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NOMINATIONS OF THE 116th CONGRESS, FIRST SESSION, PART I

HEARINGS

BEFORE THE

COMMITTEE ON FOREIGN RELATIONS UNITED STATES SENATE

ONE HUNDRED SIXTEENTH CONGRESS

FIRST SESSION

PART I
MARCH 6, 2019 TO JULY 30, 2019

Printed for the use of the Committee on Foreign Relations

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CONTENTS

Responses to additional questions from the committee and any additional material submitted for the record are located at the end of each hearing transcript.

PART I

March 6, 2019 1

Abizaid, General John P., to be Ambassador Kingdom of Saudi Arabia 6

Tueller, Hon. Matthew H., of Utah, to be Ambassador to the Republic of Iraq 10

March 12, 2019 65

Johnson, Ronald Douglas, of Florida, to be Ambassador to the Republic of El Salvador 69

Fitzpatrick, Michael J., of Virginia, to be Ambassador to the Republic of Ecuador 72

March 27, 2019 113

Destro, Robert A., of Virginia, to be Assistant Secretary of State for Democracy, Human Rights, and Labor 121

Krach, Keith, of California, to be Under Secretary of State for Economic Growth, Energy, and the Environment; U.S. Alternate Governor of the European Bank for Reconstruction and Development; U.S. Alternate Governor of the International Bank for Reconstruction and Development; and U.S. Alternate Governor of the Inter-American Development Bank 123

Stilwell, Brigadier General David, USAF (Ret.), of Hawaii, to be Assistant Secretary of State for East Asian and Pacific Affairs 128

April 9, 2019 207

Eberhardt, Jeffrey L., of Wisconsin, to be Special Representative of the President for Nuclear Non-Proliferation 211

Gilmore, Hon. James S., of Virginia, to be U.S. Representative to the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe 214

Swendiman, Alan R., of North Carolina, to be Deputy Director of the Peace Corps 217

April 11, 2019 251

Crawford, Edward F., of Ohio, to be Ambassador to Ireland 254

Byrnes, Kate Marie, of Florida, to be Ambassador to the Republic of North Macedonia 257

Satterfield, Hon. David Michael, of Missouri, to be Ambassador to the Republic of Turkey 260

Page

May 16, 2019 303

Brink, Bridget A., of Michigan, to be Ambassador to the Slovak Republic . 305

Howery, Kenneth A., of Texas, to be Ambassador to the Kingdom of Sweden 307

Klimow, Colonel Matthew S., USA (Ret.), of New York, to be Ambassador to Turkmenistan 310

Daigle, John Jefferson, of Louisiana, to be Ambassador to the Republic of Cabo Verde 313

May 21, 2019 343

Bates, Pamela, of Virginia, to be U.S. Representative to the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development 347

Landau, Christopher, of Maryland, to be Ambassador to the United Mexican States 350

Nordquist, Jennifer D., of Virginia, to U.S. Executive Director of the International Bank for Reconstruction and Development 353

Pedrosa, Eliot, of Florida, to be U.S. Executive Director of the Inter-American Development Bank 356

June 20, 2019 393

Bremberg, Andrew P., of Virginia, to be U.S. Representative to the Office of the United Nations and other International Organizations in Geneva 397

Goldberg, Hon. Philip S., of the District of Columbia, to be Ambassador to the Republic of Colombia 400

Manchester, Doug, of California, to be Ambassador to the Commonwealth of the Bahamas 402

Zuckerman, Adrian, of New Jersey, to be Ambassador to Romania 405

Norland, Hon. Richard B., of Iowa, to be Ambassador to Libya 430

Cohen, Jonathan R., of California, to be Ambassador to the Arab Republic of Egypt 433

Rakolta, John, Jr. to be Ambassador to the United Arab Emirates 436

July 17, 2019 605

Marks, Lana, of Florida, to be Ambassador to the Republic of South Africa 606

Lapenn, Jessica, of New York, to be U.S. Representative to the African Union 609

Bell, Richard K., of Pennsylvania, to be Ambassador to the Republic of Cote D' Ivoire 612

Leonard, Hon. Mary Beth, of Massachusetts, to be Ambassador to the Federal Republic of Nigeria 615

Bekkering, Michelle, of the District of Columbia, to be an Assistant Administrator of the U.S. Agency for International Development, Economic Policy, Economic Growth, Education, and Environment 618

July 30, 2019 701

Carwile, John Leslie, of Maryland, to be Ambassador to the Republic of Latvia 703

McKee, Erin Elizabeth, of California, to be Ambassador to Papua New Guinea, Ambassador to the Solomon Islands, and Ambassador to the Republic of Vanuatu 706

Godfrey, Anthony F., of Virginia, to be Ambassador to the Republic of Serbia 710

Mustafa, Herro, of California, to be Ambassador to the Republic of Bulgaria 714

Page

PART II

September 19, 2019 759
Billingslea, Hon. Marshall, of Virginia, to an Under Secretary of State for Civilian Security, Democracy, and Human Rights 772
Boehler, Adam Seth, of Louisiana, to be Executive Officer of the U.S. International Development Finance Corporation 776
Pack, Michael, of Maryland, to be Chief Executive Officer of the Broadcasting Board of Governors 778

October 16, 2019 897
Cantor, Carmen G., of Puerto Rico, to be Ambassador to the Federated States of Micronesia 899
DeSombre, Michael George, of Illinois, to be Ambassador to Thailand 902
Kim, Hon. Sung Y., to be Ambassador to the Republic of Indonesia 906
Tan, Morse H., of Illinois, to be Ambassador at Large for Global Criminal Justice 908
Currie, Hon. Kelley Eckels, of Georgia, to be Ambassador at Large for Global Women's Issues 911

October 29, 2019 965
Cabral, Roxanne, of Virginia, to be Ambassador to the Republic of the Marshall Islands 966
Degnan, Kelly C., of California, to be Ambassador to Georgia 969
Gilchrist, Robert S., of Florida, to be Ambassador to the Republic of Lithuania 972
Kim, Yuri, of Guam, to be Ambassador to the Republic of Albania 975

October 30, 2019 1017
Sullivan, Hon. John Joseph, of Maryland, to be Ambassador to the Russian Federation 1025

October 31, 2019 1167
Castillo, Andeliz N., of New York, to be U.S. Alternate Executive Director of the Inter-American Development Bank 1170
Golden, Dr. Alma L., of Texas, to be an Assistant Administrator of the U.S. Agency for International Development 1172
Haymond, Peter M., of Virginia, to be Ambassador to the Lao People's Democratic Republic 1176
Romanowski, Alina L., of Illinois, to be Ambassador to the State of Kuwait 1179
Tsou, Leslie Meredith, of Virginia, to be Ambassador to the Sultanate of Oman 1182

November 20, 2019 1255
Biegun, Stephen E., of Michigan, to be Deputy Secretary of State 1260

December 17, 2019 1393
Chapman, Hon. Todd C., of Texas, to be Ambassador to the Federative Republic of Brazil 1396
Hennessey-Niland, John, of Illinois, to Ambassador to the Republic of Palau 1399
Shea, Dorothy, of Virginia, to be Ambassador to the Lebanese Republic 1403
Wright, Dr. Donald, of Virginia, to be Ambassador to the United Republic of Tanzania 1406

NOMINATIONS

WEDNESDAY, MARCH 6, 2019

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

The committee met, pursuant to notice, at 10:02 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, Gardner, Romney, Barrasso, Paul, Young, Cruz, Menendez, Cardin, Shaheen, Udall, Murphy, Kaine, and Merkley.

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

The CHAIRMAN. The committee will come to order.

Today we are going to hear a couple of very important positions. We have a couple nominees, one to be Ambassador of Saudi Arabia and one to be Ambassador of Iraq. And to introduce our nominees, we have a very, very distinguished guest from the great State of Alaska, Senator Sullivan, and he is going to make the introductions. So, Senator Sullivan, the floor is yours.

STATEMENT OF HON. DAN SULLIVAN, U.S. SENATOR FROM ALASKA

Senator SULLIVAN. Well, thank you, Mr. Chairman and Senator Menendez. It is truly an honor for me to come before the committee today on behalf of my friend and a great American, General John Abizaid, U.S. Army, retired, to support his confirmation to be U.S. Ambassador to the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia.

I know you have all had an opportunity to review his resume. I know many of you have already talked to General Abizaid. What I wanted to do is to highlight a few important elements of his personal background and experience that I have seen firsthand.

After graduating from West Point, General Abizaid began his distinguished Army career in 1973 as an infantry platoon leader. He rose to the rank of four-star general and was the longest serving commander of U.S. Central Command, an area of responsibility that at the time he commanded spanned more than 4 million square miles from the Horn of Africa, Egypt, the Arabian Peninsula, Iraq, Afghanistan, South and Central Asia.

As he rose through the ranks, he always kept his mind sharp. He achieved a master's degree in Middle Eastern studies from Harvard University. He was an Olmsted Scholar at the University of Jordan in Amman.

After 34 years of service to his nation, he retired from the U.S. military in 2007 and is now a fellow at Stanford University's Hoover Institution.

In 2005, I was a major in the Marine Corps Reserves and was called to active duty to spend close to a year and a half as a staff officer for General Abizaid when he was the CENTCOM Commander. I pretty much was with him everywhere in the world during that time, Iraq, Afghanistan, Pakistan, Egypt, Central Asia and, yes, Yemen and Saudi Arabia. It was a difficult time in the region, especially in Iraq.

What I witnessed day in and day out is everything you would want in an American general and an American public servant serving our country, a man of the highest integrity, a warrior, a scholar, an intellectual, a truly tested leader and, yes, a diplomat who, during his time in the military, garnered the deep respect of the leadership at the State Department due to his keen understanding of the culture and politics of the region for which he was responsible.

There are few people in our country who understand the cross currents of U.S. interests, challenges, and history in the Middle East than John Abizaid. He commands respect and trust from those around him, those who have served with him.

I remember watching in amazement several times as a staff officer when he had meetings with leaders in the region, all over the region, whether it was kings or prime ministers or colonels and generals, where he would begin the meetings speaking in Arabic. General Abizaid speaks Arabic, by the way, another element of his distinguished background.

This kind of credibility and trust was so critical in the region.

He is also a man with a great sense of humor and sharp wit. I remember a time when I was outside his office in Iraq waiting for him. The other individual waiting for him was also a Marine Corps major. General Abizaid had just had a meeting with four-star Army General Barry McCaffrey. General McCaffrey walked out, looked at the two Marine majors and said, John, what is with these marines hanging around your office, to which the general responded, I like hanging out with marines. It makes me feel smart.

[Laughter.]

Senator SULLIVAN. General Abizaid is a classic example of an American patriot willing to serve his country for all the right reasons. He did not seek this nomination for attention or recognition. He was sought out by the administration because of his extensive experience and knowledge of the U.S.-Saudi relationship and the issues in the Middle East. He accepted President Trump's nomination because he knows at this point in time it is important to have someone skilled to navigate such a multifaceted relationship in this very important but challenging region. And, yes, the U.S.-Saudi relationship is indeed complex. I know there is a lot of debate in this chamber on pressing foreign policy challenges in the Middle East as it relates to Saudi Arabia and Yemen and Iran, and I am sure you will ask him hard but fair questions.

But here is an issue over which I think there should be no debate. We need a highly qualified ambassador in Riyadh, and we need that person there soon. I do not think there has been a nomi-

nee before this committee who is so uniquely qualified and well equipped to manage the relationship of the post for which he has been nominated.

John Abizaid will serve his country as he always has, with integrity, honor, and distinction. I urge all of you to support his nomination and move to confirm him as soon as possible.

Thank you again, Mr. Chairman, for the opportunity to say a few words about a great American.

The CHAIRMAN. Well, thank you very much.

We will hear from both of our witnesses in just a moment, but Ambassador Tueller, who is with us today, has been nominated to be Ambassador of Iraq, also a heavy lift. Ambassador Tueller is a career member of the Senior Foreign Service has held multiple tours across the Middle East, and has served his country with distinction as U.S. Ambassador to Yemen since 2014. His experience navigating the complexities of the ongoing Yemen conflict has afforded him a unique perspective on war and reconciliation, which will, no doubt, serve him well in post-war Iraq.

Prior to his current role, he served as Ambassador to Kuwait, as Deputy Chief of Mission in Egypt, Qatar, Kuwait, respectively, and as a senior diplomat in Iraq.

Let me say just a couple of things as we open here.

As far as Saudi Arabia is concerned, we have a shared security interest with Saudi Arabia in combating Sunni extremism and Iranian influence in the region, and we should not lose sight of that.

At the same time, I think all of us have serious concern over events surrounding the Saudi Kingdom, and the Saudi-GCC rift with Qatar has made difficult U.S. efforts in the Gulf Arab unity against Iran.

We look forward, Mr. Abizaid, General Abizaid, to hearing how you plan to work with the Saudi officials to advance U.S. objectives on a wide range of issues, including the Saudis' role in the Yemen conflict, the GCC crisis with Qatar, and reported human rights abuses.

In addition to that, we welcome Mr. Tueller regarding the Iraq post. There remain ongoing tensions between Baghdad and the Kurds, as we all know, particularly in the north. Repairing this relationship needs to be a priority for the United States. The Kurds have been good friends and allies of ours. It is important that the relationship in Iraq be repaired.

This comes at a time when the Iraqi parliament is preparing to debate a resolution that would significantly affect the U.S. military presence there. This is a hugely concerning prospect, and I look forward to hearing from you how we can work together to communicate our shared security interests with officials in Iraq.

With that, I will yield to the ranking member, Senator Menendez.

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

Senator MENENDEZ. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

I just want to tell our distinguished friend and colleague, Senator Sullivan, from my travels abroad, I think it is the Marine detach-

ments that actually protect the embassies. So I do not know if they want to hear that joke.

[Laughter.]

Senator MENENDEZ. But in any event, General Abizaid, Ambassador Tueller, thank you both for your past service and thank you for both signing up to serve in two complex countries with which the United States has critical security partnerships.

Mr. Chairman, I think it sends an important signal that these are our first two nominees before the committee in this Congress, especially since we have not had a nominee for Saudi Arabia in 2 years. And while we have had two closed-door briefings ostensibly touching on Saudi Arabia in this Congress, they were wholly unsatisfactory in providing this committee with information. The administration's attempt to explain its failure to provide a legally mandated determination about the murder of American resident Jamal Khashoggi was insulting.

I urge the committee to hold open hearings with the administration to understand our actions and our objectives.

And specifically, Mr. Chairman, I ask you to work with me and the other bipartisan cosponsors on this committee on the Saudi Arabia and Yemen Accountability Act. If the President fails to act, I believe Congress must.

Now to our nominees. You will both face challenging environments. General Abizaid, as we discussed, Saudi Arabia has taken a number of actions that have seriously strained the U.S.-Saudi relationship over the past few years, actions that belie the ambitious reforms many had hoped for.

Under new management, the Crown Prince has launched Saudi Arabia into a devastating war in Yemen; isolated Qatar, threatening Gulf cooperation and coordination against threats from Iran and regional terrorist groups; detained and tortured members of his own family; effectively hoodwinked and intimidated the Lebanese Prime Minister. And just this week, we publicly learned about the detention and potential torture of a United States citizen. And I would like to acknowledge that a member of Dr. Fitaihi's family and his advocates are here today.

Amidst all of this, we continue to cooperate in confronting real and strategic threats to the United States and Saudi interests. The Kingdom does continue to face legitimate threats, including from Houthis, often with Iranian backing. No country should be expected to live with the threat of missiles being launched into civilian centers across its border. But as the conflict drags on, violent Houthi factions only become more empowered.

We cannot let these interests blind us to our values or to our long-term interests in stability. I have been disappointed with the administration's public posture towards Saudi Arabia. Our leaders cannot credibly call on the world stage and demand accountability for human rights abuses while giving a wink and a nod to the Crown Prince.

General Abizaid, while I am wary of the militarization of the State Department, I believe you have the right experience for the kind of leadership we need at this embassy. As we discussed, you will face not only the challenge of engaging directly with the Saudis and managing a large mission in Riyadh. You will have to

contend with a White House that at times seems to be running its own bilateral show.

Ambassador Tueller, given your current service to Yemen while stationed, however, in Riyadh, as is the ousted Hadi government, I would also posit some of these challenges to you.

As our Ambassador to Yemen, you have been responsible for securing U.S. interests there, for supporting an internationally led effort to promote a political solution that offers legitimate security interests for Saudis and Yemenis, while also ensuring that all Yemeni people have a political process to express their interests, one that equitably and adequately addresses all equities and promotes our interests.

You will face somewhat similar challenges in Iraq. Unfortunately, the President's lack of a coherent strategy for U.S. policy in Iraq has only increased some of the challenges we face. As we discussed yesterday, there is a growing movement within some political corners to oust American troops from the country. I believe we have invested too many American lives and national treasure, seen too many Iraqis perish under the brutality of terrorism, and risked critical alliances that we have built to do that precipitously.

