travel to Plan El Salvador Seguro municipalities to meet with local community and civil society organizations, business leaders, municipal officials, and the media to publicize metrics and discuss implementation of the plan and ongoing needs. Council members concluded its visits to the first of the 10 priority Plan El Salvador Seguro municipalities, with a May 12 visit to San Salvador's municipal crime prevention committee.

Counter the activities of criminal gangs, drug traffickers, and organized crime:
On September 29, 2017, the Attorneys General of El Salvador, Guatemala, and Honduras, and the acting U.S. Assistant Attorney General, announced criminal charges against 3,800 gang members in the United States, Guatemala, El Salvador, and Honduras. Over 2,300 of those charged under Operation "Regional Shield" were MS-13 members in El Salvador and on September 12, 2017, the Salvadoran Attorney General reported that the operation dismantled six MS-13 cliques and two Barrio 18 cliques. On September 8, 2017, Salvadoran authorities launched "Operation Tecana," the second major asset forfeiture operation against the MS-13 gang, resulting in the arrest of 137 people, including six police officers, and seizures of 50 properties, 41 businesses, and nine homes. Homicides in El Salvador fell 20.7 percent in 2016, from 6,656 in 2015 to 5,278 in 2016, bringing El Salvador's homicide rate from almost 105 per

100,000 people to 81.7 per 100,000 people. As of October 12, 2017, the 2017 homicide rate stands at 3,004. If current trends continue, the 2017 homicide rate would be approximately 25 percent lower than the rate in 2016. In 2016, El Salvador seized approximately nine metric tons of cocaine – over one metric ton greater than the amount seized in 2015. On July 17, 2017, PNC Director Howard Cotto announced the first test of an online database, headquartered in El Salvador that, beginning in December 2017, will share information between Northern Triangle governments on criminal structures. Salvadoran law enforcement passed background information on two homicide suspects to the Houston Police department in early March 2017 and dismantled a drug-trafficking cell based on information received from Colombia and Guatemala on February 7, 2017. On February 9, 2017, the Legislative Assembly of El Salvador approved an extension to the extraordinary security measures that provide increased government control of prisons until April 30, 2018. On January 3, 2017, the AG named Fiscal Alvaro Rodriguez as National Anti-Extortion Coordinator.

Investigate and prosecute in the civilian justice system government personnel, including military and police personnel, who are credibly alleged to have violated human rights, and ensure that such personnel are cooperating in such cases:
Currently, 11 police officers and 16 soldiers are under active investigation by the AG's office for possible extrajudicial killings. Salvadoran prosecutors arrested four police officers, ten soldiers, and ten civilians June 20 and 21, 2017, who are alleged to belong to a criminal extermination group that was responsible for 35 homicides and 13 robberies. On July 31, 2017, Salvadoran police arrested five members of an extermination group on aggravated homicide charges against five victims. On October 13, 2017, a Salvadoran Court convicted three police officers to nine years of imprisonment after finding them guilty of inhumane and degrading treatment of a suspect. On August 22, 2017, the online magazine *Factum* published an investigative report accusing four police officers of three extrajudicial killings, two sexual assaults, and extortion. Those officers are under internal police investigation and have been confined to their base. On September 5, 2017, PNC Director Cotto announced that the police will distribute 500 U.S. Embassy-provided GoPro body cameras to police units, and that officers who failed to use the cameras, once issued, would face discipline. On August 7, 2017, Cotto issued his strongest statement yet on extrajudicial killings, saying publicly that the state cannot tolerate the killing of gang members. The PNC released its first comprehensive Use of Force Protocol on October 13, 2016, an important step toward preventing human rights abuses by police, developed in consultation with civil society. However, on September 22, 2017, five police officers were acquitted of extrajudicial killing in the San Blas case. The judge ruled prosecutors did not prove which individual officer was guilty of the murder.

Cooperate with commissions against corruption and impunity and with regional human rights entities:
On September 27, 2017, the government launched the National Commission on the Search of Disappeared Persons in the context of the Armed Conflict (CONABúsqueda), created through Executive Decree on August 21, 2017. CONABúsqueda will be responsible for locating adult victims of forced disappearance during the 1980-92 civil war, investigating what happened to the disappeared, and if possible, returning remains to families. In the aftermath of the July 2016 Supreme Court decision striking down parts of the Amnesty Law, Salvadoran courts have re-opened emblematic human rights cases from the civil war, including the 1980 killing of

Catholic Archbishop Oscar Arnulfo Romero, the El Mozote massacre, and other civil war-era cases of torture, forced disappearance, and murder. On January 31, 2017, President Salvador Sánchez Ceren swore in the Committee for the Integral Social Development of El Salvador, tasked with enforcing the 2012 Inter-American Human Rights Court ruling that the state must compensate victims of the El Mozote massacre. Through October 2017, the government has paid $1.8 million in restitution to survivors and family members of victims of the massacre.

Support programs to reduce poverty, expand education and vocational training for at-risk youth, create jobs, and promote equitable economic growth particularly in areas contributing to large numbers of migrants:
The Salvadoran government announced on February 23, 2017, that 24.7 percent of government services in 2016 ($90 million) were purchased from micro and small enterprises (SMEs), an increase from 20.2 percent in 2015. In July 2017, the Salvadoran government announced it had provided over $1 million in co-financing for 63 manufacturing SMEs in government-prioritized sectors such as food and beverage, textile and garment, and plastics and metalworking. The Ministry of Economy launched a project on July 17, 2017, to boost the information and communications technology sector via $3 million in co-financing. To date, this co-financing has supported 34 projects in animation, video games, and audiovisual design, generating more than 1,080 direct and indirect jobs. The Legislative Assembly approved amendments in February 2017 to a law to provide tax incentives to companies that create jobs for unemployed people between the ages of 18 and 29 with no prior work experience. In December 2016, El Salvador's tripartite National Minimum Wage Council, made up of government, employers, and workers, approved increases to minimum wages, between 19 and 105 percent, effective January 1, 2017.

Implement a plan that includes goals, benchmarks, and timelines to create a professional, accountable civilian police force and end the role of the military in internal policing, and make such plan available to the Department of State:
On September 27, 2017, Minister of Justice and Public Security Landaverde approved an updated plan to reduce the military's role in policing in tandem with reductions in the homicide rate over the next four years. On October 9, 2017, Minister Landaverde, Minister of Defense David Munguía Payes, and Foreign Minister Hugo Martinez affirmed in a document sent to the Ambassador their commitment to a joint strategy to allow the PNC to fully assume responsibility for domestic security, and committed to reducing the number of military members engaged in school security by 10 percent in 2018. In May 2017, the PNC's Specialized Reaction Force began transferring personnel from a Salvadoran military base to an off-site civilian police facility and received advanced training from July to November 2017 from the Colombian National Police in order to perform functions currently conducted by the military. In July 2017, the Grupo Conjunto Cuscatlan (GCC) began moving personnel and equipment out of Salvadoran Armed Forces facilities into a civilian headquarters, accelerating its transition from a joint police-military maritime interdiction unit to a civilian police unit. On March 9, 2017, the National Police Academy signed a Memorandum of Understanding with USAID and John Jay College of Criminal Justice to establish an Academy for Security Analysis to professionalize police and justice sector officials and strengthen engagement with civil society organizations. The police launched a communication plan in October 2016 to increase public confidence in the police.