We must work with the Iraqi people to continue to support building institutions, to promote an inclusive political process, and to continue training Iraqi security forces so that the Iraqis themselves can ultimately defend their country.

We must support efforts to confront those seeking to continue destabilizing Iraq from a resurgent ISIS to Iranian political ambitions. And I am particularly concerned about the proposal to permanently close the consulate in Basra.

Your job will be to keep an open mind about the political process, finding a way to include Shia, Sunni, and Kurdish populations with all of whom the United States has important relationships.

And in that context, I look forward to hearing from both of you.

The CHAIRMAN. Thank you, Senator.

Gentlemen, thank you to both of you for being willing to take this on. As both myself and the ranking member have stated in our opening statements, we have tried to tee up for you to answer some of the questions that are really challenging. About everybody that comes here, we talk about the challenging conditions in the country they are going to. Both of these are very, very unique challenges. We hear a lot of talk on this committee from the administration, from the media, from all of the opinion writers about the problem of reconciling the United States' interests and having a strategic relationship with Saudi Arabia and reconciling how we are going to do that while, at the same time, as the ranking member pointed out, Saudi Arabia is engaged in acts that just are simply not acceptable.

Unfortunately, as I said, we hear a lot of descriptions about the problem. We do not hear any answers. There have been some modest suggestions that have been made, none of which would resolve the problem I do not think.

It is an ongoing conversation that the ranking member and I are having and we are having internally amongst this committee, sometimes publicly, sometimes privately, and likewise between the committee and the administration.

So knowing that you do not have a silver bullet or a magic answer, we do want to hear your thoughts, your comments, analysis, and maybe even some helpful suggestions as we go forward because everyone agrees we have got to go forward and reconcile these two very competing things.

Iraq is not totally dissimilar, but again, because of things that are going on there that make it very difficult for us to operate, but it is essential we have a relationship with Iraq and that it has to be in the interest of both countries or it will not be a relationship.

So, gentlemen, thank you. And we will start out with you, General. Why do you not take the floor?

STATEMENT OF GENERAL JOHN P. ABIZAID, UNITED STATES ARMY, RETIRED, OF NEVADA, TO BE AMBASSADOR EXTRAORDINARY AND PLENIPOTENTIARY OF THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA TO THE KINGDOM OF SAUDI ARABIA

Mr. ABIZAID. Well, thank you very much, Mr. Chairman and Ranking Member Menendez, members of the committee.

Thanks goes to Senator Sullivan for a very overrated introduction. He is a smart marine. He is a great marine, and he is a great Senator. And I value his service to this nation so much. Thank you, Senator Sullivan.

I also want to say how privileged I am to be here with Ambassador Matt Tueller who served in so many tough and demanding assignments.

I am honored to appear before you today as President Trump's nominee to be the next U.S. Ambassador to the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia. I am grateful to the President for his nomination and to Secretary Pompeo for his trust and confidence. I welcome the opportunity to discuss the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia and ask that my full testimony be submitted for the record.

If confirmed by the Senate, I pledge to work closely with the members of this committee to advance U.S. interests and values in Saudi Arabia and the region.

My wife Kathy and my son David are both here today, and my daughters, Shari and Christy, have duties far away, but they are here in spirit. I thank the family for their love, their support, and service to the nation. All of the kids have served the nation, and my son-in-law, Lieutenant Colonel Robb Shaw, continues to serve as a battalion commander of paratroopers. We have spent too much time in the Abizaid family dealing with America's wars. It is my hope that, if confirmed as Ambassador, I can play some small role in ensuring that my grandchildren never see combat in the Middle East.

Having served for a considerable part of my life in the Middle East, I am aware of both how difficult this region can be and just how essential it is to U.S. interests and national security.

It is my conviction that stability in the Middle East is most endangered by the continued threat of violent Sunni extremism and Iran's radical policy of Shia expansionism. From Syria to Yemen, these forces foment instability, deprive the region's people of a better future, and threaten the national security of the United States. It is difficult for me to imagine today that a convoy of Iranian Revolutionary Guards Qods Force filled with weapons could travel

unimpeded from Iran to Lebanon. The good people of Iran deserve a better future than the endless war and constant drain on the economy provided by the IRGC Qods Force.

To confront these threats, the United States must work with and through our regional partners. We cannot effectively combat these threats nor promote our core interests and values without them. The United States has a long history of cooperation with the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia. It is difficult to imagine a successful U.S. effort to undercut Sunni extremism or keep Iran in check without engaging and partnering with the Kingdom.

This is not to say that I am unaware of the challenges facing the U.S.-Saudi partnership today: war in Yemen, the senseless killing of Jamal Khashoggi, rifts in the Gulf alliance, alleged abuses of innocent people, to include an American citizen and female activists. All present immediate challenges.

Yet, in the long run, we need a strong and mature partnership with Saudi Arabia. Reform there promises to make the Kingdom more dynamic, more prosperous, and the region more stable. It is in our interests to make sure that the relationship is sound, to assist with the vision of reform and not shy away from expressing our views and our values to our partners in the Kingdom.

If confirmed as Ambassador, I pledge to work tirelessly on the many issues that will inevitably come between the United States and Saudi Arabia. It would be my great honor to lead our diplomatic team in Saudi Arabia, to advance U.S. interests and values in the Kingdom, and to counter the forces that threaten U.S. national security.

I am grateful for the opportunity to appear before you today, and I look forward to answering your questions.

[The prepared statement of General Abizaid follows:]

PREPARED STATEMENT OF JOHN P. ABIZAID

Chairman Risch, Ranking Member Menendez, members of the committee, I am honored to appear before you today as President Trump's nominee to be the next U.S. Ambassador to the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia. I am grateful to the President for his nomination and to Secretary Pompeo for his trust and confidence. If confirmed by the Senate, I pledge to work closely with the members of the committee to advance U.S. interests and values in Saudi Arabia and the region.

I would first like to thank my wife, Kathy, as well as my children Sharon, Christine, and David for their love, support, and service to this nation.

Having served for a considerable part of my life in the Middle East—including in Lebanon, Israel, Jordan, and of course Iraq—I am aware of both how difficult this region can be, and just how essential it is to U.S. interests and national security.

Today, there are an abundance of active forces that would foment regional insecurity. Iran continues its expansionist, destabilizing foreign policy. In Yemen, Iran helps the Houthis obtain weapons and equipment used to attack Yemeni civilians and bordering countries. In Syria, Iran props up Bashar al Assad, who has terrorized his own citizens with unspeakable brutality. In Lebanon, Iran funnels weapons to Hizballah, strains the fragile Lebanese democracy, and threatens our ally Israel.

The United States also continues to combat the scourge of international terrorism. While nearly vanquished on the ground, ISIS remains a potent threat to the United States and our allies across the globe. Al Qa'ida in the Arabian Peninsula (AQAP) maintains a foothold in Yemen and seeks to inflict harm on those who do not agree with its false vision of Islam.

Our relationships with regional partners are essential to countering these and other threats we face. We cannot protect the homeland, safeguard our citizens overseas, and promote our core interests and values without these partners. It is my firm conviction that Saudi Arabia has been, and will continue to be, an essential partner.

I am clear-eyed about the challenges facing the U.S.-Saudi partnership. I know that the Saudis must do more to end the suffering of the Yemeni people and build peace there. I know there must be accountability for the terrible murder of journalist Jamal Khashoggi. If confirmed as ambassador, I pledge to work tirelessly on both these issues, and to urge our Saudi partners to reach the highest standards of accountability.

Despite these challenges, I firmly believe these objectives are achievable through close, continued engagement and cooperation with the Kingdom. We are able to influence, steer, and advance U.S. national security interests and values because of our ability to have honest, often difficult conversations with Saudi leadership. Any scaling back of that relationship diminishes our ability to secure vital American national security interests in the region, and cedes influence to our competitors around the world.

Mr. Chairman, Ranking Member Menendez, members of the committee, I submit to you the important ways in which this relationship benefits the United States and promotes regional and global security.

During my nearly four decades serving in the U.S. military, it was my highest honor and duty to protect and defend the United States and its citizens. If confirmed as ambassador, my top priority will continue to be safeguarding America and its people. Given my experience in the region, I have no doubt that the U.S-Saudi security partnership is essential to doing so.

The Kingdom of Saudi Arabia plays a critical role in countering global terrorism and threats to U.S. interests. The Kingdom hosted the inaugural conference of the Global Coalition to Defeat ISIS in Jeddah in September 2014, helping set in motion the Coalition's successful push to defeat the so-called Islamic State. As Custodian of the Two Holy Mosques, King Salman and King Abdullah before him swiftly condemned ISIS and enacted tough enforcement and criminal penalties for Saudis who sought to travel to fight in Iraq and Syria. Critically, Saudi Arabia has led Coalition efforts to disrupt ISIS financial and facilitation networks, and to build Coalition members' capacity to target such networks and counter illicit financial flows.

Our military-to-military cooperation with the Kingdom is also essential to countering threats and protecting American lives. The Houthis have fired numerous missiles and rockets into Saudi Arabia—home to over 80,000 Americans—specifically targeting populated areas and civilian infrastructure in Riyadh, Jeddah, and elsewhere, including Saudi Aramco facilities and vessels in Red Sea shipping lanes.

The United States and Saudi Arabia joined forces in May 2017 to inaugurate and co-chair the Terrorist Financing Targeting Center, a U.S.-Gulf Cooperation Council initiative to disrupt a broad range of new and evolving terrorist financing networks including ISIS, al Qa'ida, Hizballah, the IRGC-Qods Force, Lashkar-e-Tayyiba, the Taliban, and the Haqqani Network.

The Kingdom of Saudi Arabia also runs among the most successful deradicalization programs in the world. The Care Rehabilitation Center in Riyadh has helped thousands of individuals convicted of terrorism turn away from poisonous ideologies.

The Kingdom remains a key diplomatic player in the Middle East and supports an active role for the United States in maintaining stability in the region. Specifically, it is a central partner in combatting Iran's expansionist and destructive foreign policy throughout the region.

Take, for example, Iraq. After decades of estrangement, the Kingdom and Iraq are forging closer ties. At the heart of this rapprochement is the promise of economic investment and relationship building that bucks traditional ethnic and sectarian lines. This was dramatically evidenced by Moqtada al Sadr's visit to Riyadh in July 2017—an event that would have been unthinkable a decade earlier—as well as numerous other high-level visits between Riyadh and Baghdad. These steps are critically important in buttressing U.S. efforts to bring peace and security to Iraq, in demonstrating to the Iraqi people an alternative to Tehran, and in ensuring the lasting defeat of ISIS and forestalling the resurgence of Islamic extremist terrorist groups in Iraq.

The Kingdom has also been a central U.S. partner in diplomatic efforts to forge a political solution to the Syrian civil war, one that ensures Iran is not granted a permanent foothold in Damascus. Saudi Arabia has allowed at least 500,000 Syrians to enter the Kingdom since the Syrian conflict began in 2011. This fact is little known, yet its importance cannot be overstated. Rather than languish in refugee camps in neighboring countries or make the treacherous journey to Europe in search of asylum, these Syrians in Saudi Arabia are permitted to work and are provided basic education and healthcare free of charge. In addition, Saudi Arabia provided $100 million in funding for U.S. government stabilization programs in northeast

Syria so that Syrians recovering from years of ISIS rule could begin to rebuild their lives.

On numerous other important U.S. foreign policy objectives—including promoting Middle East Peace and negotiating Afghanistan reconciliation—the United States is best served by recognizing the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia's considerable influence and by partnering with the Kingdom to advance mutually beneficial policy objectives.

Mr. Chairman, Ranking Member Menendez, members of the committee, I know you are concerned about the situation in Yemen, as am I. The conflict there enters its fifth year this month; over 80 percent of Yemeni citizens need some kind of international aid to make it by each day. By any measure, the situation in Yemen is a political, humanitarian, and security crisis that urgently needs resolution.

In this difficult space, the administration believes it is firmly in the United States' national security interest to provide support to the Saudi-led Coalition. Doing so bolsters the self-defense capabilities of our partners and reduces the risk of harm to civilians.

At the same time as it fights to deter a threat on its border, Saudi Arabia has provided over $3 billion in stabilization and economic support for the Yemeni people. I understand Saudi funding helped stabilize the Yemen central bank as the country's currency verged on collapse last year. Saudi Arabia, along with the United Arab Emirates, provided $970 million toward the United Nation's 2018 Yemen Humanitarian Response Plan and, since November, pledged another $750 million.

Inside the Kingdom, Saudi leadership are undertaking wide-ranging reforms under the banner of "Vision 2030" to diversify the Saudi economy, create more professional opportunities for Saudi citizens, and expand women's roles in public and professional life. Chairman Risch, Ranking Member Menendez, members of the committee, these are positive developments which, if confirmed, I will strongly advocate for as ambassador. I feel particularly strongly that Saudi Arabia, like any nation, will benefit greatly by expanding the space for women in public and professional life. Advocating for women's rights is a critical goal for U.S. foreign policy, and I fully commit to making this a key element of my potential tenure as ambassador.

While I am encouraged by the economic and social reforms the Saudis have instituted in recent years, I am fully aware of the disturbing reports that political, human rights, and women activists—as well as Dr. Walid al Fitaihi, a U.S. citizen—have been detained and at times allegedly tortured by the Saudi government. While we should encourage reforms that are beneficial to U.S. interests and represent our values, we should also speak frankly to our partners when they do wrong.

The administration has made clear that the United States is concerned by the detention of these Saudis activists and takes all allegations of abuse seriously. The administration continues to urge the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia, and all governments, to ensure fair trial guarantees, freedom from arbitrary and extrajudicial detention, transparency, and rule of law. If confirmed as Ambassador, I will continue to call on the government of Saudi Arabia to treat prisoners and detainees humanely, and to ensure that allegations of abuse are investigated quickly and thoroughly. I will stress to the Saudis that political repression endangers and undercuts the ambitious and positive goals of Vision 2030.

If confirmed, I will also continue to press Saudi leadership on the heinous killing of journalist Jamal Khashoggi. The President and Secretary Pompeo have been clear that Saudi Arabia must hold accountable the individuals responsible for this horrific crime, including high-ranking members of the Saudi government. If confirmed, I will continue to deploy the full range of diplomatic tools to demand accountability and find justice for Mr. Khashoggi.

Outside the realm of security and foreign policy, our bilateral relationship with the Kingdom is anchored by significant economic linkages that benefit the United States. We are Saudi Arabia's second largest export market, U.S. exports to the Kingdom support 165,000 U.S. jobs, and our trade surplus now tops $5.4 billion. Saudi Arabia's foreign direct investment in the United States exceeded $14 billion in 2018 alone. These investments support thousands of American businesses and jobs across the United States. American energy companies rely on Saudi cooperation, and Saudi-American cooperation is behind the largest oil refinery in the United States in Port Arthur, TX.

Finally, I would like to stress the importance of our diplomatic mission in Saudi Arabia and my great desire to lead it. Over 1,000 men and women of numerous nationalities work at Embassy Riyadh, Consulate General Jeddah, and Consulate General Dhahran. They engage Saudi government officials each day to advance America's interests; issue visas for Saudi students and their family members—who total over 100,000 in the United States today; and work to ensure American companies can compete fairly in the Kingdom and greater Middle East. Perhaps most importantly, they work tirelessly to protect the over 80,000 American citizens now living

in Saudi Arabia, and provide consular support to another 20,000 U.S. citizens who make the Haj and Umrah pilgrimages each year.

Mr. Chairman, Ranking Member Menendez, members of the committee, it would be my highest honor to lead this team and to advance U.S. interests and values in Saudi Arabia and the region. I am grateful for the opportunity to appear before you today, and I look forward to answering your questions.

The CHAIRMAN. Thank you very much.

Ambassador Tueller?

STATEMENT OF HON. MATTHEW H. TUELLER, OF UTAH, A CAREER MEMBER OF THE SENIOR FOREIGN SERVICE, CLASS OF MINISTER–COUNSELOR, TO BE AMBASSADOR EXTRAORDINARY AND PLENIPOTENTIARY OF THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA TO THE REPUBLIC OF IRAQ

Ambassador TUELLER. Chairman Risch, Ranking Member Menendez, members of the committee, I am honored to appear before you today as President Trump's nominee to be U.S. Ambassador to Iraq and particularly to be here, along with General Abizaid, with whom I have had the privilege of working before in the region. If we are both confirmed, I look forward to a close and collaborative relationship as we both seek to advance U.S. interests in this important region.

I am grateful to President Trump and to Secretary of State Pompeo for their confidence in me. If I am confirmed by the Senate, I pledge to work closely with the members of this committee to advance U.S. interests in Iraq.

Mr. Chairman, as we begin, I ask that the full written text of my testimony be submitted for the record.

The CHAIRMAN. It will be.