Protect the right of political opposition parties, journalists, trade unionists, human rights defenders, and other civil society activists to operate without interference:
Media outlets, press associations, and senior authorities, including the Minister of Justice and Public Security and the Attorney General, agreed to create an early warning system to prevent aggression against media workers. On December 20, 2016, the Human Rights Ombudsperson condemned aggression against journalists and announced it would develop a protection manual for investigative journalists. The Attorney General also publicly defended the role of the press. In March 2017, the PNC assigned its High Visibility Crimes Unit to investigate the homicides of three transgender women and the Secretary for Social Inclusion met with LGBTI activists to hear their concerns about LGBTI hate crimes. The Ombudsperson met with the Salvadoran Association of Municipal Workers on September 27, 2016, to discuss the high-profile 2014 murder of teamster Gilberto Soto. The Ombudsperson's Office continues to engage bi-monthly with civil society in the Freedom of Expression Working Group, which has promoted initiatives to ensure the free flow of information. Two journalists claimed to have received threats following the release of an August 22, 2017 *Factum* magazine report on alleged extrajudicial killings by a police unit. In response to the threats, the Ombudsperson issued a protective order on August 25, 2017, and the Attorney General and police offered security assistance.

Increase government revenues, including by implementing tax reforms and strengthening customs agencies:
Customs Director Armando Flores announced on August 22, 2017, new measures to streamline processes at border points. These actions follow a high-level July 25-27, 2017, meeting of Salvadoran, Honduran, and Guatemalan officials, to initiate the process for El Salvador's incorporation into the Customs Union. On October 18, 2017, the Salvadoran government said the process would conclude in February 2018. The Presidents of El Salvador, Guatemala, and Honduras met October 20, 2017, to discuss improving trade facilitation and border management among the Northern Triangle countries, as well as El Salvador's plans to join the Honduran-Guatemalan Customs Union. In May 2017, El Salvador and Guatemala initiated a pilot program to co-locate their customs officers at the Las Chinamas border crossing, and on June 8, 2017, both countries formalized this arrangement permanently. As of August 2017, the Ministry of Finance reported having collected $32 million from the special security tax in 2017. Estimated net tax revenues were 15.9 percent of GDP for 2016, nearly reaching the target rate of 16 percent established under the Partnership for Growth initiative, which ended in November 2016.

Resolve commercial disputes, including the confiscation of real property, between United States entities and such government:
In March 2017, the Legislative Assembly passed legislation that included a legal mechanism to provide PriceSmart with a tax refund or credit for automatically withheld Value Added Taxes (VAT) on credit and debit card transactions. In June 2017, PriceSmart received a credit note from the Government of El Salvador for $4.4 million and applied it towards the VAT owed on imported goods. As of September 30, 2017, the Salvadoran government was almost $29 million in arrears for unpaid subsidies owed to U.S. power company AES; however, on September 27, 2017, the government announced that a pending government bond issuance would include money to compensate distribution companies for the subsidy debt. AES is also owed over $7 million for electricity provided to the national water company. In October, the

Salvadoran government confirmed it would drop $13 million of a $17 million judgment against Hanes for unpaid taxes, but is still pursuing $4.1 million in fines. Hanes is planning to appeal the decision, as it asserts the company is following accounting procedures permitted under U.S. Central American and Dominican Republic Free Trade Agreement.

United States Department of State

Washington, D.C. 20520

JUN 29 2018

The Honorable
Bob Corker, Chairman
Committee on Foreign Relations
United States Senate
Washington, DC 20510

Dear Mr. Chairman:

In accordance with section 7045(a)(4)(B) of the Department of State, Foreign Operations, and Related Programs Appropriations Act, 2017 (Div. J, P.L. 115-31), we are hereby transmitting the enclosed certification regarding the central government of Guatemala and the accompanying Memorandum of Justification.

We hope this information is helpful to you, and please do not hesitate to contact us if we can be of further assistance.

Sincerely,

Mary K. Waters
Assistant Secretary
Legislative Affairs

Enclosure:
As stated.

MEMORANDUM OF JUSTIFICATION REGARDING CERTIFICATION UNDER SECTION 7045(a)(4)(B) OF THE DEPARTMENT OF STATE, FOREIGN OPERATIONS, AND RELATED PROGRAMS APPROPRIATIONS ACT, 2017 (DIV. J, P.L. 115-31)

Section 7045(a)(4)(B) of the Department of State, Foreign Operations, and Related Programs Appropriations Act 2017 (Div. J, P.L. 115-31) (SFOAA) requires the Secretary to make certain certifications prior to the obligation of 50 percent of assistance made available pursuant to section 7045(a)(2) of the SFOAA for the central Government of Guatemala to implement the U.S. Strategy for Engagement in Central America, which complements the Plan of the Alliance for Prosperity (A4P) in the Northern Triangle of Central America (Plan). The certification is being submitted to the House of Representatives Committees on Appropriations and Foreign Affairs and Senate Committees on Appropriations and Foreign Relations. Consistent with the certification requirements in section 7045(a)(4)(B) of the SFOAA, the central Government of Guatemala is taking effective steps to:

Work cooperatively with an autonomous, publicly accountable entity to provide oversight of the Plan:
On November 15, 2017, President Morales chaired the first meeting of an A4P cabinet-level council responsible for coordinating government efforts to reduce irregular migration and strengthen economic development in areas with high rates of out-migration. Morales directed the new council to set up regularly scheduled meetings every four months to provide cabinet-level oversight of the A4P plan. Established May 29, 2017, the cabinet has a mandate of four years, is chaired by President Morales, and is composed of the nine ministers responsible for the A4P plan implementation. The minister of finance and the head of Guatemala's National Competitiveness Program (PRONACOM) co-chaired three consultative group (CG) meetings in 2017. This group includes a broad set of public and private actors and civil society organizations that participate in four CG sub-committees corresponding to each A4P pillar.

Combat corruption, including investigating and prosecuting current and former government officials credibly alleged to be corrupt:
Under former Attorney General Thelma Aldana's leadership, the public ministry (PM), in collaboration with the International Commission Against Impunity in Guatemala (CICIG), aggressively pursued current and former government officials and private sector actors credibly alleged to be corrupt. The PM arrested former president Alvaro Colom and nine ministers from his administration (2008-2012) on corruption charges on February 13. The PM and CICIG also pursued related charges against senior officials in several major political parties and against Guatemala's private sector elite. The PM's Anti-Money Laundering Office and Asset Seizure unit initiated 17 raids on April 7, 2017, in a case involving money laundering and corruption by a former minister of mines and energy. On February 2, 2017, at the request of the then-Attorney General and CICIG, the Guatemalan congress revoked the immunity of Supreme Court Justice Blanca Stalling. Stalling was arrested on February 8, 2017, on influence peddling charges.

investment climate. The PM inaugurated a secretariat for indigenous peoples on May 24, 2017, to establish specialized services, institutionalize policies, and increase access to justice for indigenous populations. Guatemala's General Order #20-2014 continues to require the PNC to collaborate with local citizen participation organizations to prevent crime and violence and implement community policing projects, which includes consultations with the local communities and indigenous areas. This collaboration has led to positive results, including 37 PNC-led citizen outreach events since October 2016, garnering 1,600 participants, 43 percent of whom were women.

Counter the activities of criminal gangs, drug traffickers, and organized crime:
The counter-narcotics police reported total cocaine seizures at 12,499 kilograms through the first nine months of 2017, compared to 10,246 in the same period of 2016. On September 29, 2017, the attorneys general of Guatemala, El Salvador, and Honduras and the acting U.S. assistant attorney general announced criminal charges against 3,800 gang members in the United States, Guatemala, El Salvador, and Honduras. Guatemala's anti-extortion prosecutor's office carried out more than 826 arrests between 2016 and 2017, including 39 anti-extortion investigations, resulting in 12 extortion cases against criminal structures of the MS-13 gang, 27 cases against criminal structures of Barrio 18, and the arrest of 20 high-ranking MS-13 gang members. Guatemala's murder rate was 27.3 per 100,000 in 2016, compared to 26 in 2017. The homicide rate has dropped nearly 50 percent since its 2009 peak of 46.4 per 100,000. Guatemala's overall violent crime rate has decreased by 16 percent since 2014. The PNC has conducted more than 30 enforcement operations in search of gang members believed to be responsible for extortion against public transport, commercial business, and private residences since August 2016. The number of final verdicts in extortion cases went from 26 in 2015 to 180 in 2017. The number of people found guilty of extortion jumped from 41 to 293 during the same period, and the number of search warrants issued related to extortion cases increased from 122 to 1,038. The PM inaugurated new anti-extortion prosecutor's offices in May 2017 in Huehuetenango, San Marcos, and Quetzaltenango, which were instrumental in executing a large-scale anti-extortion operation on June 11 in six Guatemalan departments. The operation yielded 69 arrests, confiscated $136,000 and five kilograms of cocaine, and helped dismantle components of two criminal structures of the Eighteenth Street gang. Four Syrian nationals with fraudulent passports were sentenced to four years in prison on April 28, 2017, after being arrested as part of an investigation by the Guatemala Transnational Criminal Investigative Unit (TCIU).

Investigate and prosecute in the civilian justice system government personnel, including military and police personnel, who are credibly alleged to have violated human rights and ensure that such personnel are cooperating in such cases:
On November 7, 2017, the Supreme Court lifted the immunity of Congressman Julio Antonio Juarez Ramirez, facilitating his prosecution on charges he ordered the killing of journalist Danilo Lopez. Trials re-opened October 13, 2017, against the late former head of state Efrain Rios Montt and his intelligence chief, Jose Mauricio Rodriguez Sanchez, in the case of genocide against the Maya Ixil community. Guilber Josue Barrios, a soldier who allegedly drugged and raped a 14-year-old at a defense ministry civil-military institute, was captured in Mexico in September 2017, extradited to Guatemala, and indicted on October 9, 2017, in civilian court. The Supreme Court ruled to remove the immunity of congressman and former military officer Edgar Ovalle in March 2017 to facilitate his prosecution on charges of involvement in

Implement a plan that includes goals, benchmarks, and timelines to create a professional, accountable civilian police force and end the role of the military in internal policing and make such a plan available to the Department of State:
President Morales abided by his commitment to remove the military from civilian policing roles. Four thousand new police cadets graduated from the police academy in December 2017, and the remaining military personnel engaged in civilian policing were removed on March 31. Since December 8, 2016, a ministry of government-supported training academy has trained nearly 150 cadets on Guatemala's new correctional model. More than 390 PNC officers received training in 2017 from the Miami Dade Police Department. In March 2017, as part of the police professionalization process, the PNC implemented its first employee evaluation program to review the performance of all 40,000 police personnel on an annual basis.

Protect the right of political opposition parties, journalists, trade unionists, human rights defenders, and other civil society activists to operate without interference:
In January 2017, the Guatemalan government announced a protocol to improve security for union leaders and members. The COPREDEH is working with government ministries and civil society to draft a national policy for a human rights defenders' (HRD) protection mechanism, which includes the protection of journalists and unionists. The PM is finalizing a protocol to facilitate the prosecution of crimes committed against human rights defenders. On November 7, 2017, Guatemala's Supreme Court lifted Congressman Julio Juarez Ramirez's immunity, following a January 26, 2017, request by the PM and CICIG. The congressman is alleged to have masterminded the murder of journalists Danilo Efrain Zapon Lopez and Federico Benjamin Salazar Geronimo on March 10, 2015, in Mazatenango, Suchitepequez. Sergio Waldemar Cardona Reyes and German Morataya were sentenced to 30 and two years in prison, respectively, on October 12, 2017, for their involvement in the murder.

Increase government revenues, including by implementing tax reforms and strengthening customs agencies:
Under the leadership of then-Tax Superintendent Solorzano Foppa, the Guatemalan Tax Authority (SAT) collected $5.7 billion in total tax revenue between January and September 2017, a 4.9 percent increase over the same period in 2016. SAT also collected about $278 million in back taxes and fines in 2016 under Foppa's leadership. SAT signed five intergovernmental conventions since 2016 to increase cooperation and transparency, change ministry internal processes, and combat corruption. SAT implemented electronic online invoicing for all taxpayers, established an electronic transfer process for vehicles, and updated official forms to enhance clarity and transparency. The ministry of public finance and SAT signed an MOU with USAID on February 2, 2018, committing to increase tax collection, reduce corruption, and improve efficiency in government procurement processes. The Guatemalan government penal court specializing in tax issues was inaugurated in March 2017 to review SAT requests to access bank records for auditing purposes. On May 23, 2017, the Guatemalan government ratified the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development Multilateral Convention on Mutual Administrative Assistance in Tax Matters, the most comprehensive multilateral instrument to tackle tax evasion and avoidance. On June 29, 2017, Guatemalan and Honduran officials launched a customs union to increase regional economic trade and development.

United States Department of State

Washington, D.C. 20520

SEP 4 - 2018

The Honorable
Robert Corker, Chairman
Committee on Foreign Relations
United States Senate
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Mr. Chairman:

Consistent with section 7045(a)(3)(A) of the Department of State, Foreign Operations, and Related Programs Appropriations Act, 2018 (Div. K, P.L. 115-141), we are hereby transmitting the enclosed certification regarding the central governments of El Salvador, Guatemala, and Honduras and the accompanying Memoranda of Justification.

We hope this information will be helpful. Please let us know if we can be of further assistance.

Sincerely,

Charles S. Faulkner
Acting Assistant Secretary
Legislative Affairs

Enclosure:
As stated.

MEMORANDUM OF JUSTIFICATION REGARDING CERTIFICATION UNDER SECTION 7045(a)(3)(A) OF THE DEPARTMENT OF STATE, FOREIGN OPERATIONS, AND RELATED PROGRAMS APPROPRIATIONS ACT, 2018 (DIV. K, P.L. 115-141)

Section 7045(a)(3)(A) of the Department of State, Foreign Operations, and Related Programs Appropriations Act, 2018 (Div. K, P.L. 115-141) (FY 2018 SFOAA) requires that 25 percent of the funds made available in the FY 2018 SFOAA for assistance for the central government of El Salvador to implement the U.S. Strategy for Central America (Strategy) be withheld from obligation until the Secretary certifies and reports to Congress that such government is: (1) informing its citizens of the dangers of the journey to the southwest border of the United States; (2) combating human smuggling and trafficking; (3) improving border security, including preventing illegal migration, human smuggling and trafficking, and trafficking of illicit drugs and other contraband; and (4) cooperating with United States Government agencies and other governments in the region to facilitate the return, repatriation, and reintegration of illegal migrants arriving at the southwest border of the United States who do not qualify for asylum, consistent with international law.