Ambassador TUELLER. I would like to recognize and express great appreciation to my wife DeNeece who is here with me today and has provided steadfast support throughout my Foreign Service career, including during periods of separation when I served at unaccompanied posts like Iraq and Yemen and during periods where she and other U.S. embassy family members were evacuated from posts in Egypt and Iraq. Along with our five children, DeNeece and I have had the privilege of representing the United States abroad under many challenging and rewarding circumstances. Two of our children are also here today, David and Margaret, as well as our daughter Ayah and two of our grandchildren, Unef and Gin Tueller. I would not be here today without the love and support of my family.

Mr. Chairman, Ranking Member Menendez, members of the committee, I am grateful of your consideration of me to lead one of our largest diplomatic missions in the world. If confirmed, I will draw on my leadership and policy execution experience in the Middle East.

Our relationship with Iraq remains a critical one for the United States, and if confirmed, I will do my utmost to advance U.S. interests there.

Let me stress from the outset there is no greater priority for me than the safety and security of all Americans, whether residing in the homeland or in the Middle East and in Iraq.

Our longstanding principal objective is to bolster Iraq as a sovereign, stable, united, and democratic partner of the United States.

We must remain engaged to ensure that Iraq can fend off the internal and external threats, including threats from Iran, to its sovereignty and its territorial integrity.

Our determination to see Iraq as a pillar of stability in the Middle East stands in stark contrast to Iran's agenda, which seeks to exploit divisions, weaken state institutions, and foster extremism. We cannot turn a blind eye to Iran's interference in Yemen, Lebanon, Bahrain, Syria, and of course, Iraq. Iran and its proxies threaten our interests and the security of our friends and allies, including Iraq's Sunni neighbors and Israel.

Iraq's most pressing need is for continuing assistance that reinforces the primacy of the Iraqi Security Forces, strengthens their capabilities, and deepens their professionalization. Together we must be vigilant to prevent the return of ISIS or the emergence of other terrorist groups.

Our coalition-wide approach to stabilization in liberated areas sets the conditions for more than 4 million internally displaced persons to return home. Much work remains to ensure the remaining 1.8 million remaining internally displaced persons are able to safely and voluntarily return to their communities and rebuild their lives.

The work of our coalition is not over. We and our partners are there at the invitation of the Iraqi government with 2 dozen other countries helping Iraq ensure its gains against ISIS are lasting. This coalition must continue to assist the Iraqi Security Forces as they combat a growing ISIS insurgency.

If confirmed, I will work hard to boost our commercial and economic engagement with Iraq and to provide new opportunities for U.S. businesses and to help Iraq develop its economy to meet the challenges that are growing more acute.

If confirmed, another priority of mine will be assistance to Iraq's persecuted religious communities that ISIS targeted for genocide. I will emphasize the priority we attach to the safety of these communities, and I will support continued U.S. assistance to these groups and will work diligently to promote prospects for their survival in Iraq.

To fully stabilize, Iraq also needs to move toward a vision for national unity in which all of its communities play a part. Iraqi nationalism remains a potent force, and Iraqis are proud of their ancient heritage and culture. ISIS and other unhelpful actors want nothing more than to divide and weaken Iraq. We, on the other hand, will continue to support a strong and independent Iraq.

The administration believes that a strong Kurdish regional government within a unified and federal Iraq is essential to Iraq's long-term stability and to the enduring defeat of ISIS. We are proud of our longstanding and historic partnership with Iraq's Kurdish people.

Senators, if confirmed, I look forward to the support of this committee and an ongoing dialogue to together serve the interests of the American people. Thank you for the opportunity to testify, and I look forward to answering your questions.

[The prepared statement of Ambassador Tueller follows:]

PREPARED STATEMENT OF HON. MATTHEW H. TUELLER

Chairman Risch, Ranking Member Menendez, members of the committee, I am honored to appear before you today as President Trump's nominee to be the next Ambassador of the United States of America to the Republic of Iraq. First, let me express my gratitude to the President and the Secretary of State for their confidence in me. If confirmed by the Senate, I pledge to work closely with the Members of this committee to defend and advance U.S. interests in Iraq.

I would like to recognize my wife DeNeece who is here with me today and express my great appreciation to her. She has provided steadfast support throughout my Foreign Service career, including during periods of separation when I served at unaccompanied posts such as Iraq and Yemen and during periods where she and other U.S. Embassy family members were evacuated from posts in Egypt and Saudi Arabia. Along with our five children, DeNeece and I have had the privilege of representing the United States abroad under many challenging but rewarding circumstances. I would not be here today but for their love and support.

I would also like to thank my friend and colleague Ambassador Doug Silliman who very ably led our Embassy in Baghdad over the last two-and-a-half years. He oversaw the United States' support for the liberation of all ISIS-controlled territory in Iraq, helped coordinate massive international aid to Iraqis struggling to recover from the scourge of ISIS' devastation of large areas of their country, set the stage for Iraq's integration into the global economy and helped marshal international assistance to help rebuild areas that were devastated in the course of the fight against ISIS, all efforts I will build on if confirmed as ambassador.

If confirmed, I will draw on my leadership and policy execution experience in the Middle East for my new duties in Iraq: including service as Ambassador to Yemen, Ambassador to Kuwait, Deputy Chief of Mission in Cairo, and Political Minister Counselor at the U.S. Embassy in Baghdad from 2007-2008 under the leadership of Ambassador Ryan Crocker.

Our relationship with Iraq remains a critical one for the national security interests of the United States, and if confirmed I will do my utmost to advance U.S. interests there. However, let me stress from the outset that there will be no greater priority for me than the safety and security of all Americans residing in Iraq. As a diplomat who participated in the 2007-2008 "surge," I understand the importance of U.S. engagement in Iraq. The next several years will be crucial for Iraq as it struggles to recover from the trauma of ISIS and continues to actively confront a persistent ISIS threat. We stand ready to help as a trusted and valued partner.

Our long-standing principal objective continues to be to bolster Iraq as a sovereign, stable, united, and democratic partner of the United States. We must remain engaged to ensure that Iraq can fend off the internal and external threats, including threats from Iran, to its sovereignty and its territorial integrity.

Our determination to see Iraq become a pillar of stability in the Middle East stands in stark contrast to Iran's agenda, which seeks to exploit divisions, weaken state institutions, and foster extremism. Where the United States seeks to help Iraq build professional security forces loyal to the state, Iran seeks to cultivate irregular forces operating outside the full control of the government. Where the United States seeks to help Iraq ensure the rule of law, Iran encourages the tactics of organized criminal enterprises. Where the United States provides Iraq with expert advice and funding to promote clean drinking water in Basrah, Iran promotes a flood of substandard agricultural products, as well as low-quality pharmaceuticals and illicit drugs like heroin onto Iraqi streets and into Iraqi homes. In short, Iran wants to keep Iraq weak and dependent. If confirmed, I will work to make Iraq strong and sovereign.

I recognize that such plain speaking may make some of Iraq's leaders nervous. They know all too well that for Iraqis, there is a price for speaking up in defense of Iraq's sovereignty. During my service as U.S. Ambassador to Yemen, I saw firsthand how Iran works to undermine regional peace rather than advance it. We cannot turn a blind eye to Iran's interference in Lebanon, Bahrain, and Syria either, and of course Iraq. Iran and its proxies threaten our interests and the security of our friends and allies, including Iraq's Sunni neighbors and Israel.

I would also like Iraqis to know that we do not seek to sever them from Iran, a nation with which they share a border, history, and culture. What we are seeking is for Tehran to have normal relations with Iraq, relations that are rooted not in armed groups and criminal activity, but in trade and exchanges that fully respect the sovereignty of the Iraqi government and people.

To help offset the impact of Iran's harmful meddling in Iraq, we must continue to build on our successful diplomatic efforts to reintegrate Iraq into the region, particularly among Arab states. Good relations between Iraq and neighbors willing to

play a constructive role is a powerful counterweight to Iran's malign influence. As Secretary Pompeo recently observed, last year the Iraqis largely rejected sectarianism in their national election. Under Prime Minister Adil Abd al-Mahdi, President Barham Salih, and Foreign Minister Mohammed Ali al-Hakim, Iraq enjoys an unprecedented relationship with Kuwait and has strengthened ties with Jordan, having received a visit from King Abdullah and inaugurated a joint industrial zone along their border. If confirmed, I will prioritize fostering those revived relationships.

The Strategic Framework Agreement for a Relationship of Friendship and Cooperation remains the foundation for developing U.S.-Iraq relations in a variety of fields especially in the economic sphere and, if confirmed, I will build on that foundation to achieve key U.S. goals for Iraq.

Iraq's most pressing need is for continuing U.S. security assistance that reinforces the primacy of the Iraqi Security Forces, strengthens their capabilities and deepens their professionalization. In support of our partners in the Iraqi Security Forces, the U.S.-led Global Coalition to defeat ISIS helped Iraq regain control over all its territory and train-and-equip nearly 200,000 members of the Iraqi Security Forces. Former Prime Minister Abadi's December 2018 announcement of the liberation of all Iraqi territory from ISIS control was a great moment for Iraq. Together with the U.S.-led Coalition, we must be vigilant to prevent the return of ISIS or the emergence of other terrorist groups.

Our Coalition-wide approach to stabilization in liberated areas set the conditions for more than four million internally displaced persons (IDPs) to return home, with 27 Coalition partners committing over $1 billion to the UNDP's Funding Facility for Stabilization. Much work remains to ensure the remaining 1.8 million remaining IDPs are able to safely and voluntarily return to their communities and rebuild their lives, as well.

The work of our Coalition is not over. We and our partners are there at the invitation of the Iraqi government, with two dozen other countries helping Iraq ensure its gains against ISIS are lasting. The Coalition must continue to assist the Iraqi Security Forces as they conduct targeted counter-terrorism operations and wide-area security at an exceptionally high operational tempo to combat a growing ISIS insurgency. Iraq was instrumental in advancing the Coalition's military campaign in Syria as well, providing valuable artillery support and airstrikes for the Syrian Democratic Forces' offensive just over the border. Iraq's growing ability to act in partnership with us to defeat threats is one of the truly remarkable developments since 2014.

Despite the gains they have made with our support, Iraq's armed forces are stretched by multiple demands and need continued assistance and training to eradicate ISIS remnants, secure Iraq's borders, and become a source of regional stability. Subsequently, the U.S.-led Coalition must continue to build the capacity of Iraq's legitimate and professional security forces.

If confirmed, I will work hard to advance U.S. interests and enhance our commercial and economic engagement with Iraq, providing new opportunities for U.S. businesses. Iraq's economic system is untenable as it is a command economy that relies on the volatility of the oil price to fund its needs.

The government of Iraq estimates that Iraq needs almost $100 billion over the next 10 years for post-ISIS reconstruction and infrastructure repair. If confirmed, I would seek to marshal the resources of the Export-Import bank and the Overseas Private Investment Corporation to allow the U.S. private sector to bring its much-needed expertise to the task of Iraq's reconstruction. I would encourage the government of Iraq to prioritize and budget for key reconstruction projects, and to develop new models to attract international financing. At the same time, I would encourage Gulf Cooperation Council members, other partners, and international organizations to accelerate their pledges made during the February 2018 Iraqi-led reconstruction conference in Kuwait, which generated almost $30 billion in sovereign loan and export credit financing and private sector activity.

If confirmed, I would aim to foster a sustainable Iraqi private sector as an outlet for the 800,000 Iraqis who reach working age every year. The government cannot be the sole source of employment for a country where sixty percent of Iraq's population is under the age of 25. Iraq's current and future stability depends to a large degree on finding work for this disproportionately large youth segment. I would therefore continue our robust economic engagement with the government of Iraq and encourage Iraqi leaders to accelerate the implementation of critical reforms promised by the current government.

I would also push the government of Iraq to tackle the issues of corruption and excessive red tape that are holding back Iraq's true economic potential. To that end, I would commend the government's recent anti-corruption actions and would con-

tinue to support a U.S. funded initiative from the U.N.'s Conference on Trade and Development, which is streamlining some of Iraq's bureaucratic processes, increasing transparency both for the Iraqi public and for U.S. investors. I would attempt to persuade the government of Iraq to modify its deficit-increasing budget which does not live up to its agreement with the International Monetary Fund. This agreement expires in June and I would seek to have both sides negotiate a new program.

A country as wealthy in natural resources as Iraq should be able to produce all of its own electricity. But currently, Iraq flares the majority of its natural gas and at the same time imports a significant amount of overpriced gas from Iran. The World Bank has estimated that Iraq has flared 16 billion cubic meters of gas per year. Not only is this a waste of a resources, but an environmentally unsound practice as well. If captured and processed correctly, Iraq's flared gas could fuel domestic power stations and industries, diversify Iraqi government revenues, and eliminate dependence on Iranian energy imports. It will take years for Iraq to realize its potential, but its government must make decisions now for that to become a reality. I will support the U.S. companies competing for projects in this sector. These projects not only make sense financially and environmentally, but also contribute to our policy of supporting Iraq's autonomy from Iran and denying the Iranian regime revenue.

If confirmed, another priority of mine will be helping the recovery of Iraq's persecuted religious communities, and particularly those that ISIS targeted for genocide. The Administration has programmed nearly $340 million since fiscal year 2017 to support these communities, including life-saving humanitarian assistance, rehabilitating critical infrastructure, clearing explosive remnants of war, psychosocial and legal services, funding justice and accountability efforts, and providing support for local businesses. While we have seen important progress on these initiatives, there is much more to be done, especially on the part of the government of Iraq to restore security to these areas. Supporting pluralism and protecting the rights of minorities is integral to the Administration's effort to defeat ISIS, counter violent extremism, deny Iran the ability to exploit sectarian divisions, and promote religious freedom around the world. If confirmed as Ambassador I will emphasize the priority we attach to the safety of these communities. I will support continued U.S. assistance to these groups and work diligently to promote prospects for their survival in Iraq.

To ensure persecuted religious communities' survival and achieve lasting stability, Iraq needs reconciliation to recover from the trauma of ISIS. We are supporting initiatives toward that end. It is not just physical infrastructure that needs to be rebuilt, it is also the deep emotional scars that remain from years of ISIS depredations. With this in mind, the State Department is overseeing programs that include psychosocial counseling to help victims and family members recover from the trauma that ISIS inflicted on them and their communities. It is especially important for Iraq to work through a law-based process to hold ISIS perpetrators and collaborators accountable. A fundamental part of that process is investigating the sites of ISIS crimes and gathering evidence that investigators can marshal in a court of law. To that end, we fully support the work of the U.N.'s Investigative Team for the Accountability of Da'esh, known as "UNITAD," to exhume mass graves in Iraq and collect other important evidence before it is too late.

To fully stabilize and realize its full potential, Iraq also needs to move further from sectarianism and toward a vision for national unity in which all of its communities play a part. Iraqi nationalism remains a potent force, and Iraqis are proud of their ancient heritage and culture. ISIS and other unhelpful actors want nothing better than to divide and weaken Iraq. We, on the other hand, will continue to support a strong, united Iraq.

The safe and voluntary return of internally displaced persons to their home is another vital element for Iraq's stabilization. Since January 2014, more than six million Iraqis have been displaced. The United States and our partners in the Global Coalition to Defeat ISIS have also provided assistance through the U.N. Development Program's Funding Facility for Stabilization to help set the conditions for more than 4.1 million Iraqis to return home. We are committed to helping create durable solutions, including local integration or safe and voluntary returns, for the 1.8 million who remain displaced. Our Mission in Iraq engages regularly with U.N. humanitarian agencies and non-governmental organizations toward this goal.

It is in our interest to support Iraq's democratic development, but significant challenges remain to the building of durable institutions that will protect the rule of law, the judiciary, and free and fair elections. Iraqis are demanding better governance and ultimately their voices must be heard. Unfortunately, last year's electoral turnout was the lowest since 2005. But through all of the turmoil of the past 15 years, Iraq's core democratic institutions have survived. We will continue to work

with the government of Iraq to provide targeted assistance to help strengthen these critical institutions. I will do my utmost to continue our support for Iraq's democratic development.

The administration believes that a strong Kurdistan Regional government (KRG) within a unified and federal Iraq is essential to Iraq's long-term stability and to the enduring defeat of ISIS. We are proud of our longstanding and historic partnership with Iraq's Kurdish people. Not only has this relationship been a bulwark of resistance to terrorism, but it has also enabled the promotion and advancement of the U.S. "brand," whether commercial, educational, or cultural. If confirmed, I will seek to further strengthen the already strong bonds between our peoples.

Following the Kurds' 2017 independence referendum, we have been focused on helping leaders in Baghdad and in the Iraqi Kurdistan Region (IKR) mend that relationship. They have made great progress since the appointment of Prime Minister Abd al-Mahdi, including an agreement to resume the transportation and export of Kirkuk oil through a KRG-administered pipeline in the north, and another agreement to harmonize customs duties, facilitating the removal of internal GOI customs checkpoints along the internal boundary with the IKR. We will continue to work with Baghdad and Erbil to encourage their efforts to resolve outstanding sources of tension.