Informing its citizens of the dangers of the journey to the southwest border of the United States:
The central government of El Salvador continues to implement public awareness campaigns, and high-ranking officials, including then-FM Hugo Martinez, made numerous public statements in 2017 and 2018 on the dangers of illegal migration and of the legal ramification of entering the United States through illegal means. Most recently, El Salvador's Vice Minister for the Assistance and Protection of Salvadorans abroad Liduvina Margarin urged Salvadorans not to migrate illegally in June 21, 2018 remarks to the media and Salvadoran legislators. The Salvadoran government continues to support U.S. messaging campaigns on the dangers of the journey through statements in print media, television, and radio.

Combatting human smuggling and trafficking:
El Salvador continues to actively combat human smuggling and trafficking and cooperates with U.S. authorities. El Salvador's Attorney General's Office Human Smuggling and Human Trafficking Unit charged 73 individuals with human smuggling and trafficking in 2017 and the first two quarters of 2018. In the 43 cases tried in 2018, 28 individuals were convicted, with a court in one case sentencing a defendant to 18 years in prison, the highest penalty yet.

On March 13, Salvadoran authorities dismantled a smuggling network operating through the Anguiatu border crossing with Guatemala, which had been under investigation for one year. The National Civilian Police (PNC) arrested 17 people involved in smuggling contraband and people. It filed bribery charges against two PNC officials, an officer and a sergeant, arrested alongside the smugglers, and a former mayor previously implicated in human trafficking. Authorities seized 37 properties associated with the detainees along the border, including a house belonging to the leader of the smuggling ring, and $100,000 in cash.

On June 18, Secretary of State Michael Pompeo and Advisor to the President Ivanka Trump awarded Yanira Violeta Olivares Pineda, head of the national Specialized Trafficking in Persons

Patrol and Salvadoran officials, *inter alios*, now working together at GCIF's headquarters in San Salvador, have identified 1,997 subjects with criminal histories in El Salvador, 181 of whom have active arrest warrants in El Salvador. They also identified 557 gang members not previously known to U.S. law enforcement, 58 Salvadoran human smugglers/facilitators, and six drug traffickers. Over the past year, the GCIF flagged 52 INTERPOL Red Notices and provided the information necessary to support 44 international arrest operations of wanted criminals.

The Salvadoran Navy captured approximately 6,531 kg of cocaine in 2017. This includes the seizure of a semisubmersible ship on October 27, 2017, carrying 1,881 kg of cocaine appraised at $42 million (the highest in history of this unit). On January 26, the Salvadoran Navy intercepted a vessel, seizing 700 kg of cocaine valued at $17.5 million, followed by another seizure of 974 kg on April 30.

Salvadoran government officials, legislators, and law enforcement agencies have coordinated a wide range of efforts to thwart human smuggling. At the urging of the Embassy and with the support of the DHS Homeland Security Investigations' (HSI) Transnational Criminal Investigative Unit (TCIU), El Salvador's Legislative Assembly passed criminal code reform increasing penalties for human smuggling by raising the maximum penalty from eight to 10 years incarceration and codified into law several aggravating factors, including trafficking, that carry additional penalties. HSI is currently collaborating with local authorities on investigating a human smuggling network operating in San Miguel, El Salvador. The HSI TCIU has identified approximately 30 conspirators in El Salvador (including a local mayor), 15 conspirators in Mexico, and five conspirators in Guatemala facilitating the illegal movement of individuals through the region. On June 1, the HSI TCIU submitted an affidavit to request authorization to intercept the phone lines of seven key suspects. The HSI TCIU is collaborating with its counterparts in Mexico and Guatemala in furtherance of this investigation.

Cooperating with United States Government agencies and other governments in the region to facilitate the return, repatriation, and reintegration of illegal migrants arriving at the southwest border of the United States who do not qualify for asylum, consistent with international law:

El Salvador has agreed to accept up to eight U.S. repatriation flights per week. In FY 2017, the United States repatriated 18,838 Salvadorans to El Salvador. To date, in FY 2018, the United States has repatriated 11,791 Salvadorans, of which 5,187 had criminal records (not limited to gang activity). As of June 15, 2017, returning migrants on U.S. repatriation flights are transferred to the renovated reception center, La Chacra, which receives and processes returning Salvadorian nationals from both Mexico (by land) and now ICE's charter removal flights from the United States.

The Government of El Salvador cooperates closely with U.S. removal authorities (DHS/ICE) on receiving repatriated migrants, including those with significant felony convictions. El Salvador is the only Northern Triangle country whose illegal migrant apprehension rate at the U.S. Southwest Border (SWB) has dropped this year, falling 49 percent over the same period in 2017 as of July 2018. The number of apprehensions of Salvadoran unaccompanied children has decreased by a third over the same period. After they cleared a backlog of deportees waiting for travel documents in 2016, the Salvadoran government has continued to cooperate fully in 2017

CERTIFICATION PURSUANT TO SECTION 7045(a)(3)(A) OF THE DEPARTMENT OF STATE, FOREIGN OPERATIONS, AND RELATED PROGRAMS APPROPRIATIONS ACT, 2018 (DIV. K, P.L. 115-141)

By virtue of the authority vested in me as the Secretary of State, including pursuant to section 7045(a)(3)(A) of the Department of State, Foreign Operations, and Related Programs Appropriations Act, 2018 (Div. K, P.L. 115-141) (SFOAA), I hereby certify that the central government of Guatemala is:

- informing its citizens of the dangers of the journey to the southwest border of the United States;
- combating human smuggling and trafficking;
- improving border security, including preventing illegal migration, human smuggling and trafficking, and trafficking of illicit drugs and other contraband; and
- cooperating with United States Government agencies and other governments in the region to facilitate the return, repatriation, and reintegration of illegal migrants arriving at the southwest border of the United States who do not qualify for asylum, consistent with international law.

This certification shall be published in the *Federal Register* and, along with the accompanying Memorandum of Justification, shall be reported to Congress.

AUG 11 2018

Date

Michael R. Pompeo
Secretary of State

child labor victims and led to the arrest of nine alleged traffickers. The public ministry published a new victim assistance protocol and victims' bill of rights in 2017 with the goal of improving investigation and prosecution while maintaining victim services.

Guatemala remained on the Tier 2 Watch List in the Department's 2018 Trafficking in Persons (TIP) Report for the second consecutive year. The Tier 2 Watch List designation denotes there is more to be done in Guatemala to fully meet the Trafficking Victims Protection Act minimum standards but acknowledges Guatemala is making significant efforts to bring itself into compliance with those standards.

Improving border security, including preventing illegal migration, human smuggling and trafficking, and trafficking of illicit drugs and other contraband:
Vice President Pence met with the presidents of Guatemala, El Salvador, and Honduras on June 28 and reiterated the need for Northern Triangle governments to do more to prevent illegal immigration to the United States. Following this meeting, President Morales hosted a working conference on migration and security July 10 in Guatemala. Guatemala committed to increasing support for public awareness campaigns and to stopping advertisements from known human smugglers. The United States and Mexico will co-host the second Conference on Prosperity and Security in Central America on September 12-13.

The Tri-National Gang Task Force coordinates efforts to combat gang migration, human smuggling, and trafficking of drugs, weapons, and illicit goods. The joint task force is responsible for patrolling a 600-kilometer stretch of the shared border between Guatemala, El Salvador, and Honduras and focuses on pursuing and denying freedom of movement to gang members and other transnational criminal groups in the Northern Triangle. Guatemala's Ministries of Defense and Government continue to maintain four interagency task forces (IATF), which work under the authority of the Vice Minister of Government for Counternarcotics to improve border controls with El Salvador, Honduras, Mexico, and Belize. Guatemala's defense and government ministries continue to support integrated intelligence cells in IATF Tecun Uman and IATF Zacapa to advance intelligence-driven operations.

The Department of State provides funding to the Guatemalan National Civil Police's Division of Ports, Airports, and Frontier (DIPAFRONT), which continues to make progress on integrating border security operations between Guatemala and El Salvador. DIPAFRONT has also demonstrated increased inter-agency cooperation with Guatemalan customs officials, leading to increased arrests and seizures. Improved interagency cooperation and information sharing is vital to Guatemala's citizen security and helps maintain updated records and access to queries of subjects being repatriated through Mexico. In August 2017, DIPAFRONT, a reliable U.S. government partner, collaborated with the Department of Homeland Security to support the DEA-led Operation Fronteras Seguras in Chiquimula. As part of this operation, DIPAFRONT set up checkpoints at strategic locations along the highway from Honduras and El Salvador, interviewed 385 persons, inspected 288 vehicles, and found 52 weapons. Operation Fronteras Seguras resulted in the arrest of two persons pursuant to outstanding warrants and remanded seven Hondurans to immigration. DIPAFRONT has also committed to increasing its force from approximately 350 to 2,500 trained border patrol officials in the next five years and started to hold additional training courses to meet this goal. In July 2018, DIPAFRONT officers traveled

CERTIFICATION PURSUANT TO SECTION 7045(a)(3)(A) OF THE DEPARTMENT OF STATE, FOREIGN OPERATIONS, AND RELATED PROGRAMS APPROPRIATIONS ACT, 2018 (DIV. K, P.L. 115-141)

By virtue of the authority vested in me as the Secretary of State, including pursuant to section 7045(a)(3)(A) of the Department of State, Foreign Operations, and Related Programs Appropriations Act, 2018 (Div. K, P.L. 115-141) (SFOAA), I hereby certify that the central government of Honduras is:

- informing its citizens of the dangers of the journey to the southwest border of the United States;
- combating human smuggling and trafficking;
- improving border security, including preventing illegal migration, human smuggling and trafficking, and trafficking of illicit drugs and other contraband; and
- cooperating with United States Government agencies and other governments in the region to facilitate the return, repatriation, and reintegration of illegal migrants arriving at the southwest border of the United States who do not qualify for asylum, consistent with international law.

This certification shall be published in the *Federal Register* and, along with the accompanying Memorandum of Justification, shall be reported to Congress.

AUG 11 2018

Date

Michael R. Pompeo
Secretary of State

Exploitation, and Human Smuggling Unit, become operational in May 2018 and has four full-time prosecutors.

The Honduran National Police (HNP) worked with the Department of Homeland Security (DHS) in 2009 to establish the Transnational Criminal Investigative Unit (TCIU), which Homeland Security Investigations (DHS/HSI) advises, mentors, and trains with funding from the Department of State. In 2017, a second TCIU was established in San Pedro Sula to better address the volume of human smuggling cases in the northern sector of Honduras, and through senior-level engagements with the Honduran National Migration Institution (INM), two immigration officers joined the TCIU. The DHS/HSI-supported TCIU is the lead investigative agency in human smuggling and trafficking in Honduras. In 2018, the TCIU, in conjunction with the MP, initiated 13 human trafficking investigations and 19 human smuggling investigations and recorded 10 smuggling and 10 trafficking arrests. In 2018, the TCIU, in coordination with the INM, conducted biometric vetting of 2,691 migrants to include third-country nationals. It is also conducting multiple investigations of transnational criminal organizations involved in human smuggling and trafficking in Honduras.

On May 15, the TCIU, in conjunction with the MP, reported the criminal arrest of six senior members of a transnational criminal organization involved in the smuggling of irregular migrants to the United States. This operation, dubbed "Operation Mesoamerica II," was part of a multinational-coordinated investigation and simultaneous enforcement operation. The TCIU-led operations took place in the Honduran cities of Tegucigalpa, Ocotepeque, and Choluteca and consisted of the execution of eight criminal arrest warrants, four hotel inspections, and four bus transportation inspections. Six subjects were arrested pursuant to criminal arrest warrants, including two border police officials, in addition to 57 irregular migrants. Nationals of Yemen, Pakistan, and various other countries of special interest were captured via administrative arrest during search operations and are in the custody of Honduran immigration.

Honduras maintained its Tier 2 ranking in the Department of State's 2018 Trafficking in Persons Report. The Tier 2 designation denotes there is more to be done in Honduras to fully meet the Trafficking Victims Protection Act minimum standards but acknowledges Honduras has increased its efforts compared to the previous period to bring itself into compliance with those standards. The government demonstrated significant efforts by investigating and prosecuting more traffickers, including allegedly complicit officials; convicting more traffickers; identifying, referring, and assisting more sex trafficking victims; and approving an increased budget for the Inter-institutional Commission to Combat Commercial Sexual Exploitation and Trafficking in Persons (CICESCT).

Improving border security, including preventing illegal migration, human smuggling and trafficking, and trafficking of illicit drugs and other contraband:
Vice President Pence met with the presidents of Guatemala, El Salvador, and Honduras on June 28 and reiterated the need for Northern Triangle governments to do more to prevent illegal immigration to the United States. Honduras committed to doubling the number of border police to help break up human smuggling networks. Honduras also hosted a follow-up meeting July 26. The United States and Mexico will co-host the second Conference on Prosperity and Security in Central America on September 12-13.

The Honduran government is active in national and regional exchange events designed to deepen understanding and collaboration on migration, repatriation, and reintegration. From February 14-15, seventeen Honduran government representatives presented at and participated in USAID/Honduras' Migration Learning Seminar in Tegucigalpa. From May 7-8, six Honduran government representatives participated in the first Regional Conference on Migration and Reintegration, sponsored by USAID's Regional Program and IOM in San Salvador. In all, some 400 Northern Triangle government officials, international organizations, NGOs, and returned migrants participated. The focus was on the myriad legal, banking, employment, educational, and other issues that will have an impact on societies as they reintegrate ever-increasing numbers of migrants. All of the countries and several donors committed to holding more forums and continuing to broaden understanding of these interrelated technical issues.

During this reporting period, the Honduran government and IOM (with support from USAID) held at least 10 training sessions to re-orient, retrain, or prepare almost 600 Honduran returnees for reintegration, especially in small business skills or self-employment. In addition, the Government of Honduras held four street fairs in San Pedro Sula and Tegucigalpa for returnees to market their products, wares, and food. In this period, and with national funds, the Foreign Ministry's Migrant Solidarity Fund trained and equipped 25 returnees to launch their own animal production (mostly chicken and pigs) in the municipality of Cedros, department of Francisco Morazán. In March 2018, IOM and the Honduran Foreign Ministry gave four workshops on "Return and Reintegration" at three reception centers and to 101 people working with returned child migrants, including teachers, principals, repatriation staff, and government officials from the Ministries of Labor and of Health, INM, and the First Lady's Office. These workshops shared communication skills and strategies to enable reintegration while combating the stigma often attached to returnees by their communities and peers.