If confirmed, I look forward to the support of this committee and an ongoing dialogue to together serve the interests of the American people. Thank you for the opportunity to testify and I look forward to answering your questions.

The CHAIRMAN. Thank you very much.

We are going to proceed to a 5-minute round of questions. I am going to reserve my time, and I am going to yield to the ranking member for opening questions.

Senator MENENDEZ. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Thank you both for your testimony and to your families because they also share in the sacrifice.

General Abizaid, we talked a little bit in the office. The administration has a habit of communicating with foreign governments, including foreign leaders, outside of traditional diplomatic channels. How do you plan to exercise your authority as chief of mission? Will you insist on remaining fully informed and briefed of all White House and administration officials' interactions with the Crown Prince and other members of the royal court?

Mr. ABIZAID. Well, thank you, Senator.

Yes, I will insist upon that, and I am also an old soldier and I know my chain of command. My chain of command is the President through the Secretary of Defense—or Secretary of State. A Freudian slip. I am sorry.

[Laughter.]

The CHAIRMAN. Understandable.

Mr. ABIZAID. I also will join with the many interlocutors that will come out from Washington and from other places in our country and talk to them because I think it is usually important for me to explain what is going on in Saudi Arabia from America's point of view and to give a point of view and an opportunity for them to see what is going on.

Senator MENENDEZ. And I raise the question because it is very difficult to be the Ambassador, the chief of mission, and have someone else from the outside say, "you do not have to listen to that, just listen to what we tell you." And that would be an impossible—even within a chain of command, that is an impossible way to operate. So I hope you will assert yourself, if confirmed as our Ambassador there, while working with others, but nonetheless assert yourself as the chief of mission.

I do not think I need to tell you that Congress has become increasingly concerned over the Saudi-led coalition conduct in Yemen. This is not to absolve the Houthis of their own abuses, but we do not sell arms to the Houthis. They are not a legitimate nation state with whom we share diplomatic relations. Repeated stories of U.S.-supplied bombs hitting weddings, funerals, and school buses are simply unacceptable. The administration's apparent prioritization of arms sales over fundamental values is not acceptable.

So I have found this so incredibly challenging that I have placed a hold on a series of offensive weapon sales to the Saudi government pending complete, verifiable information from the State and Defense Department about how the Saudis are using American-made weapons.

Can you speak to me about how you will address this issue if you are confirmed, as well as what will you say to the Saudis about their continuing engagement in the Yemen conflict?

Mr. ABIZAID. Thank you, Senator.

I think it is very important that the Saudis find the path towards peace in Yemen. It is in their interests. It is in the interests of the government of Yemen. It is in the interest of the region.

It is also important that in the peace that is found, it is not found in such a way that there is a Hezbollah-like militia that is underpinned by the IRGC Qods Force that is able to operate freely in a free and independent Yemen.

As far as competence in the operations conducted by the coalition there, I think they have much work to do. It is very important for us to continue to talk to them about the targeting system, about the way that they go about hitting the various targets, about the professionalization of the forces, and that when mistakes are made, that they do like we do, which is convene a board of officers, talk about the mistakes, and then take the corrective action necessary to gain better and better expertise.

I am hopeful that there is a way to move forward with regard to easing the humanitarian problems of Yemen, and we will continue, if I am confirmed, to tell the Saudi government of the need to do so.

Senator MENENDEZ. I appreciate that.

Our goal is ultimately to end the conflict in Yemen, and I hope that you will move the Saudis in that direction.

Let me, in the last seconds that I have, get a series of yeses or noes from you on this set of questions.

We have seen alarming reports of both Emiratis and Saudis transferring a serious U.S.-origin weapon system to third party fighters on the ground. Will you engage with the Saudis to have them understand that we do not accept their transfer of our weapons that we sell to them to others?

Mr. ABIZAID. Yes.

Senator MENENDEZ. Will you continue to press the Saudi government to fully account for the murder of Jamal Khashoggi?

Mr. ABIZAID. Yes.

Senator MENENDEZ. Would you ultimately commit to ensuring that if the administration moves forward, which I do not think it has—and I know Senator Markey is very interested in this—in any

type of civilian nuclear agreement that we move toward the gold standard?

Mr. ABIZAID. Yes.

Senator MENENDEZ. Thank you very much.

The CHAIRMAN. Thank you.

Senator Rubio?

Senator RUBIO. Thank you both for being here.

And, General, thank you for being willing to take—I actually think this is the toughest assignment in the world right now in our diplomatic corps. Saudi Arabia, as you well know, is an important strategic partner on combating terrorism, on confronting Iran. They also are our most difficult partner right now because it almost asks us to agree to stay silent on grotesque violations of human rights, both domestically and abroad.

And their Crown Prince is not making things easier. He is increasingly making it untenable. He is reckless. He is ruthless. He has a penchant for escalation, for taking high risks, confrontational on his foreign policy approach, and I think increasingly willing to test the limits of what he can get away with with the United States.

Anyone who thinks that is an unfair assessment of the young man should look at what he has done in the last 2 years. It seems like something out of a James Bond movie. He has kidnapped the Prime Minister of Lebanon. Kidnapped the Prime Minister of Lebanon. He kicked out the Ambassador of Canada, canceled flights to Toronto, cut off investments, recalled all their students in Canada over a tweet or a couple tweets from the Canadian Foreign Minister regarding human rights. And he has fractured the important alliance with the Gulf kingdoms. He has—obviously we know—ordered I believe and all the evidence I believe strongly indicates he ordered or knew of efforts to murder Jamal Khashoggi and to do so in a third country in a diplomatic facility.

By the way, domestically he is ruthless. We know the case of Saif Badawi who has been sentenced to 10 years in jail and a thousand lashes for blogging.

And then we have the case of women activists, upwards of 11 at one point, but who have been brutally tortured and mistreated, whipped, beaten, electrocuted, sexually harassed in the basement of what some call the Palace of Terror.

And then we have a United States citizen, a doctor, Walid Fitaihi, a Harvard trained physician, who recently was slapped, blindfolded, stripped to his underwear, bound to a chair, shocked with electricity, all apparently in an effort to get him to provide evidence against a family friend or a relative through marriage, and then reports as recently as yesterday and today that the families had their home raided in retaliation for family members here in the U.S. who have had the audacity, according to the Saudis, to come to Capitol Hill and tell the stories of their family members.

And then, of course, to top it all off, which is a great shame to an American company, you have Google and Apple, but apparently Google has already made this decision. There is an app in Saudi Arabia called Absher. Here is what is translates to roughly. It is called "yes, sir." That is the name of the app. Here is what allows men to do. It allows them to see where the women under their

watch are. It allows them to cancel their passports. It allows them to look at their travel and flight logs. Google says that they are going to keep selling it because it does not violate their terms of service. We are still waiting on Apple. I mean, it is just stunning.

Anyway, the point being I guess I have given all this to you. I guess that is the bad news of this assignment that you have agreed to take on, to great credit to you.

But how do we balance this? How do we balance all of this with this important regional and strategic partnership? Because this guy is making it harder. He has gone full gangster, and it is difficult to work with a guy like that no matter how important the relationship is.

And welcome to the committee.

[Laughter.]

Mr. ABIZAID. It is a great honor to be here, Senator Rubio.

Senator, I appreciate your concern. There are many difficult problems. I would like to make the current problems short-term problems as we work quickly to try to fix them to the best of our ability.

Our relationship with Saudi Arabia is bigger than the relationship just with the Crown Prince. It is all about a nation. It is about a government. It is about a king. It is about the oil minister. It is about many, many nodes of people that are interested in moving the Kingdom forward in a better way in the 21st century.

And so I think that as I move forward and learn more about the Kingdom—and I want to emphasize how much I respect the Kingdom and the people there—I will look for every way possible to find out what has gone on in the short-term problems and enhance the need to make the long-term problems work.

Arab societies and Saudi Arabia in particular have many nodes of interests. These nodes of interest need to be engaged by us in order to find out ways to move forward and solve these problems.

Senator RUBIO. Just as an aside, one of the things that I think will come up during your time there is what has already been mentioned about the potential for a nuclear agreement. Senator Markey and I recently introduced legislation to increase congressional oversight over any civil nuclear cooperation agreement, or 123 agreement. Secretary Pompeo has already said he wants a 123 agreement which would not permit enrichment. And I just strongly encourage you to be a strong voice in that regard because someone who has a penchant for reckless, who has a penchant for escalatory foreign policies and all the other things I have highlighted, to retain the capability to enrich would be I believe an incredibly dangerous precedent to set. I do not know how you serve there for 2 years or longer and not run into this issue at some point because I, no doubt, think it will become a prime issue here very shortly.

Mr. ABIZAID. I appreciate that issue, Senator.

And I had failed to acknowledge the issues concerning women's rights. I have two daughters and a wife. I will be very interested in helping in the reform effort to move the rights of 50 percent of the population there forward in a way that brings their talents and energy to the surface.

The CHAIRMAN. Thank you.

Senator Shaheen?

Senator SHAHEEN. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

And let me welcome both you, Mr. Tueller, and you, General Abizaid, and thank you for being willing to consider taking on these difficult posts at this very important time.

I would like to begin with you, General Abizaid, and add my support for everything that Senator Rubio said and add one more concern to that, and that is that the United States still is owed $331 million from Saudi Arabia for air refueling that we provided the coalition in Yemen.

I think the list of human rights violations is so long it is hard to comprehend what is going on there. And I would like your assurances as Ambassador that you will consistently raise the issue of human rights violations in a way that expresses to the Saudis the grave concern that we have in the United States about what they are doing.

Mr. ABIZAID. I will, Senator.

Senator SHAHEEN. And can you talk about how as Ambassador what opportunities you have to help hold the Saudis accountable for what they are doing? It has been 2 years since we have had an Ambassador in Saudi Arabia without any oversight or concerns expressed on some of these issues.

Mr. ABIZAID. Senator, ambassadors do not hold countries accountable. Countries hold countries accountable. It is the role of the United States to ensure that the Saudis know what we stand for, what we believe, and what the relationship needs to be to move forward. I will ensure that those ideals, those values, those mutual interests are conveyed as clearly as I can to the government of Saudi Arabia. And I look forward to working with them not in an adversarial way, but in a way that promotes our ability to have the partnership move forward that makes the region more secure.

Senator SHAHEEN. And I know that several people have mentioned the Khashoggi murder. Under the Global Magnitsky Act, there is a responsibility for the administration to respond to that murder. Can you talk about what responsibility you might have as an Ambassador to try and ensure that the administration is responsive under the Global Magnitsky Act?

Mr. ABIZAID. Yes. The Secretary of State has said on many occasion that we demand transparency and accountability. It seems to me that we will continue to do that throughout. We probably do not have all the facts. We need to get all the facts, and I will convey them, to the best of my ability, to the Secretary and to the national command authority under this committee.

Senator SHAHEEN. Thank you.

Ambassador Tueller, one of the challenges that we have heard from the Iraqis in response to our continued presence there is the differences of opinion among the Iraqi people about our continued military presence in Iraq. As Ambassador, how could you help address the concerns that the Iraqi people have?

Ambassador TUELLER. Thank you, Senator.

Our military presence and the presence of other coalition members is there at the invitation and request of the Iraqi government. I believe there are many, many of the Iraqi political leaders but most importantly Iraqi military leaders who want that presence there. They understand the importance that that presence provides

to enhancing their capability to providing training and support. So I think we need to rely on those friends, those who understand the impact that our presence has and use that leverage to make sure that that is an enduring contribution to Iraq's security.

Senator SHAHEEN. And one of the principles of this new policy with respect to Syria is the assumption that we can continue to support the Syrian Democratic Forces in Syria with the forces that we have in Iraq. Do you have any view on how successful that kind of policy can be?

Ambassador TUELLER. Senator, in both cases, I think we face similar concerns about the security threat, whether it is the resurgence of ISIS or the role that Iran or other outside actors play in fomenting instability. It has always been my belief that our presence in the region, our engagement, whether it is diplomatically, militarily, economically, serves as a stabilizing presence in the region. And of course, our presence in Iraq I think has importance beyond just the borders of Iraq and signals to any potential threats that we are there prepared to defend our interests.

Senator SHAHEEN. Thank you. I appreciate that.

I am out of time, but I hope that you will address the role of Iranian influence with the new Iraqi government at some point in this hearing.

Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

The CHAIRMAN. Senator Johnson?

Senator JOHNSON. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

I want to start out by thanking the nominees and their families for their past service and sacrifice and for your future service and sacrifice.

We are faced with some stark realities, you know, a reality that we do not particularly like, but ones we have to deal with. Senator Rubio was talking about—I liked the way he termed it. The Crown Prince has gone full gangster. We find the behavior completely unacceptable. But at the same time, as you said in your testimony, General Abizaid, we need a sound relationship with Saudi Arabia. The reality is that Iran is the malign influence and needs to be countered.

So I would like both of you talking about how—you mentioned it in your testimony, but take a little bit more time. How important is our relationship to having a sound relationship with Saudi Arabia vis-a-vis Iran? General Abizaid?

Mr. ABIZAID. Thanks, Senator.

How important is it? It is a vital national interest that we have a sound relationship with Saudi Arabia to counter malign Iranian influence.

And I think it is important for all of us to recognize the difference between the Iranian people and the mullahs and the IRGC Qods Force that control the security apparatus of Iran. It is my view that sooner or later the good people of Iran, which are many, will get tired of the violence and the drains on their treasury and will start to move towards a better future.

It is essential that as this happens, reform in Saudi Arabia moves apace. Saudi Arabia is the linchpin. It has been for a long time. It will continue to be. And I am confident that if we face our

problems with them squarely and not mince any words about it, that we will be able to solve them.

Senator JOHNSON. Ambassador Tueller, let me ask you the question slightly differently. What are our alternatives? If we do not have a sound relationship with Saudi Arabia, where do we go to from there?

Ambassador TUELLER. Senator, I think it is sobering to imagine the region without that important security relationship between the United States and Saudi Arabia. One of the main differences between Iran and Saudi Arabia in my view from the perspective of the U.S. diplomat is Saudi Arabia wants us in the region, wants us engaged in helping to address the region's underlying problems. Iran and its proxies want us out of the region. They see that their agenda is served by having the United States disengaged and not countering their malign influence. So I think it is very, very important that we work to ensure that that relationship with Saudi Arabia allows us to continue to project our influence into the region.

Senator JOHNSON. None of us like the situation, the reality that is in Yemen right now. You are currently the Ambassador. In my office during our meeting, one of the questions I asked you is—because we are all counting on a peace process. We all say, you know, military solution. We have to have a peace process. But realistically what incentive do the Houthis have to agree to a peace process?

Ambassador TUELLER. Senator, I hate to begin the answer to any question with saying it is complicated, but of course, Yemen is complicated. Even the Houthis I do not think can be viewed as monolithic. There are elements that currently are aligned with or fighting with the Houthis out of ambition, out of self-interest, northern tribes or elements that are still loyal to former President Saleh. I think as we continue to apply pressure to them, what I hope is that we can create conditions where some of those elements will begin to abandon sort of the Houthi ideological project, a project that, because it is an Iranian project, really in Yemen will never bring stability to Yemen.

You are absolutely right, sir, that there is no way that the Houthis are going to voluntarily give up their weapons and just become a part of a power sharing arrangement. So we need to continue to apply military, economic, political, security pressure on them.

Senator JOHNSON. Let us face it. Iran has no incentive to pressure the Houthis into some kind of a settlement. They would preferred a failed state in which they can operate and continue to spread their influence.

So again, that being the case, absent military pressure, there is really no way we are going to come to a peace agreement. Correct?

Ambassador TUELLER. Sir, I think that is correct. I would point out, of course, as I speak of Iran and I am sure as you do, we are really in many respects talking about the IRGC Quds Force, a malign element. I believe if the people of Iran came to understand that their government is spending hundreds of millions of dollars in Yemen, a country far from their borders where they have no strategic interest, while they are suffering economic hardships, that perhaps the voice of the Iranian people can help to bend their policy towards something more constructive.

Senator JOHNSON. Thank you, Mr. Ambassador.

The CHAIRMAN. Thank you, Senator Johnson.

Mr. Tueller, your comments about the sobering thought of us not being aligned with Saudi Arabia in the region and being gone from Saudi Arabia I think are very insightful. Having said that, I think that the message needs to be strong, and I am sure General Abizaid will carry it. They are making it very difficult for us right now, and the Crown Prince particularly is making this very, very difficult for us. There are boundaries and that is a real problem. It is a serious problem, and it is going to have to be addressed by the Saudis and by the Crown Prince. Thank you.

It is Senator Murphy's turn.

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

Thank you both for your willingness to serve. I hope we get you to your posts as quickly as possible. Thanks to your family as well.

Even those of us who have been the longest, most vocal critics of Saudi Arabia do not wish for us to walk away from what is an incredibly important relationship, an important counterterrorism relationship. Saudi Arabia has played a role for good in the detente in the region between Israel and the Gulf states.