The governments of El Salvador, Guatemala, and Honduras have participated in a series of workshops supported by the U.S. government to explore best practices and lessons learned in reintegration and deterring repeat migration. These have included case studies from Mexico, Colombia, Peru, and Ecuador.

THE USAID EVALUATION FOR THE RECORD
SUBMITTED BY SENATOR ROBERT MENENDEZ

CREDIT: THOMAS CRISTOFOLETTI

ADDRESSING THE DRIVERS OF ILLEGAL IMMIGRATION: USAID RESULTS IN THE NORTHERN TRIANGLE

Nearly 70,000 children from Central America made the dangerous journey alone to the U.S. southwest border in Fiscal Year 2014. Through the government-wide U.S. Strategy for Central America, a multi-faceted approach to address the security, governance, and economic drivers of illegal migration to the United States, USAID is combating rampant crime and violence, tackling corruption and impunity, helping to disrupt the influence and activities of transnational criminal organizations, and providing greater economic opportunity. Together with Northern Triangle governments of El Salvador, Guatemala and Honduras, the private sector, and civil society, USAID's efforts help to foster an environment where families can envision their futures in their home countries.

The U.S. Strategy for Central America is closely aligned with the Plan of the Alliance for Prosperity -- a regional strategy drafted and endorsed by the governments of El Salvador, Guatemala and Honduras. For 2016 and 2017, the governments pledged $5.4 billion for the Alliance for Prosperity.

of the Government of El Salvador's national security plan, Plan El Salvador Seguro, USAID is intensifying proven "place-based" approaches that integrate law enforcement efforts with community-level prevention programs and the creation of safe spaces within schools and public areas. These efforts contributed to an **average 45 percent decline in homicides** in Plan El Salvador Seguro municipalities between 2015 and 2017. In addition, municipalities with the largest integrated USAID and INL programming saw **even higher declines**; for example, in Zacatecoluca, **homicides dropped by over 66 percent** from 2015 to 2017.

PROSPERITY: INCREASED ECONOMIC OPPORTUNITY

USAID helps to stem migration by facilitating greater economic opportunities for Salvadorans, with a focus on programs that help micro, small and medium enterprises (MSMEs) to increase sales and create new jobs. USAID partners with the Salvadoran government and the private sector to provide effective trade and business development services to MSMEs, primarily through a local network of small business development centers, which has become a model for the region. **From FY 2013 to FY 2017, USAID activities helped MSMEs to create more than 26,500 new jobs and helped smallholder farmers to increase sales by $147 million. In addition, USAID mobilized more than $19.6 million in private sector financing during the same period for small business growth.**

GOVERNANCE: IMPROVED CAPACITY TO PREVENT, DETECT, AND PROSECUTE CORRUPTION

In 2012, USAID supported the establishment of a Freedom of Information Institute, which has resulted in unprecedented access to official documents. Disclosure of information ordered by the Institute has triggered investigations on waste and abuse of public funds, nepotism, and illicit enrichment of public officials—including three former presidents. This support, coupled with USAID assistance to the Attorney General's Office and other regulatory agencies, has been **instrumental in the unprecedented prosecution of more than 20 high-level public officials. In one such case in 2018, former President Antonio Saca was prosecuted for misuse of public resources; he pled guilty to embezzlement and money and assets laundering in a plea deal and faces up to 10 years in prison.**

HONDURAS

SECURITY: DECREASED HOMICIDES IN HIGH-CRIME DISTRICTS

Honduras has one of the highest homicide rates in the world, with insecurity as the primary driver for illegal migration. USAID works with INL and local actors to combine community-based prevention programs with justice reform and law enforcement activities in the country's most violent urban areas. These coordinated efforts contributed to a 36 percent drop in Honduras' national homicide from 2014 to 2017 (from 68 homicides/100,000 in 2014 to 43.6/100,000 in 2017). **Decreases were even higher in communities with active USAID programs: urban, high-crime districts in which USAID works with INL saw an average 54 percent decline in homicide rates from 2014-2017.** These programs will help to sustain this downward trend so that families can return safely to their homes.

PROSPERITY: 90,000 MOVED OUT OF POVERTY IN TARGET AREAS

According to the International Organization for Migration, a quarter of returning unaccompanied Honduran children cite a lack of economic opportunity as their primary motivation for seeking to illegally migrate north. USAID is helping to improve incomes, increase sales, and create jobs. Our

SECRETARY OF HOMELAND SECURITY KIRSTJEN NIELSEN PRESS STATEMENT
SUBMITTED BY SENATOR TIM KAINE

SECRETARY NIELSEN SIGNS HISTORIC REGIONAL COMPACT WITH CENTRAL AMERICA TO STEM IRREGULAR MIGRATION AT THE SOURCE, CONFRONT U.S. BORDER CRISIS

Release Date: March 28, 2019

Secretary of Homeland Security Kirstjen M. Nielsen traveled to Tegucigalpa, Honduras where she met with security ministers representing the countries of Guatemala, Honduras, and El Salvador. The multilateral discussions mark the continuation of a multi-year diplomatic process and the signing of a historic Memorandum of Cooperation (MOC) on border security cooperation in Central America.

Together with Guatemalan Minister of Government Enrique Degenhart, Honduran Security Minister Julian Pacheco, and Salvadoran Minister of Justice and Public Security Mauricio Landaverde, Secretary Nielsen expressed her gratitude for the continued collaboration and partnership of the Central American nations as they work to stem the flood of irregular migration and develop regional approach to addressing the ongoing humanitarian and security emergency at our Southern Border.

"America shares common cause with the countries of Central America in confronting these challenges," said Secretary Nielsen. "We all want to enforce our laws, ensure a safe and orderly migrant flow, protect our communities, facilitate legal trade and travel, support vulnerable populations, interdict dangerous and illicit drug flow, and secure our borders."

"I look forward to implementing this historic agreement and working with my Northern Triangle counterparts to help secure all of our nations and to end the humanitarian and security crisis we face," said Nielsen. "Together we will prevail."

The MOC—the first ever multilateral compact on border security—aims to better synchronize cooperation between the countries in order to bolster border security, prevent the formation of new migrant caravans, and address the root causes of the migration crisis through better synchronized efforts to include the following:

- Human trafficking and smuggling;
- Combating transnational criminal organizations and gangs;
- Expanding Information and Intelligence Sharing;
- Strengthening air, land, and maritime border security.

Each of these focus areas will be pursued through an array of agreed-upon initiatives. Technical working groups with representatives from each country will monitor the initiatives and ensure they are carried out expeditiously. The groups will meet periodically throughout the year, with Secretary Nielsen and the Northern Triangle Ministers continuing to meet in the coming months to ensure continued momentum.

While in Honduras, Secretary Nielsen also participated in a bilateral meeting with the Honduran President Juan Orlando Hernández and First Lady Ana Rosalinda García de Hernández. Secretary Nielsen affirmed America's commitment to working with Honduras in a shared effort of combating human trafficking and child smuggling, as well as addressing the major drivers of irregular migration prompting families and individuals to put themselves in harm's way by embarking on the dangerous journey north.

REUTERS ARTICLE TITLED, U.S. ENDING AID TO EL SALVADOR, GUATEMALA, HONDURAS OVER MIGRANTS, DATED MARCH 30, 2019, SUBMITTED BY SENATOR TIM KAINE

REUTERS

WORLD NEWS
MARCH 30, 2019 / 4:13 PM / A MONTH AGO

U.S. ending aid to El Salvador, Guatemala, Honduras over migrants

WASHINGTON (Reuters) - The United States is cutting off aid to El Salvador, Guatemala and Honduras, known collectively as the "Northern Triangle," the State Department said on Saturday, a day after President Donald Trump blasted the Central American countries for sending migrants to the United States.

U.S. President Donald Trump talks to reporters at his Mar-a-Lago estate in Palm Beach, Florida, U.S., March 29, 2019. REUTERS/Joshua Roberts

"We are carrying out the President's direction and ending FY (fiscal year) 2017 and FY 2018 foreign assistance programs for the Northern Triangle," a State Department spokesperson said in a statement. The department declined to provide further details.

The State Department said it would "engage Congress in the process," an apparent acknowledgement that it will need lawmakers' approval to end the funding.

A U.S. House Appropriations Committee aide estimated that around $700 million of aid was affected.

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Democratic Representative Nita Lowey, who chairs the committee, tweeted that the move to cut aid was "immoral and more likely to deteriorate conditions that push people into the kind of poverty and despair that exacerbates migration."

New Jersey Senator Bob Menendez, the top Democrat on the Senate Foreign Relations Committee, called Trump's order a "reckless announcement" and urged Democrats and Republicans alike to reject it.

"U.S. foreign assistance is not charity; it advances our strategic interests and funds initiatives that protect American citizens," Menendez said in a statement.

Trump claimed on Friday during a trip to Florida that the countries had "set up" caravans of migrants in order to export them into the United States. A surge of asylum seekers from the three countries have sought to enter the United States across its southern border in recent days.

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"We were giving them $500 million. We were paying them tremendous amounts of money, and we're not paying them anymore because they haven't done a thing for us," Trump said.

Trump also threatened on Friday to close the U.S. border with Mexico next week if Mexico does not stop immigrants from reaching the United States, a move that could disrupt millions of legal border crossings and billions of dollars in trade.

Reporting by Julia Harte and Richard Cowan; Editing by Mary Milliken, James Dalgleish and Richard Chang

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COMMUNITY LETTER TO HON. MARK GREEN
SUBMITTED BY SENATOR ROBERT MENENDEZ

May 3, 2019

Mr. Mark Green
Administrator
U.S. Agency for International Development
1300 Pennsylvania Avenue, NW
Washington, DC 20004

Dear Administrator Green:

We, the undersigned, believe that U.S. Government (USG) investments in gender equality are critical to achieving U.S. foreign policy objectives, strengthening our national security, and increasing economic opportunities both abroad and at home. As reflected in the 2018–2022 Joint Strategic Plan and the 2017 National Security Strategy, "societies that empower women to participate fully in civic and economic life are more prosperous and peaceful." [1]

We understand that USAID is currently updating its Gender Equality and Female Empowerment Policy, which seeks to comprehensively improve the lives of people around the world by advancing gender equality and "empowering women and girls to participate fully in and benefit from the development of their societies." We hope that any changes to the policy are based on a rigorous evidence-base and made in the interest of improving the policy to reflect new evidence where it exists, and new best practice, while also maintaining the policy's integrity and allowing for consistency.

The Gender Equality and Female Empowerment (GE/FE) Policy has been a critical foundation for progress on the promotion of gender equality throughout development and humanitarian assistance efforts over the last 7 years, including identifying and addressing gender gaps, needs, opportunities, and barriers for achieving development outcomes across USAID's work. Notably, following USAID's leadership in putting in place the GE/FE policy and ADS Chapter 205 on integrating gender equality and female empowerment, a large number of USAID implementing partners have modified their internal policies, focusing on mainstreaming gender in accordance with USAID's direction and leadership.[2]

Congress under this administration has passed legislation that the President signed into law, bolstering this agenda, including the Women's Entrepreneurship and Economic Empowerment Act of 2018 and the Women, Peace and Security Act of 2017. These laws and associated initiatives are important steps and make clear that the U.S. Government recognizes that promoting gender equality and the rights of women, girls, and LGBTI individuals, while utilizing an evidence-based approach, is critical to the achievement of the U.S. Government's foreign policy objectives. Without working to achieve gender equality, U.S. aid will not be as effective as possible, and the conditions that lead to the need for aid—such as fragility and conflict—will perpetuate. The advancement of global gender equality and women's and girls' empowerment is not only the right thing to do, but also the smart thing to do.

Today, we are writing to provide guiding principles for how USAID can strengthen its approach to and promotion of gender equality through updating its GE/FE policy.

1. Reaffirm gender equality as a core development objective, vital towards achieving the Journey to Self-Reliance. A strong, evidence-based, and effective GE/FE Policy is critical to the realization of human rights; effective and sustainable development outcomes and growth; and over time transitioning from assistance to strategic partnerships with capable partner country governments and civil society.[3] Supporting and strengthening the systematic leadership and participation of local women's civil society organizations in decision-making processes is key to ensuring community and country self-reliance.

2. Maintain a holistic approach, affirming the indivisible nature of different aspects of women's and girls' lives and others marginalized due to their gender identity.[4] The achievement of gender equality and women's and girls' empowerment requires a GE/FE Policy that maintains a holistic approach, and looks at root causes of inequality including harmful social and cultural norms about gender. A holistic approach must include engaging men and boys and LGBTI communities in the ad-

vancement of gender equality and the promotion of positive masculinities.[5] It is critical to utilize cross-sectoral efforts to ensure, among other outcomes:[6]

- Access to safe, quality, and inclusive education;
- Access to health services, including sexual and reproductive health information and services;
- Prevention of and response to gender-based violence;
- Access to gender-responsive child and youth-friendly services;
- Access to paid employment and asset ownership, including youth workforce development;
- Reduction and redistribution of unpaid care work;
- Women's and girls' collective voice in governance, including through supporting their meaningful political participation and strengthening local women's civil society organizations; and,
- Access to legal rights and judicial mechanisms to ensure those rights are upheld.

3. Retain core principles of the GE/FE policy, especially the explicit commitment to the principle of pursuing an inclusive approach to foster equality. The policy must continue to be inclusive of all, regardless of age, sexual orientation, gender identity, disability status, religion, ethnicity, socioeconomic status, geographic area, migratory status, forced displacement or HIV/AIDS status.[7]

4. Take a lifecycle approach to understanding the specific actions needed to advance gender equality and women's and girls' empowerment, with a focus on adolescents. Gender inequality and gendered power dynamics affect individuals across their lifecycles, and therefore all humanitarian and development interventions must assess and address these dynamics to achieve their objectives.[8]

5. Integrate a gender analysis throughout the program cycle. As USAID looks to strengthen program design and integrate best practices, evidence, adaptive management and learning throughout the program cycle, USAID should ensure that a gender analysis and the engagement of program beneficiaries informs each stage of the cycle. This includes mainstreaming a gender analysis throughout strategic planning, procurement, project design, project implementation, and monitoring and evaluation.[9] Gender analyses are critical to understanding the realities of women's and girls' lives, as reflected in the Women's Entrepreneurship and Economic Empowerment Act of 2018. They must be conducted comprehensively and consistently throughout both development and humanitarian contexts.