But the relationship today is just completely upside down between the United States and Saudi Arabia. If you knew nothing about the history of this country and the history of Saudi Arabia and you watched the conduct of this relationship over the course of the last year, you would get the impression that Saudi Arabia is the great power and that the United States is a dependent junior partner. After the murder of Jamal Khashoggi, the Saudis did not come here to explain what happened. Our Secretary of State went there to do a showy photo op. The person in the administration that seems to be in charge of the relationship is someone who has absolutely no history with respect to foreign policy in the region.

And so the reason why so many of us think that it is necessary for us to take action to reset the relationship is not because we want to walk away from it, but because we need to put ourselves back in charge of this relationship and make clear that the way in which we have been treated and our residents have been treated is unacceptable.

That being said, General Abizaid, I want to turn to a slightly different part of our relationship. We do have this important counterterrorism relationship with Saudi Arabia, but as has been said, Saudi Arabia historically has been both a fire fighter and an arsonist when it comes to the fight against terrorism in that they certainly apply pressure on the most radical elements in the region, but they also have exported a version of Islam that forms the building blocks of extremist movements, a conservative and tolerant brand of Salafist, Wahabist Islam that they talk about wanting to control but still seem to be spending a lot of time pushing money out into the region and into the world.

You have written about this. You have given a lot of thought to this. How do you predict approaching this sensitive issue as Ambassador?

Mr. ABIZAID. Senator, it is a very thoughtful question.

The time that I spent as the Director of the Combating Terrorism Center at West Point gave me an opportunity to look at this pretty

deeply. And at least I can report to you, based on my last visit out there, that the situation is getting better. And while we spend a lot of time talking about what the Crown Prince has not done or what he has done that is malign, we should also say that he has sent a very clear message that he favors a more tolerant view of Saudi Wahabi Islam. And I see evidence of that.

It is not just him, of course. It is the whole country that wants to move forward. The young people want to move forward. They are happy not to see the religious police on the streets. They are happy to be able to have the opportunity for women to drive. But it cannot just be a PR issue. It needs to be a deep societal change issue. And I believe that the country, the country's leadership is committed to that, and we need to help them move forward to the extent that we can.

Senator MURPHY. The locking up of women dissidents is not necessarily a great advertisement that you are willing to push for a more tolerant version of Islam. But I appreciate the fact that you have spent time thinking about this, and I hope that you continue to work on it.

Ambassador Tueller, I wanted to ask you one specific question because you have been on the ground as our chief diplomat in and around Yemen for the last several years.

Reports emerged a few months ago that our coalition partners, the Saudis and the Emiratis, had transferred American weapons to AQAP-linked fighters in Yemen. And in fact, in the wake of these reports, the UAE admitted to having done such.

Let me ask you, when did the administration, when did you learn about these transfers?

Ambassador TUELLER. Mr. Senator, of course, I saw the same press reports recently that you had seen. I believe we all saw back in 2015 some similar reports that there had been some weapons transfers. I know that CENTCOM and DOD is investigating this, trying to track down exactly where and when there might have been unauthorized transfers. In the case of weapons that we had earlier provided to the Yemeni security forces back in 2010, 2008, we know that some of those weapon systems probably have fallen out of the control of Yemeni legitimate forces following the Houthi-led coupe.

Senator MURPHY. And what are the consequences of that?

Ambassador TUELLER. Sir, we all understand absolutely and take very seriously the end-use monitoring of our weapons transfers, and we expect countries, when we transfer weapons, to adhere very, very closely. And we do not just expect that. We follow up with systems to make sure that we can track and hold countries accountable.

Senator MURPHY. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

The CHAIRMAN. Thank you. Well thought out, Senator Murphy.

Senator Romney?

Senator ROMNEY. Thank you, Mr. Chairman and Ranking Member Menendez.

Thank you, General and Ambassador, for being here. Thank you in particular for a lifetime of service to the greatest nation on earth and to the cause of freedom. The sacrifice that you have both made in very different ways, but enormous sacrifice putting yourself in

harm's way and in danger, often being gone for long periods of time from your loved ones and the country of your heritage is most commendable, and I feel it is an honor to be with you and an honor to have you willing to serve yet again in a place of great challenge.

As we contemplate the outrage of what is occurring in Saudi Arabia and what has occurred there, as we contemplate the extraordinary harm and pain and the suffering of civilians in Yemen, and we consider much of what goes on in the parts of the Middle East, there is sometimes a sentiment amongst our members and amongst the American people to say why are we there. Why do we not just leave? Why do we not just get out of the Middle East and let the Sunnis and the Shias and the Iranians and the Saudis do what they are going to do and we will just stand back in our hemisphere and just not worry about it? That is not a sentiment that I share, but I would be interested, in the moments we have, to hear from both of you as to why we are involved in the Middle East and why we are involved in Yemen, what the significance is of those things for the citizens of the United States. Mr. Tueller, why do we not begin with you?

Ambassador TUELLER. Thank you very much, Senator.

In the case of Yemen, the United States has important interests. We want to ensure that there are no terrorist groups that can arise in Yemen or use the territory there to mount attacks against us or our friends and allies.

We want to make sure that there is freedom of navigation through the strategic waterways around Yemen. Much of the world's trade passes through the Bab-el-Mandeb and, of course to contemplate that Iran or a hostile power would be able to control that I think is of great strategic interest to the United States.

We want to make sure that our friends and allies in the region have secure borders, that they do not feel that they are being threatened by groups like the Houthis that kind of act on behalf of Iran as armed proxies in these countries.

And then, Mr. Senator, there is another important interest I think that as Americans we have and that is the humanitarian situation. We do not give in to hopelessness. We do not give in to cynicism. I think all of us react the same way when we see pictures, whether it is in Yemen or other parts of the world, where innocent civilians are suffering from consequences of war or the actions of irresponsible governments. So as the United States, we have an interest in mitigating that humanitarian challenge.

One of the things that I often feel badly about is because we have the relationships with Saudi Arabia and understandably we hold them to a higher account, we do focus on the consequences of Saudi actions. But almost 100 percent of the humanitarian catastrophe in Yemen has been caused by the Iranian-backed Houthis that overthrew the government, destroyed the institutions of state, caused approximately a 40 percent decline in the GDP of the country. I see very, very little reporting, for example, of the millions and millions of mines that the Houthis have planted around the country that in fact cause more civilian casualties and will continue to cause civilian casualties going into the future. So that is a great concern, and I think the American people need to be concerned about the humanitarian issues.

Thank you.

Senator ROMNEY. Thank you.

Mr. ABIZAID. Thank you, Senator Romney.

Extremism and sectarian violence is the curse of the Middle East. And extremism, unfortunately, is not just a curse for the people in the Middle East. It is a curse for all of us, recently seeing what happens when an extremist attack happens between two nuclear-armed powers like India and Pakistan. We have a responsibility to do our best to help the people in the region keep extremism from gaining the upper hand.

When I think back to the days of the ISIS offensives not far behind us, it was terrifying to me to think of the idea that Iraq could become an ISIS-dominated state.

Combating extremism requires constant work on the part of the good people in the region and the United States helping people help themselves to defend themselves against it. As long as Iranian state-backed Shia extremism and ISIS and al Qaeda-type extremism on the Sunni side exist, it is important for us to stay engaged. And it is important for us to move in a direction that allows the people in the region to have a better future so they do not fall prey to the extremist narrative of lies.

When I think about the future of the region, if countries can reform, if countries can embrace their own populations, there is a chance for a much better path ahead.

I do not, by the way, believe in a large presence of American forces in occupation. It is counterproductive to getting the job done. Let us help the people in the region help themselves.

And in particular, in the case of Saudi Arabia, their counterterrorism activities, in conjunction with our own, have been very, very meaningful in putting somewhat of a damper on the extremism that we see so frequently throughout the region.

The CHAIRMAN. Thank you. Thank you, Senator Romney.

Senator Kaine?

Senator KAINE. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

And congratulations to each of you. You are very, very well qualified for these positions, and I appreciate your service.

General Abizaid, I would like to start with you. Jamal Khashoggi was a Virginia resident. The family lives in Virginia. And I want to raise up another individual who has a Virginia connection just to exemplify the human rights challenges that I hope you will grapple with as Ambassador. Aziza al-Yusef.

Aziza al-Yusef is a legal permanent resident of the United States. She came to Richmond to study computer science at Virginia Commonwealth University a long time ago, got a computer science degree, moved back to Saudi Arabia, and as a Saudi citizen, has taught computer science in Saudi Arabia to women for nearly 30 years. You have brought wonderful families with you today. She is a mother of five. She is a grandmother of eight. And she passionately believes that women should be treated as equal human beings. She has been engaged in the protests about women being able to drive. She has been very active to try to reform and end the guardianship system that essentially makes women surveilled property of a man. She has been very active in protests with respect to lax treatment of domestic violence by men against women,

all while raising her family and teaching computer science in Saudi Arabia.

She was imprisoned in May with a group of women and men who had been advocating for the right of Saudi women to drive. She was imprisoned after the driving restriction was lifted, and the interpretation of that by most has been when the driving restriction is lifted, we want to send the message you have no rights. We are giving you a privilege. But by then imprisoning all the activists, men and women, who had been advocating for women's equality in driving, it was essentially a message to everyone you cannot protest. You have no rights. We are doing this as a privilege.

And Amnesty International and other organizations indicate that Aziza al-Yusef and the others who have been imprisoned have been tortured, held, and they can see their families once a month.

This is a grandmother of eight, a mother of five, who has spent her whole life educating Saudi women to be computer scientists.

And I just will say, General Abizaid, this is an important relationship, but for me it is sort of a proxy of a nation's authoritarianism, extremism, corruption if they treat women the way these women are being treated for simply advocating that they should have basic equal rights.

And so you have the background to do this job and do it very, very well, but I hope the human rights aspect of the portfolio and the treatment of these individuals who have ties to the United States will be a top priority for you.

Mr. ABIZAID. Senator, you have my word. It will be.

Senator KAINE. Thank you.

To Ambassador Tueller, is Iraq an ally?

Ambassador TUELLER. Sir, I think that the relationship between Iraq and the United States is an extremely important one that serves both our interests. I have outlined some of those common interests, particularly in security in the region. And I expect that while I am there, I will be able to continue to work with Iraq as a partner and ally of the United States.

Senator KAINE. Thank you for that. And I share it. I think we are partners. I think we are allies. There is a lot of work to do to make that relation strong.

As you pointed out, we are in Iraq militarily now at their invitation. We are not occupying Iraq. We left militarily in 2011. With the rise of ISIS in 2014, Iraq has asked us back. And even if there is some controversy about that with some politics, it is not going to be a slam dunk on any issue. Overwhelmingly the Iraqi government still wants the United States to be there to be that kind of partner. Would you not agree?

Ambassador TUELLER. I think that we can count on Iraq to continue to want the U.S. involved. They understand what happened after the U.S. forces withdrew back in 2011, the rise of ISIS controlling over 55,000 square miles in Iraq. This deeply, deeply traumatized and threatened Iraq, and they understand that they need the assistance of the United States and other partners to avoid the resurgence of that threat.

Senator KAINE. General Abizaid said a powerful thing at the beginning of his testimony. He said the Abizaid family has spent too

much time in the Middle East and you do not want your grandchildren to be there at war in the Middle East.

It is interesting that Iraq is now an ally and a partner, and yet we still have two authorizations for military force against Iraq that are pending. President Trump said in his State of the Union great nations do not wage endless wars. I think great Congresses should not authorize endless wars. The 1991 Gulf War authorization to go after Saddam Hussein for the invasion of Kuwait is still live and active, kind of a zombie authorization floating out there. It has never been repealed. The 2002 authorization to go after the government of Saddam Hussein is still active and live, again kind of a zombie authorization out there that has not been repealed.

Senator Young and I have introduced today a bill to repeal both the first Gulf War and the 2002 Iraq authorization. There is no need to have an authorization against an ally and partner, and I would hope my colleagues might see the virtue in cleaning that up.

Thank you, Mr. Chair.

The CHAIRMAN. Thank you, Senator Kaine.

Senator Paul?

Senator PAUL. Thank you both for your testimony and your service.

I will direct this to General Abizaid. It is often said that Iran is the largest state sponsor of terrorism. It said over and over and over again. I think it is often forgotten, though, that I would say Saudi Arabia is the largest state sponsor of radical Islam. They act in somewhat different ways.

Iran is very much a regional player and they are involved anywhere there are Shia populations and they are very much involved in several theaters mostly within the Middle East.

Saudi Arabia's malign influence, though, is worldwide. Most of the extremists that we have seen have been Sunni extremists. The Saudis fund tens of thousand of madrasas, including tens of thousands just within Pakistan. It is said that people trained in these madrasas cross the border and actually attack our soldiers and have killed our soldiers in Afghanistan.

And so when I hear people say, oh, they are getting better, they are letting women drive, part of me thinks, well, maybe that is a public relations stunt to let women drive while we imprison the activists at the same time. At the same time they are letting women drive, they are sending a team of thugs with a bone saw to chop somebody up in another country, a writer and a resident of our country. So I do not think we should be fooled.

But I do think in the larger context of things, the reason I bring up sort of Iran and Saudi Arabia is it reminds me somewhat of the Cold War where anybody that sided with us, we turned a blind eye to human rights violations. So there were dictators throughout Africa, Mobutu, Mugabe, who did horrific things to their people, and we just looked away and said, well, they are our guy, you know, they are on our side against the Soviet Union.

So we have divided up the Middle East. Iran is the largest state sponsor, and we never say a thing about Saudi Arabia. We are starting to because of this horrific murder. But I think we have turned a blind eye because of oil, because they tend to side with us against Iran. And I just think there needs to be a more even-

handed look at this. I am not saying that Iran is good, but maybe both are malign actors.

Also when we look at the Middle East, I think there needs to be someone saying—you know, we talk about a Middle East peace process, and it has all been about the Palestinians and Israel. I think that is an important question, maybe an imponderable one. But I do think that really the big peace process would be some day somebody recognizing that it would be having Saudi Arabia at the same table with Iran, if you really want to solve most Middle East process.

So I guess my question to you is given all of that, do you think we need to make a stronger statement about the Saudis? Instead of just saying they are getting better, saying, well, perhaps we need to restrict the arms sales until they quit funding madrasas. Instead of saying please quit funding madrasas, maybe they should have to quit funding madrasas. We should play hard ball with our weapons and say that people that imprison people and give people a thousand lashes and all the things the Saudis do, maybe they do not deserve our weapons. General Abizaid?

Mr. ABIZAID. Thank you, Senator Paul.

I already indicated that I think extremism is a curse of the Middle East, and it is extremism on the Sunni side and it is extremism on the Shia side. And really sectarianism is the twin curse of the Middle East, and we have to move very, very hard to convince the good people in the region to abandon forms of extremism.

But when I think of extremism in Saudi Arabia or extremism in any other Arab country, there are elements within the population that believe that if they fund extremist preachers, if they fund extremist ideologies, if they fund jihadis to move to the sound of the guns wherever the current battle might be, that they are doing God's work. And it is clearly not God's work.

So we have to keep saying it. It does not matter whether it comes from Saudi Arabia or Egypt or the UAE or Yemen. We have got to keep saying it. We have got to keep working against it. I will not shy away from that. I have told them that for years, and I will continue to tell them that.

But, on the other hand, I would also like to respectfully say they have made progress. I remember having an opportunity to go to Saudi Arabia recently where I saw some very innovative and very effective programs aimed specifically at reducing terrorism both financially and on the field of battle.

Senator PAUL. I appreciate that.

Ambassador Tueller, President Trump has often said that the greatest geopolitical blunder of the last 20 years was the Iraq war. What is your opinion on that?

Ambassador TUELLER. Well, sir, I think that the removal of a leader like Saddam Hussein from the region in the long term serves the interest of the United States and——

Senator PAUL. You disagree with the President?

Ambassador TUELLER. I do not think the President—I cannot take his remarks——

Senator PAUL. His point was that removing Hussein created a vacuum, created an endless war over there, and also empowered Iran.

Ambassador TUELLER. It has empowered many of those forces of sectarianism and extremism, but I think in the——

Senator PAUL. Which goes back to Senator Kaine's point. Are they an ally? Some would argue Iraq is now more of an ally of Iran than they are of the U.S.

But the President disagrees with you. The President thinks the Iraq War was a big mistake, emboldened Iran, and we should not have done it.

The CHAIRMAN. Thank you, Senator.

We will move to Senator Merkley.

Senator MERKLEY. Thank you very much.

And, Ambassador Tueller, when you were commenting on the humanitarian situation in Yemen, you said virtually 100 percent of the humanitarian problems are caused by the Houthis. I found that a very surprising statement. An extensive number of deaths are being caused by a cholera epidemic that comes from the Saudi bombing of water systems. The United Nations did a study that said of 17,000 civilian deaths between 2015 and 2018, the majority, 10,000, were the result of the Saudi-led bombings.