6. As USAID re-organizes bureaus and establishes new ways of working, ensure that the mandate and capacity to conduct gender analyses and integrate findings is maintained or strengthened across all bureaus and missions. The GE/FE Policy should continue to be applied to all USAID missions in the field as well as to USAID policy and programmatic operations in Washington DC and elsewhere. This consistent approach will continue to facilitate orientation about and implementation of the GE/FE policy.[10]

7. Evaluate the implementation of the GE/FE policy in an open and transparent way. USAID should ensure a strong collaboration, learning, and adaptation (CLA) approach by developing benchmarks for evaluating the updated GE/FE Policy with input from partner country government and local and international civil society organizations as well as from USAID staff, partners, and leadership.[11]

8. Commit to meaningful substantive consultations with civil society organizations in the process of reviewing the GE/FE policy. Following USAID's established tradition of partnerships, the Agency should commit to formally engaging the views of civil society organizations with expertise in comprehensive and holistic gender equality policy and programming via in person consultations, and provide opportunities for written input into revisions of the policy before any updates to the established GE/FE are made final. This consultation process should include a wide range of civil society voices who have proven expertise in global gender equality issues, including, but not limited to, implementing partners, advocacy organizations, and those focused on evidence-based research.

9. Ensure the development, collection, analysis, and use of sex- and age-disaggregated data and gender-responsive data metrics, including gender equality indicators and data on issues specific to women and girls and others marginalized due to their gender identity, as well as other quantitative and qualitative gender data. USAID should strengthen the development, collection, analysis and use of sex- and age-disaggregated data and gender-responsive data metrics, including gender

equality indicators and data across all sectors in order to provide a holistic picture of the status of women and girls. Topline, national metrics, and individual metrics that are age and gender blind mask deep inequalities within populations as well as missing key early warning indicators for fragility.[12] Such quantitative data, complemented by qualitative data, should be used in monitoring as well as in evaluation to identify the extent to which interventions are closing gender gaps and shifting harmful gender norms, and to determine whether interventions are potentially causing unintended consequences exacerbating and/or creating new vulnerabilities faced by women and girls. Using such data and analysis, stakeholders will be best able to collaborate, learn and adapt interventions accordingly.

Further, the full implementation of the GE/FE policy requires internal structures best suited to maximize efficiency and impact. This should include a fully staffed and funded Senior Coordinator for Gender Equality and full-time gender-dedicated positions in the pillar and sector bureaus at USAID headquarters and in every USAID Mission. All relevant positions should be trained on the GE/FE policy as well as requirements under ADS 205, including on how to effectively undertake and use a gender analysis. Having the right capacity in the right places is critical to success.

Any updates to the Gender Equality and Female Empowerment Policy must align with existing laws and key, cross-sectoral policies and strategies:[13]

- Women's Entrepreneurship and Economic Empowerment Act (2018)
- Women, Peace and Security Act (2017)
- U.S. Strategy to Prevent and Respond to Gender-Based Violence Globally (2016 update)
- U.S. Global Strategy to Empower Adolescent Girls (2016)
- USAID LGBT Vision for Action (2014)
- PEPFAR Gender Strategy (2013)
- Ending Child Marriage & Meeting the Needs of Married Children: The USAID Vision for Action (2012)
- USAID Youth in Development Policy (2012)

We appreciate the opportunity to provide recommendations on strengthening the promotion of gender equality and women's and girls' empowerment through the update of the USAID Gender Equality and Female Empowerment Policy. We look forward to continuing to work with you to ensure effective U.S. foreign assistance that helps create a more stable and prosperous world.

Sincerely,

ACDI/VOCA

Advancing Girls' Education in Africa (AGE Africa) AHA Foundation

American Hindu World Service (AHWS) CARE USA

ChildFund International Data2X

EnCompass LLC Faiths for Safe Water

Friends of the Global Fight against AIDS, Tuberculosis and Malaria Global Rights for Women

Global Woman P.E.A.C.E. Foundation Global Women's Institute GreeneWorks

Heartland Alliance International Helen Keller International (HKI) Human Rights Watch

I4Y (Innovations for Youth), UC Berkeley International Action Network for Gender Equity & Law International Center for Research on Women International Medical Corps

International Rescue Committee

International Youth Foundation

Jewish World Watch Mercy Corps

Mercy Without Limit

National Association of Social Workers

National Cooperative Business Association CLUSA International National Democratic Institute

National Organization for Women Oxfam America

PAI

Plan International USA

Planned Parenthood Federation of America Project Concern International (PCI)

Save the Children Shadhika Solidarity Center The Hunger Project

The International Foundation for Electoral Systems (IFES)

The United Methodist Church, General Board of Church and Society The Voices and Faces Project

U.S. National Committee for U.N. Women United Nations Association of the USA

United States International Council on Disabilities Vital Voices Global Partnership

Women for Afghan Women Women for Women International Women Graduates USA

Women's Global Education Project Women's Refugee Commission World Learning

ZanaAfrica Foundation

CC: Senator James E. Risch, Chairman, Senate Foreign Relations Committee

Senator Robert Menendez, Ranking Member, Senate Foreign Relations Committee

Senator Lindsey Graham, Chairman, Senate Appropriations Sub-Committee on State, Foreign Operations, and Related Programs

Senator Patrick Leahy, Ranking Member, Senate Appropriations Sub-Committee on State, Foreign Operations, and Related Programs

Congressman Eliot Engel, Chairman, House Foreign Affairs Committee Congressman Michael McCaul, Ranking Member, House Foreign Affairs Committee

Congresswoman Nita M. Lowey, Chairwoman, House Appropriations Sub-Committee on State, Foreign Operations, and Related Programs

Congressman Hal Rogers, Ranking Member, House Appropriations Sub-Committee on State, Foreign Operations and Related Programs

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Notes

[1] Joint Strategic Plan (FY2018–2022), p 23; National Security Strategy (2017), p. 42.

[2] See Gender Practitioners Collaborative, Minimum Standards for Mainstreaming Gender Equality—http://genderstandards.org/.

[3] USAID Policy on Gender Equality and Female Empowerment (2012), p. 1.

[4] USAID Policy on Gender Equality and Female Empowerment (2012), p. 1.

[5] USAID Policy on Gender Equality and Female Empowerment (2012), pp. 6, 7, 11.

[6] USAID Policy on Gender Equality and Female Empowerment (2012), pp. 6–9.

[7] USAID Policy on Gender Equality and Female Empowerment (2012), p. 2.

[8] USAID Policy on Gender Equality and Female Empowerment (2012), p. 3, fn.3.

[9] USAID Policy on Gender Equality and Female Empowerment (2012), pp. 11–12.

[10] USAID Policy on Gender Equality and Female Empowerment (2012), pp. 15–18.

[11] USAID Policy on Gender Equality and Female Empowerment (2012), p. 14.

[12] Ibid.

[13] Please note other cross-sectoral strategies, including at the international level such as the 2030 Sustainable Development Agenda and the Sustainable Development Goals. The targets and indicators related to Goal 5—Gender Equality are particularly significant.

○