Can you explain a little bit how you reached the conclusion that the Saudi bombing of civilians somehow is responsible for 0 percent of the humanitarian crisis in Yemen?

Ambassador TUELLER. Senator, I think any death of civilians in conflict is unacceptable, and we should always——

Senator MERKLEY. That is not my question.

Ambassador TUELLER. Well, I think that we cannot excuse that. However, my remarks about the Houthis being almost 100 percent responsible—there is an anecdote that I often relate to people. In January of 2014, the most important port in Yemen used by the private sector was the Port of Aden. It had 111 ships that disembarked during that month of January 2014.

Senator MERKLEY. Ambassador, could you speak up, please?

Ambassador TUELLER. In January of 2015, which was before the Saudi-led intervention but after the Houthi takeover of Sanaa, the number of ships disembarking in Aden had fallen to nine. And that was almost 100 percent responsible for the Houthis' actions that caused foreign investment, the Yemeni private sector to flee the country, to stop investing in that economic activity.

Senator MERKLEY. I do not want to use all my time on the lengthy explanation there. But when you say that if 100 percent is the Houthis, 0 percent is the Saudis, you are giving them no responsibility for having used their munitions to attack civilian sites, and I find that very astounding.

Ambassador TUELLER. Sir, when we have seen cases where the Saudis have caused collateral damage, we have spoken very, very forcefully to them about that, and we have worked to try to mitigate those consequences. We have seen improvements.

Senator MERKLEY. By acknowledging that, you are saying there is some Saudi responsibility. I am going to have to stop there. But I did find that very disturbing given the vast deaths caused by the Saudi bombing campaign, and to treat Saudi Arabia as saying, oh, they are our ally, so we will blame someone else for all these deaths they are causing seems unacceptable to me.

General Abizaid, we have really been disturbed in Oregon by Saudi Arabia posting bail for Saudi citizens, and then those citizens disappearing. In 2016, Mr. Noorah, a Saudi national, killed a 15-year-old Portland native driving approximately twice the posted speed limit. Saudi Arabia posted bail, and he disappeared.

We had the Saudi consulate post bail for Mr. Alhamoud who fled Oregon before facing trial in 2012 on multiple sex crime charges, including rape.

We have a Saudi national, Mr. Algwaiz, who has faced charges in 2016 for striking a homeless man with is vehicle, who disappeared.

We have the Saudi consulate posting a $500,000 security deposit for Mr. Alharthi, a student in Oregon and Saudi national, who was arrested in 2015 on 10 counts of encouraging child sex abuse before fleeing the country.

We have the Saudi consulate posting a $500,000 bond for Mr. Duways, another university student and Saudi national, who was arrested in 2014 on the charge of rape.

We have these crimes being committed by Saudi nationals and then the Saudi government posting bail and whisking them out the country. Is this acceptable?

Mr. ABIZAID. Certainly not acceptable for any government to assist their citizens that have violated our laws.

Senator MERKLEY. Are you as disturbed as I am that essentially at this moment the Saudi nationals in the United States have a "get out of jail free" card that allows them to commit abuses against children, manslaughter, rape, and have no accountability?

Mr. ABIZAID. Senator, I think there has to be complete accountability for any government and their citizens living abroad, and that means respecting the laws of the host nation.

I would, in fairness, like to point out that there are 80,000 Saudis studying in the United States, most of whom are not the type of people you talked about.

Senator MERKLEY. And believe you me, I am not implying that Saudi nationals as a whole are committing crimes on a higher basis than anyone else. I do not have that statistic. I am making the point that when a person commits a crime in the United States, we should not, because they are an ally who buys a lot of stuff from us, allow them to whisk their citizens out with no accountability for rape, for child abuse, other sexual crimes, manslaughter, or for any other crime. And my sense is you agree with that.

Mr. ABIZAID. I agree that any government that assists their citizens fleeing our justice is breaking our laws.

Senator MERKLEY. I know, and you are translating this into a general principle, but are you not disturbed by these exact issues regarding Saudi Arabia?

Mr. ABIZAID. Well, what I cannot say because I do not know—I accept your stories, but I do not know that the government assisted in the escape. I just do not know that.

Senator MERKLEY. Yes. What we do know is that it has been the conclusion of our government that they are likely to have insisted, and in one case at least, the passport was surrendered. And so something magical happened for the person to be able to return to Saudi Arabia.

I have introduced the ESCAPE Act, which calls on the State Department to analyze this issue, to report on it. If five cases happened in Oregon that we know of—and there may well have been more we do not know about. There may have been hundreds of these cases across the country. I am surprised that the State Department has not already investigated this.

Would you encourage the State Department to investigate this issue and get to the bottom of it? And if this is happening with other nations, then investigate that too, but the ones we have knowledge of all involve Saudi Arabia.

Mr. ABIZAID. Senator, if you confirm me, I will encourage them to do so.

Senator MERKLEY. Thank you.

The CHAIRMAN. Thank you.

Senator Young?

Senator YOUNG. Thank you, gentlemen, for your lifetime of service. By my reading of your many accomplishments, I think you come in well prepared to not only be confirmed but to serve our country honorably and professionally.

Mr. Ambassador, I have a follow-up question pertaining to this issue of the Houthis, the Iranian-aligned Houthis being the primary driver of the humanitarian crisis, which may indeed be the situation right now. They have mined the ground. They have been responsible by my latest briefings for numerous violations of human rights law.

But I think it is helpful that we remember recent history. Over the last couple of years, our Saudi partners, working with the Emirates in the United States of America, who have assisted with refueling, targeting assistance, military training, and some other activities, has also been party to some actions that, per my many briefings on the subject in classified and unclassified settings, has helped to radicalize portions of the Houthi population, leading to their alignment with the Iranians when many would not have otherwise aligned with the Iranians. They have blocked the Port of Hodeidah where 80 percent of food, of medicine, of water is delivered. The bombing campaigns where they have indiscriminately bombed civilians is something that I hope moving forward we will continue to recognize, helped to exacerbate what remains the worst humanitarian crisis in the world.

Yes, the Saudis must remain security partners. They will be complicated partners moving forward especially with their current leadership and their Crown Prince's impulsive and sometimes reckless behavior by the reading of this United States Senator. So I just think it is very important that we are reminded of this and are sort of sober-minded as we continue to try and finesse this relationship.

Senator Shaheen earlier brought up the lack of responsiveness that we have seen by the administration under the Global Magnitsky Act. General, I remain frustrated by the administration's unwillingness to follow another law, specifically the National Defense Authorization Act section 1290, which my colleague, Senator Shaheen, and I worked on. There is a provision in section 1290 which requires the Secretary to certify that the governments of Saudi Arabia and UAE are undertaking a number of actions. The provision also includes a detailed requirement for Yemen-related

briefings to Congress and requires the administration to submit to Congress a strategy for Yemen. Congress has not yet received a credible certification from the administration. I do not intend to remain silent on this. This is the law of the land and I want it to be followed.

So, General, would you commit to providing myself and other members of this committee a monthly update on the following: a description of Saudi Arabia military and political objectives in Yemen and whether the United States' assistance to the Saudi-led coalition has resulted in significant progress towards meeting those objectives; a description of efforts by the government of Saudi Arabia to avoid disproportionate harm to civilians and civilian objects in Yemen; an assessment for the need for existing secondary inspection and clearance processes and transshipment requirements on humanitarian and commercial vessels that have been cleared by the U.N. verification and inspection mechanism; a description of the sources of external support for the Houthi forces, including financial assistance, weapons transfers, operational planning, training, and advisory assistance; an assessment of the applicability of the U.S. and international sanctions to Houthi forces that have committed grave human rights abuses, obstructed international aid, and launched ballistic missiles into our Saudi partner's territory; and an assessment of the effect of the Saudi-led coalition's military operations in Yemen on the efforts of the U.S. to defeat AQAP and the Islamic State? General would you commit to providing that information on a monthly basis to this committee?

Mr. ABIZAID. Thank you, Senator Young.

As a citizen of the great State of Nevada, not a member of the administration, I have nothing to say about that. If you confirm me and I become a member of the administration, I can commit to assisting the administration in answering those questions.

Senator YOUNG. I thought you would answer somewhere along those lines.

Well, let me just note before yielding back to the good chairman that if the administration is not already tracking each of the different things I have requested of you, it would be a matter of sort of diplomatic malpractice, security malpractice, from my perspective, and it is my fervent hope that the administration will follow the law and finally provide a credible certification as required under the law.

Thank you.

The CHAIRMAN. Thank you very much.

Senator Cruz is next.

Senator CRUZ. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Gentlemen, thank you both for your service. Congratulations on the nominations you have received, but thank you also for being willing to serve. Neither of the countries to which you have been nominated are easy postings nor are they altogether safe postings. And so we are grateful for both of you answering the call to serve your nation in challenging times.

General Abizaid, I want to start with you. Saudi Arabia is in my judgment a deeply problematic ally. Their human rights record has been sorely lacking. They have, for many years, been willing to fund jihadists on the principle that if you feed the crocodile per-

haps it will eat you last. Their conduct with regard to Mr. Khashoggi was abominable and unacceptable. On all of those fronts, I think we should be clear and explicit condemning their actions.

At the same time, they are nonetheless an ally, and critically they are a vital counterpoint to the nation of Iran. And as I look to the Middle East, the rivalry between Iran and Saudi Arabia—any conduct that the United States Congress does to weaken Saudi Arabia vis-a-vis Iran to my mind is harming the national security interests of America because a stronger Iran with an Ayatollah Khamenei pledging death to America, funding terrorists actively trying to murder Americans—a stronger Iran makes for a more dangerous world.

Do you share that assessment, and what role do you believe Saudi Arabia plays in counterbalancing Iran?

Mr. ABIZAID. Thank you, Senator Cruz, for the question.

I certainly share your sentiments and your description about Iran. Maybe 15 years ago, maybe I would have shared your description about Saudi Arabia. There was absolutely too much turning a blind eye towards extremists leaving the country and causing problems elsewhere.

As I look at it today, I do not think the problem is solved, but I think it is getting better. There are joint task forces for combating terrorism. There are joint task forces looking at the economic flows of money into the terrorist networks. We noticed here recently that Hamza bin Laden was stripped of his citizenship, that others have been forced to pay a price for their support of terrorism, to al Qaeda, ISIS, or indeed even supporting the Iranian state.

So it is incumbent upon the United States to continue to press the case that good allies do not support terrorism anywhere.

Senator CRUZ. And can you describe the importance of a strong Saudi Arabia as a check to Iran?

Mr. ABIZAID. Senator, I think you did an adequate job of that. I do not know what I could add.

Senator CRUZ. Is there any coherent or rational argument that Saudi Arabia poses a comparable threat to the United States to that of Iran?

Mr. ABIZAID. Senator, when I look at the reform vision of 2030, if we can support it moving forward, it is a plan for diversification of the economy. It is a plan to begin the empowerment of women. It is a plan to make the armed forces more professional. It is a plan to give the young people of Saudi Arabia a hope for a better future. If that plan can succeed with the support of the international community, I believe we will see a change, an important change, that will be good for all of us and Saudi Arabia.

Senator CRUZ. What do you believe Iran is trying to accomplish in the Middle East?

Mr. ABIZAID. You know, Senator, we have had this conversation before, and I appreciate we have had it. And as we have noted before, I firmly believe that the good people of Iran are just putting up with the IRGC Qods Force and the mullah government. Given the opportunity for a better future, just like the Saudis, if they had a vision for a reform movement, if they had a vision for a better future, the people would move in that direction. But right now, the

IRGC Qods Force and the radicals are in charge, and we need to keep the pressure to cause them to ultimately be deposed by their own people.

Senator CRUZ. I agree with you.

Ambassador Tueller, one of the more troubling developments in Iraq has been the growing influence of the Iranians, both Iranian Shia militia and also direct or indirect Iranian control of the Iraqi institutions of government. How significant do you assess that threat and what should we be doing about it?

Ambassador TUELLER. Senator, I think it is a great threat. It is one that concerns us, and I know it is one that concerns the Iraqi people. I think one of the most powerful forces in Iraq, leaving aside the sectarian influences, ethnic differences, and political parties, is Iraqis share a strong sense of pride in their Iraqi Arab identity. They do not want to see their country weakened, divided, sovereignty impinged upon, and they see the major threat of that coming from Iran. So I think as we empower Iraqis to build the kind of country and future they want, that is what we have to build on.

Senator CRUZ. Okay. Final question. Talk to me briefly about the Kurds. The Kurds have been loyal allies. They have spilled blood supporting the United States of America. They have, I think, been neglected and mistreated far too often by United States foreign policy. Can you talk about the importance of assuring that we do not abandon the Kurds once again and leave them subject to the predations of their neighbors?

Ambassador TUELLER. Senator, that U.S.-Kurdish relationship is a historic one. It is a long-lasting one. I think it is a very important one. I intend, if I am confirmed, to make sure that that relationship between the United States and the Kurdish people is one that is solid, that gives the Kurds the sense of security they need that they are never again in the future going to be dominated by the type of regime that Saddam Hussein represented in Baghdad.

At the same time, I think it is very important from the U.S. perspective that we see good, solid relationships between Baghdad and Erbil, and I intend to do all I can to make sure that that relationship is a positive one.

Senator CRUZ. Thank you.

The CHAIRMAN. Thank you, Senator Cruz.

Senator Gardner?

Senator GARDNER. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Thank you both for your service to this country, your willingness to serve in these new posts. This country truly is grateful for your service.

General Abizaid, continuing on the conversation you had with Senator Cruz, there are certain issues, resolutions that this Congress may be voting on regarding Yemen and other resolutions. How would that affect or change relationships in Saudi Arabia, perhaps empowering Iran? If you could talk a little bit about that.

Mr. ABIZAID. Senator, first of all, I am sorry we missed our appointment. I understand you were snowed in badly in Colorado.

Senator GARDNER. United once again proved they were in charge. [Laughter.]

Mr. ABIZAID. Senator, it is a good question. I do not think it is good for me as a private citizen at this point to comment on legisla-

tion. I would prefer to say it is very important for us to set the stage that allows for reform in Saudi Arabia, that allows ultimately some day for reform in Iran, and that allows for a better solution to the many problems that are transparent and obvious in Yemen.

One thing we cannot afford in Yemen, we cannot afford to withdraw U.S. expertise to the coalition about how to fight. If we want them to fight right, we need to continue to give them that expertise.

Another thing we cannot afford is that if a Hezbollah-like pro-Iranian IRGC Qods Force militia were to form in Yemen, it would be a lethal threat to the region and one that we could not ignore and certainly one that Saudi Arabia could not ignore.

So it is important that we work in the right way in your legislation, and I know you are. But again, I think me commenting about exactly how it should be done would be out of my place.

Senator GARDNER. General—and you may have already talked about this with other members of the committee. I apologize if I am repeating. Could you talk a little bit about the civilian nuclear agreement and what parameters ought to be in place to assure a true civilian nuclear agreement, if that is indeed the case?

Mr. ABIZAID. Well, Senator, I have had this discussion with many of you in our consultations. I certainly think that in some future there can be nuclear power in Saudi Arabia, but I think anytime the U.S. provides nuclear power to anybody, it needs to be done under the strictest controls possible.

Senator GARDNER. With the standard gold-plated agreements that have been in every——

Mr. ABIZAID. I would say, yes, that is certainly the standard, but the issue is all about let us not allow plutonium or other type of substance move to somewhere where it can be used as a bomb.

Senator GARDNER. Right. Thank you.

Ambassador Tueller, we discussed some of the challenges in Iraq, obviously, with corruption. How does the United States proceed addressing government corruption and the tools that you could bring to the position?

Ambassador TUELLER. Senator, again our engagement, whether it is through advocating for U.S. businesses to be present competing for contracts and the responsibility and the transparency that U.S. companies bring when they are engaged in an economy, also I think continue to empower the Iraqi institutions that have been stood up that so far have been able to continue to exist within the new Iraq that are intent on promoting greater transparency. The issue of corruption throughout the region and in fact through many developing countries is one that, as U.S. diplomats, when we encounter, we see how toxic it is. And I think the U.S. government, by upholding our standards, by encouraging greater transparency, helps the citizens of those countries.

Senator GARDNER. What effects do you see remaining from the separation—the referendum? The attempt last year—I believe it was last year.

Ambassador TUELLER. Sir, between the Kurds——

Senator GARDNER. Yes, correct.

Ambassador TUELLER. Well, of course, the call for a referendum—we opposed that. We advised many of the Kurdish lead-

ers that we thought it was provocative and unnecessary. What I am pleased to say is that that we are seeing that relationship already improving. I know that there is a good relationship between the Kurdish leaders, the current president, and the current prime minister as well, and that some steps are being taken to repair that damage and put the relationship on a better footing.

Senator GARDNER. Thank you.

Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

The CHAIRMAN. Thank you, Senator Gardner.

Senator Udall?

Senator UDALL. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

And thank you to both of the witnesses here today. I appreciate your testimony.

These first two questions are for both of you.

Last fall, Ambassador James Jeffrey, the State Department's Special Representative to Syria, stated during a Defense One conference—and I quote here. It requires stability ops to break Iran's meddling influence. End quote.

Jeffrey continued saying that Iran, quote, will create a new Daesh if we do not get at the underlying problem. End quote. Referring to an Arabic acronym for ISIS. This is an odd position given that Daesh is a Sunni terrorist organization.

In tackling Iran, he said we have no better partner than Saudi Arabia. He added we could not be doing what we are doing in the region without them.

Yet, we know that funds from Saudi Arabia donors flowed towards Daesh and that many Wahabi clerics were an inspiration to ISIL's leaders. Saudi Arabia has also been implicated in the murder of Jamal Khashoggi and is directly responsible for one of the worst humanitarian disasters in recent history in Yemen.

Comments like these and those of Secretary Pompeo and President Trump last year trying to frame Iran as a supporter of al Qaeda and other Sunni terrorists without proof should get our attention.

Just last year, Reuters reported in announcing the U.S. withdrawal from the 2015 Iran nuclear deal, Trump said in May that Iran supports terrorist proxies and militias such as al Qaeda. End quote.

In a speech last week, Pompeo said, quote, today we ask the Iranian people is this what you want your country to be known for, for being a co-conspirator with Hezbollah, Hamas, Taliban, and al Qaeda.

In the same report, Reuters noted that a study casts doubts on these claims, claims, if true, would give the President some legal argument to say that the 9/11 AUMF applies to Iran, a claim that I as a Member of Congress who voted in favor of the 9/11 AUMF find to be without any basis in reality.

My first question to both of you is, do you believe that a war with Iran is in the best interest of the United States or either of the countries you are nominated to serve in?

Mr. ABIZAID. No.

Ambassador TUELLER. No, Senator, I do not.

Senator UDALL. Do either of you believe that the 9/11 AUMF extends to Iran or that Congress intended to use the 9/11 AUMF to take on Iran?

Ambassador TUELLER. Senator, I would have to defer to the State Department legal advisor to address any issues about authorized use of military force.

Mr. ABIZAID. I would have to defer to legal experts as I do not have any expertise in the issue.

Senator UDALL. But you guys were both around when all of this happened, and you know how targeted we were with the 9/11 AUMF and what our objectives were, which we long ago—long ago—have achieved. So I find that a little discouraging that you are punting on that one.

Mr. ABIZAID. You know, Senator, I guess I would say is I was a soldier and we go where you tell us to go.

Senator UDALL. Well, I understand that, but you are also a very smart gentleman. You understand the realities of the Congress. It is Congress that has the authority under the Constitution to declare war, and it is also Congress that if it decides to do so and it thinks it is appropriate, that ends wars. And so an AUMF that has been in place since 2001 and is being used around the world as the reason for going into countries I think is something you should be worried about as a soldier and something that you should have looked into.

Mr. ABIZAID. Thank you, Senator.

Senator UDALL. We all know that climate change is real and that the result is that in places like New Mexico and Iraq, there is less water for all to go around. We must adjust to this reality. There are real and persistent water challenges in Iraq, including the Mosul Dam, and lack of sufficient drinking water supplies and trained staff to manage these important infrastructure investments.

What role can the United States play and what role can you play to help facilitate a sufficient water supply in Iraq, including Mosul Dam stabilization, so that the region avoids conflicts over water resources?

Ambassador TUELLER. Senator, it is an excellent question. It is one that applies in Iraq. It is one that I have seen come into play in Yemen which faces a depletion of its water resources and elsewhere in the Middle East, in Syria and elsewhere. So throughout the Middle East, you often see that water resources are underlying part of the ongoing conflict.

So I think it is important with respect to the Mosul Dam. The United States and the Army Corps of Engineers has been involved in some of the efforts to try to stabilize the dam. The Iraqis themselves are taking on a greater responsibility for that. It is a tremendous threat, one that we all need to remain vigilant.

Thank you for the question, Senator.

Senator UDALL. Thank you.

General, do you have a thought on that?

Mr. ABIZAID. I would only say, Senator, that the water problems in the Middle East are great, and the number one thing we can do to help solve them is first get these conflicts under control to the best of our ability. Once we do that, then other things will follow.

Senator UDALL. I hope we can do that, and then I hope we can work on the infrastructure for water resources and the other things that are needed for stability in order to, like you say, move forward.

Mr. ABIZAID. I agree with you, Senator.

Senator UDALL. Yes. I appreciate that.

Thank you for your courtesies, Mr. Chairman. I know I ran over a little bit.

The CHAIRMAN. You certainly did.

Senator UDALL. I bow down and apologize to you.

[Laughter.]

The CHAIRMAN. There will be more.

Senator Barrasso, so patient and I am sorry I passed you over earlier.

Senator UDALL. If I had seen him there, I would have shortened my questions.

Senator BARRASSO. Thank you, Senator. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Ambassador Tueller, if I could, just a general—how extensive is Iran's influence over Iraq?

Ambassador TUELLER. Well, of course, the two countries share a long border. They share an economic history, family, religious ties, but I think it is often missed, as you look at the broader, to understand again, as I said, Iraqi nationalism, the fact that Iraqi Shia clergy have their own standing, credibility, legitimacy within the country. So I think it is important not to overstate or to overreact to what is Iran's presence and relationship.

I would say we are not trying to sever the relationship between Iraq and Iran. There should be ties. What we want to see is a normal, healthy relationship based on respect for sovereignty, an Iraq wanting to build, as we want to build, an Iran wanting to build an Iraq that is strong, stable, and sovereign.

Senator BARRASSO. Iran—they have armed militias, provided Revolutionary Guard forces to assist with the fighting against ISIS in Iraq. So I am talking about the current role the Iranian forces are playing in Iraq and what you see in terms of the force activity there.

Ambassador TUELLER. Senator, the issue of the popular mobilization forces that exist in Iran is one that is complicated. I know that the prime minister and other government officials are trying to bring all of those forces under the control of the government. Many of those forces, in fact, are nominally under control of the prime minister. What we are really concerned about is particularly those popular mobilization forces that are not responsive to the Iraqi government but are taking their directions, their leadership from not just Iran but from the Revolutionary Qods Force, and that is what is going to pose a great challenge. I think moving forward for Iraq to emerge as a strong, sovereign, normal country, it has to deal with that issue.

Senator BARRASSO. The United States has been encouraging Iraq to end its energy dependence on Iran. There was a "Wall Street Journal" article from November, headlining "U.S. Pushes Iraq to Wean Itself off Iranian Energy." But despite its role as a major energy producer itself—Iraq—it does rely on Iran for imported nat-

ural gas to use in gas turbine power plants. Iranian natural gas generates about 45 percent of Iraq's electricity. Upon the reimposition of U.S. sanctions against Iran, the United States has provided Iraq a couple of waivers.

Do you believe Iraq is serious about ending its dependence on Iran for energy? And what efforts is Iraq taking to reduce or end its energy dependence on Iran?

Ambassador TUELLER. Senator, that is correct. Not only significant imports of natural gas from Iran but also electricity itself as part of the grid. So it is important, for example, that Iraq receive capital, improve its ability to capture its own natural gas rather than flaring it so that it can be used to generate electricity. In the last several months, there has been some progress in that respect, but it is time consuming. Not enough has happened yet. And I think an important thing to try to use is—if I am confirmed as Ambassador, to encourage U.S. companies to be able to play a role in helping the Iraqi energy sector to capture that natural gas to use it for electrical generation.

Senator BARRASSO. And be less dependent upon Iran for their sources of energy.

Ambassador TUELLER. Absolutely.

Senator BARRASSO. Thank you.

General, if I could, the blockade with Qatar. In June of 2017, Saudi Arabia ended the diplomatic relationship with Qatar, and Saudi Arabia led a blockade against Qatar in terms of its Arab Gulf neighbors, Egypt, UAE, Bahrain. You know all of the things that have happened there.

Can you talk a little bit about what the current status is of this dispute with Saudi Arabia and Qatar and what progress has been there in terms of resolving the dispute?

Mr. ABIZAID. To be honest, Senator, I do not think there has been much progress in resolving the dispute. I know there have been some forums, especially in the defense arena, where Qatari representatives were allowed to attend, opportunities to meet with their Gulf colleagues.

My opinion is that it is important to solve this problem. Having Gulf states be antagonistic and at each others' throats at a time when they are facing a great threat from Iran to me does not make geopolitical sense.

Senator BARRASSO. To that point that you just made, can you talk about how this dispute threatens the regional unity needed to counter Iran?

Mr. ABIZAID. Senator, the Iranians are masters at finding the small crack between forces that they face, and they have a small crack because of this dispute.

Senator BARRASSO. Thank you.

Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

The CHAIRMAN. Thank you, Senator.

Ambassador Tueller, I think what Senator Barrasso has raised about the Iranian influence in Iraq is a really serious concern to all of us. We keep hearing more and more reports of that not only in this committee but other committees that I serve on. I hope you will pay close attention to it. We all know their malign intent, and we realize it is complicated, like you said. But it is discouraging to

hear the inroads they continue to make into the Iraqi infrastructure. So in any event, I hope you keep an eye on that.

Senator Menendez?

Senator MENENDEZ. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

General Abizaid, I am very inclined to support your nomination, but I heard a few answers here that create a little cause for concern for me. So let me try to follow up with you.

In several answers, you said we cannot afford and went on to describe elements that we cannot afford Saudi Arabia not to do X, Y, or Z. From my perspective, we cannot afford to continue to allow the Saudis fighting in Yemen and indiscriminately bombing civilians and ultimately violating international law.

We cannot afford to allow the killing of an American resident journalist with impunity and no consequence for that.

We cannot afford to allow U.S. citizens or permanent residents to be detained and, if some of these allegations are true, tortured without consequence. And the list goes on.

So, yes, many of us understand that the Saudi relationship is important in our broader national security question, particularly as it relates to Iran. But that does not mean—that does not mean—that we cannot challenge our relationship with a nation even when our security interests may align.

Is that your view that we can challenge and seek to change the nature of the relationship, or is that we have to accept what they have done in order to pursue our greater national security goals?

Mr. ABIZAID. Senator, I thought I was clear in saying we should not accept these outrageous sorts of problems such as the killing of Jamal Khashoggi, that we should not accept the torture and detention—the alleged torture and detention of an American citizen, and so many other things, as I mentioned in my opening statement. These short-term problems have to be solved now, and it requires forceful discussions on behalf of the United States with the government of Saudi Arabia. And I am prepared to have those discussions if you confirm me.

Senator MENENDEZ. All right, because that is important because I get concerned that somehow we create this aura that the relationship is so important that we cannot challenge those things that are horribly wrong about it. And I do not buy that because if, at the end of the day, you can kill a journalist with impunity and because of our interests we will look the other way, that is a dangerous message to send across the globe. And it is a dangerous message to send to any other country for which we may have an interest that you can act with impunity as long as you pursue a certain interest we might have with you. That is not who we are as a nation. I just want to make sure you are going to have no problem pursuing those challenges.

Mr. ABIZAID. I have no problem saying what I need to say in that regard.

Senator MENENDEZ. And in that regard, will you press the Saudi government on the continued detention of American citizen, Dr. Walid Fitaihi?

Mr. ABIZAID. Yes.

Senator MENENDEZ. And will you commit to request to visit women rights activists who have been unjustly detained?

Mr. ABIZAID. Yes.

Senator MENENDEZ. And finally, let me—Ambassador Tueller, I do not want you to think I have no affection for you in this hearing. Let me just ask you, what does success look like for us in Iraq? And how do we achieve that, and what tools do we have to try to achieve it? Give me a sense of that. It is a broad statement of your mission, but I would like to get a sense of what it is that we are working towards.

Ambassador TUELLER. Sir, I believe we do need to be guided by a long-term strategic vision, and I think it is a vision that sees Iraq as a pillar of stability in the region. And we achieve that by working with Iraqis to build up their security institutions, by building up their economy, by combating the influence of sectarianism, by combating issues like corruption or lack of transparency in the economy. We seek that as a vision as you look at the contrasting agenda of Iran, which seeks an Iraq that is weak, that is divided that does not have sovereignty over its own territory and forces. We are working to bring about in areas of Iraq clean drinking water and government services to people where Iran is flooding the market with cheap goods and in fact with heroin or other dangerous products. So we need to be projecting a positive, constructive vision for Iraq, and I have no problem doing it.

Senator MENENDEZ. And what is our leverage to achieve those things?

Ambassador TUELLER. Again, I think that we have allies and partners who want that, Iraqis who want that same vision, and we are working with them, whether they are Kurds, whether they are from political alliances, wherever they come from, those Iraqis that want to see a strong, stable, unified, sovereign Iraq—those are the people that we will work with.

Senator MENENDEZ. Thank you.

The CHAIRMAN. Thank you.

We hear a lot of partisan talk up here. So there is no mistake, I think the ranking member probably articulated as clearly as is possible that when we have an ally, we try to support those allies as best we can. But the kinds of things that have been happening lately make it very, very difficult, and we cannot look the other way.

Thank you for those remarks, Senator Menendez.

Senator Murphy?

Senator MURPHY. Thank you very much. Thank you for giving us the opportunity to have a short second round.

I appreciate, General Abizaid, your follow-up answer to Senator Menendez. I, as well, was a bit concerned with what was to me an unexpected robust defense at times of the Saudi regime, and so I appreciate your clarification.

My second round, though, is for you, Mr. Tueller. The Houthis, no doubt, bear significant responsibility for the humanitarian catastrophe up until this day. But you are the first diplomat with jurisdiction over the crisis in Yemen that I have ever heard assign 0 percent responsibility for the humanitarian disaster inside Yemen to the Saudis. And it seemed as if you resisted amending that answer in the follow-up from Senator Merkley. And although

Senator Young did not ask you a question, I think you understood the beginning of his query to you.

Just because one party starts a war does not give carte blanche to the other side to conduct themselves in a manner that makes the humanitarian situation on the ground worse. And by saying that the Saudis bear no responsibility for what has happened there is a permission slip to the Saudis and anyone who is a contestant to a conflict to behave as irresponsibly as they like just because they might not have been the instigator.

I can recite you the same statistics that Senator Merkley did, but they are pretty overwhelming in terms of the consensus among the international community as to the affect that the bombing campaign, targeting civilians, the months' long blockade had on the worsening humanitarian situation.

So I want to give you one last shot before we end here to amend your answer that the Houthis bear 100 percent responsibility for the civilian nightmare that has happened inside Yemen.

Ambassador TUELLER. Mr. Senator, thank you for the following question, and in describing what I think is an analytical position as to exactly what is happening to the economy in Yemen, that does in no way or shape excuse the Saudis when they violate the Law of Armed Conflict or conduct their military operations in a manner that does not give due regard for civilian life.

What I am describing, however, is the situation in Yemen, already the poorest country in the world with measures of childhood stunting, famine that existed before 2014 that has absolutely had the legs of the economy kicked out from under it by the actions of the Houthis and the Iranian-back proxies. The U.N. Humanitarian Coordinator I think has described the situation best when she said Yemen is not suffering from a famine of food. Yemen is suffering from a famine of incomes. That is what is really driving most of the humanitarian suffering that we are all witnessing. Yemenis who have lost their incomes because of closure of private sector small and medium enterprises, who have lost their government salaries, the government that has lost its income——

Senator MURPHY. I get it. I get it. That is not my question. I understand what is happening there. The question is whether the Saudis bear something above 0 percent responsibility for what has happened there.

Ambassador TUELLER. Senator, I understand, and absolutely I would not minimize that when there have been targeting of infrastructure such as roads or bridges or transportation—and that has had a very, very deleterious impact on the economy.

But if you are looking for a solution of how we are going to address the humanitarian situation, it is going to be finding a way to leverage the Houthis and to entering into a peaceful power sharing agreement. It is not going to happen as a result of what the Saudis will do. The answers lie in the hands of the Yemenis. And so I think many, many Yemenis would tell you exactly the same thing that I have said here today.

Senator MURPHY. So help me figure this out. Are you changing your answer or not changing your answer? This is a problem for you moving forward here if you cannot commit to us that the Saudis have some responsibility for what has happened there, as

almost everyone has testified before this committee before you has said. Are you changing your answer or not?

Ambassador TUELLER. So with the war going on—and, of course, the Saudis as one of the participants—absolutely, of course, they have had an impact on the humanitarian suffering. I am not saying that. And I think again going to the specific question, when there have been violations of the Law of Armed Conflict or undue consideration for collateral damage, we cannot overlook that or excuse that.

But when I am looking for answers of how we are going to, as a nation, resolve the humanitarian crisis, we have got to look to the underlying causes of what is happening in Yemen, the responsibility of all the Yemeni parties, and what we are going to do so that the Yemeni civilians do not continue the suffering.

Senator MURPHY. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

The CHAIRMAN. Thank you, Senator.

Well, with that, thank you to both of you and your families. You have been very patient with us, and we really appreciate that.

For information of the members, the record will remain open until close of business on Thursday, including for members to submit questions for the record.

With the thanks of the committee, this hearing is now adjourned.

[Whereupon, at 12:03 p.m., the hearing was adjourned.]

Additional Material Submitted for the Record

RESPONSES TO ADDITIONAL QUESTIONS FOR THE RECORD
SUBMITTED TO GENERAL ABIZAID BY SENATOR ROBERT MENENDEZ

U.S.-Saudi Relations

Question. I am very concerned by recent reports that Embassy staff in Riyadh were barred from Jared Kushner's recent meetings with the Saudi Royal Court, including with Crown Prince Mohammed bin Salman:

- If confirmed, what steps will you take to ensure that you or another embassy official are present at all meetings between Saudi and U.S. officials?

Answer. The U.S. government should always act as one unit in the execution of foreign policy. As I noted in my testimony, if confirmed, I will join with the many U.S. government interlocutors from Washington, within the U.S. Mission to Saudi Arabia, and elsewhere to advance U.S. interests in Saudi Arabia as Chief of Mission in the most coordinated manner possible. My policy, if confirmed as Ambassador, will be to have an Embassy assigned representative at every official meeting to the extent possible.

Question. There have been numerous reports of private individuals with ties to the president who have pursued business deals or contracts in Saudi Arabia.

- What will you do to ensure that all U.S. businesses are treated fairly and equally and that those with ties to the president do not receive preferential treatment?

Answer. The goal of U.S. embassies overseas is to advance U.S. interests across the full spectrum of political, economic, security, and humanitarian priorities. If confirmed, I will look to carry on the U.S. Mission to Saudi Arabia's long history of connecting the full range of U.S. businesses and commercial interests to Saudi counterparts. If confirmed, I will strictly enforce regulations and procedures to ensure equal treatment of U.S. businesses and citizens.

Question. How can the United States best leverage its close relationship with Saudi Arabia to ensure better alignment between U.S. and Saudi priorities? How

might Saudi leaders respond to efforts by the United States to withhold or condition the provision of security assistance in order to compel policy changes?

Answer. I recognize that U.S. government assistance and the reputational incentives a partnership with the United States offers is, in some cases, a useful tool to encourage countries to adopt policy changes that favor U.S. interests. I believe U.S. priorities are advanced by our close relationship with Saudi Arabia, not in spite of it. We are able to influence, steer, and achieve results because of our ability to have honest, often difficult conversations with Saudi leadership, and our security cooperation activities serve as a key venue for deepening our relationship.

In Saudi Arabia, our strong partnership over many decades has allowed us to secure U.S. interests in the region, roll back the malign influence of Iran, and counter violent extremist groups, such as al-Qa'ida and ISIS.

Question. How can the United States encourage or demand the development of more open, participatory, and transparent governance in the kingdom?

Answer. In all our relationships around the world, the United States will continue to encourage more open, participatory, and transparent governance, and the President's National Security Strategy strongly supports championing American values abroad.

In Saudi Arabia, freedom of expression, thought, and religion or belief are not guaranteed by law. Gender discrimination excludes women from many aspects of public life, and citizens lack the ability to choose their government in free and fair elections. The Shia minority is marginalized from political, social, and economic life. There are no political parties or similar associations in the Kingdom. In 2015, elections were held for two-thirds of the 3,159 seats on 284 municipal councils; the government appointed the remaining third. Women were allowed to vote and run as candidates for the first time in 2015.

If confirmed as Ambassador, I will articulate U.S. support for expanding this participatory process for municipal elections. I will also convey clearly U.S. concerns regarding the detention of activists and perceived dissidents in Saudi Arabia. If confirmed, my mission will take all allegations of abuse seriously. I will continue to urge the government of Saudi Arabia to ensure fair trial guarantees, freedom from arbitrary and extrajudicial detention, transparency, and rule of law. Women's rights are a critical goal for U.S. foreign policy, and I fully commit to making them a key element of my potential tenure as ambassador. The Saudis have made progress, but it is clearly not enough. The United States has pressed them on this issue for years, and I will continue to do so.

Question. What leverage, if any, do you believe Saudi investments in U.S. Treasury securities, Saudi support for the denomination of international oil sales in U.S. dollars, and Saudi purchases of U.S. defense articles and services provide the Saudi government relative to the United States? How should the United States respond to implied or explicit threats by Saudi officials to change patterns of bilateral investment, defense ties, or energy policies?

Answer. Saudi Arabia's investments in the United States are significant, with over $14 billion in foreign direct investment in 2018. These investments benefit Saudi Arabia and the United States, and our country remains the key engine of the world economy. Saudi Arabia, like so many countries, are attracted to the U.S. market for its stability, quality, and continued potential for growth.

Saudi Arabia remains a leading player in the global oil market, and use of the U.S. dollar as the primary currency of oil and other international trade is important to U.S. national security. Dollar-denominated energy trade gives the United States leverage over those using our currency.

Saudi Arabia is—by far—the largest purchaser of U.S. defense equipment, with over $100 billion in active Foreign Military Sales cases. These sales provide significant income and growth for U.S. businesses, support American jobs, and enhance our military interoperability.

Yemen

Question. Repeated stories of U.S. -supplied bombs hitting weddings, funerals, and school busses are simply unacceptable. Although the Saudis say that they have implemented measures to investigate and reduce civilian casualties, much of the reporting from the Saudis and the administration does not comport with other reporting from media and human rights organizations on the ground:

- What is your assessment of the mechanisms Saudi Arabia has put in place to both prevent civilian casualties and to investigate particular incidents?

Answer. At our urging, Saudi Arabia has put in place a number of mechanisms to reduce civilian casualties in Yemen. If confirmed, I will continue to work with

Saudi Arabia to continue activities to sustain their positive progress on protecting civilians and adherence to international humanitarian law as they pursue their legitimate national security objectives. Our close relationship with Saudi Arabia ensures we can continue to work with them on this matter.

Question. Will you continue to press for the Saudis to meaningfully reduce civilian casualties and hold those responsible for perpetrating attacks on civilians accountable?

Answer. Yes, if confirmed, I will continue to press the Saudis on these critical points.

Question. Do you believe it is important to continue to promote the principles of International Humanitarian Law and the Law of Armed Conflict in Yemen?

Answer. Yes, I believe we have both moral and strategic reasons to promote the principles of International Humanitarian Law and the Law of Armed Conflict in Yemen.Relations

Question. What levers do you think the United States has to promote the Stockholm Peace process? What will happen if this fragile peace process falls apart?

Answer. Diplomacy has been our primary lever in the Yemen conflict. We have coordinated that piece of diplomatic engagement with the Coalition, who were essential in bringing the parties to Sweden in the first place. Saudi Arabia, in particular, continues to leverage its strong bilateral relationship with the ROYG to move the peace process forward. Through the Omanis and the European Union, we continue to communicate the importance of making good on the Sweden agreement to the Houthis. The current peace process is the closest the parties have come to forging a political agreement in a long time. They sat across from each other in one room in Sweden—no small feat. If this effort falls apart, our diplomatic engagement in support of U.N. efforts to forge a political solution will continue.

Question. What do you think our posture should be?

Answer. Decisions that the United States makes in Yemen have not only political, but also humanitarian consequences for the daily lives of millions of Yemenis. Our actions have the potential to affect our bilateral relationships in the region and beyond, and will have a lasting impact on security in the Middle East and our global counterterrorism objectives. Our posture must reflect all of these realities. If confirmed, I will support our current posture, which is to support the international community's ongoing effort to support the Yemeni parties in sitting down and charting out an agreement that will end this conflict.

Question. What role do you believe the Houthis should play in any negotiated settlement?

Answer. At one time, the Houthis had legitimate grievances about their political and economic marginalization in Yemen. However, the way they chose to address those grievances—an attempted violent overthrow of a legitimate government—is unacceptable. If they are ready to put down their arms and truly invest in a post-conflict Yemeni government, they are entitled to political participation and economic opportunities, as are all Yemenis. However, they cannot expect this outcome while retaining their relationship with Iran. They must put down their weapons and make a political agreement in good faith.

Question. We have seen alarming reports of both Emiratis and Saudis transferring serious U.S.-origin weapons systems to third party fighters on the ground. If true, this has serious implications for future arms sales. How will you engage with the Saudis on this matter?

Answer. Recent media reports alleging that the Coalition provided U.S.-origin Mine-Resistant Ambush Protected (MRAP) vehicles and other equipment to Yemeni forces and other third parties without the consent of the U.S. government are concerning. All recipients of U.S. origin equipment are expected to adhere to commitments governing procurement of U.S. defense equipment. If confirmed, I am committed to looking into these allegations and working with the Saudis to ensure that they adhere to all of the requirements regarding the transfer of U.S. equipment.

Question. What steps will you take to investigate these allegations?

Answer. If confirmed, I am committed to looking into these allegations and working with the Saudis to ensure that they adhere to all of the requirements regarding the transfer of U.S. equipment.

Question. What do you think are appropriate responses?

Answer. If confirmed, I am committed to looking into these allegations and working with the Saudis to ensure that they adhere to all of the requirements regarding the transfer of U.S. equipment.

Question. As Ambassador, what steps will you take to press the Saudi government to stop their detention of human rights activists, end the detention of American citizen Dr. Walid Fitaihi and allow you to visit womens' right activists who have been unjustly detained?

Answer. If confirmed, I will pursue American interests and champion our values, commitments, and our enduring respect for human rights. I will make clear that the United States remains deeply concerned by the detention of activists and perceived dissidents in Saudi Arabia and that we take all allegations of abuse seriously. If confirmed, I will continue to urge the government of Saudi Arabia to ensure fair trial guarantees, freedom from arbitrary and extrajudicial detention, transparency, and rule of law. If confirmed as Ambassador, I will call on the government of Saudi Arabia to treat prisoners and detainees humanely, and to ensure that allegations of abuse are investigated quickly and thoroughly and those found responsible are held accountable.

I have dedicated my life to the protection of U.S. citizens and U.S. national security interests and if confirmed that will not change. If confirmed, the protection of all U.S. citizens in Saudi Arabia will be my highest priority.

Question. What steps will you take to press the Saudi government to fully account for the murder of Jamal Khashoggi and advise the State and Treasury Departments to fully comply with the Magnitsky law and provide Congress the mandated determination?

Answer. The President and the Secretary of State have been clear that Saudi Arabia must hold accountable every individual implicated in the horrific murder of Jamal Khashoggi, including high-ranking members of the Saudi government. If confirmed, I will do my utmost to advance this process as Ambassador. The U.S. government has a wide range of diplomatic tools—an important one being the Global Magnitsky sanctions program—and I will urge the administration to use those tools in line with the advancement of U.S. foreign policy interests as laid out by the President.

I cannot speak to current compliance, as I am not a member of the administration. However, I fully commit to providing as much information as possible to comply with Congressional requirements.

Question. Will you press for both our own administration and the Saudis to fully cooperate with the U.N. Special Investigator? What steps will you take to advocate for their cooperation?

Answer. The administration supports U.N. Special Rapporteur Agnes Callamard's global mandate to investigate extra-judicial, summary, or arbitrary executions. It is my understanding that State Department officials met with her, at her request, in Washington to discuss several matters, including the murder of Jamal Khashoggi. If confirmed, I will urge Saudi counterparts to continue their investigation in order to hold those responsible accountable, and to provide appropriate cooperation for Special Rapporteur Callamard's inquiry into the murder of Mr. Khashoggi.

Anti-Semitism/Religious Intolerance

Question. Saudi Arabia has a history of religious intolerance and anti-Semitism, including in its education system. I am very concerned that Saudi Arabia's latest books for the 2018-2019 school year continue to teach hatred or even violence against Jews, Christians, Shiites, women, men who have sex with men, and anybody who mocks or converts away from Islam:

- Will you commit making this issue a priority during your time as ambassador?

Answer. Yes, if confirmed, I will commit to making this issue a priority. The United States is concerned that hateful language in educational materials not only fosters intolerance and discrimination, but fertilizes the ground for violent extremism that extends far beyond Saudi Arabia's own borders. As noted in my testimony, intolerance and violent religious extremism exported across borders and regions is a problem we need to solve. This is a difficult problem to solve, and research indicates it may be worsening, but direct engagement with the government and other stakeholders will be a priority.

Question. What steps will you take to raise this issue with Saudi authorities?

Answer. Although the Saudi government has taken some positive steps to remove objectionable content, textbooks retain inflammatory material hostile to Christians, Jews, and Shia Muslims. I understand that Embassy officials routinely engage with

Saudi counterparts on this issue, and support international visitor programs aimed at expanding religious tolerance and interfaith cooperation. If confirmed, I will seek to build upon those efforts.

Question. How will you advise the administration to address this issue with Saudi Arabia?

Answer. Direct engagement on tough issues is critical. I understand the State Department's International Religious Freedom office routinely engages leaders across faiths and regions, and I will look to support their work to promote religious tolerance with Saudi Arabia.

Nuclear / 123

Question. Do you commit to ensuring the administration complies with 42 U.S. Code § 2153(e), which requires the president to keep the Committee on Foreign Affairs of the House of Representatives and the Committee on Foreign Relations of the Senate "fully and currently informed of any initiative or negotiations relating to a new or amended agreement for peaceful nuclear cooperation pursuant to this section (except an agreement arranged pursuant to section 2121(c), 2164(b), 2164(c), or 2164(d) of this title, or an amendment thereto)"?

Answer. Yes, if confirmed, I will support the Department's efforts to comply with this requirement.

Question. Crown Prince Muhammad bin Salman stated in an interview that Saudi Arabia would acquire nuclear weapons if Iran acquired them. What is your assessment of the Saudi's current interest in pursuing nuclear energy?

Answer. As Saudi Arabia expands and diversifies its economy under Vision 2030, alternate means of energy production are a reasonable avenue to lessening the country's dependence on fossil fuels. Safe, secure civilian nuclear technology is one route to achieving that goal.

Question. Do you agree that supplying nuclear reactors—even so-called "peaceful power" reactors—to Saudi Arabia is significant risk?

Answer. My understanding is that all 123 agreements include the strongest nonproliferation and security standards required by any nuclear supplier in the world. Beyond these legal requirements, my understanding is that the United States has a long-standing policy of seeking to limit the spread of enrichment and reprocessing technologies. If the United States enters into a 123 agreement with Saudi Arabia and a U.S. firm is chosen to build nuclear reactors there, it would ensure the Saudi nuclear power program is subject to our high nonproliferation and security standards.

Question. How do you think the U.S. should proceed regarding providing nuclear technology to Saudi

Answer. If confirmed as ambassador, I will support pursuing the strongest nonproliferation standards in negotiations with Saudi Arabia.

Question. There are reports that former NSC officials were pursuing efforts to give nuclear technology to the Saudis, reportedly regardless of the 123 requirements:

- Are you aware of such reports?

Answer. I am aware of media reports, but have no further knowledge of such activities.

Question. What steps will you take to ensure that any discussions comply fully with 123 and protect U.S. interests?

Answer. If confirmed, I would support continuing discussions with Saudi Arabia on a 123 agreement that fully complies with U.S. law and includes the strongest nonproliferation standards.

Democracy

Question. What are the most important actions you have taken in your career to date to support democracy and human rights? What has been the impact of your actions? [

Answer. Having served in the U.S. Army for 34 years, I have devoted my life to defending U.S. values and human rights around the world. I participated in or led in the following: the rescue of U.S. students in Grenada; served as an unarmed U.N. observer in Lebanon; participated in operations in Northern Iraq to protect the Kurds and preserve peace and stability; after the 2006 earthquake I led efforts to provide relief supplies and military assistance to Pakistan; established the Provin-

cial Reconstruction Team concept in both Iraq and Afghanistan; and led evacuation operations for American civilians in Lebanon. Throughout my career, I have been dedicated to the democratic principles upon which our country was built and I have advocated for the universal respect of human rights. These were particularly difficult to in operations in Iraq and Afghanistan.

The world we live in remains challenging; however, I believe my impact on younger U.S. officers concerning the respect for the rule of law, democracy and universal human rights has been significant.

Question. What issues are the most pressing challenges to democracy or democratic development in Saudi Arabia? These challenges might include obstacles to participatory and accountable governance and institutions, rule of law, authentic political competition, civil society, human rights and press freedom. Please be as specific as possible.

Answer. The State Department's most recent Human Rights Report on Saudi Arabia documents significant restrictions on freedom of expression and civil society. Fundamental freedoms of religion, expression, assembly, and association are not enshrined in Saudi law. At least 120 Saudis remain in Saudi government detention for activism, criticism of government leaders, impugning Islam or religious leaders, or "offensive" internet postings. There are credible reports that some of the detainees have been mistreated or tortured, including U.S. citizen Walid Fitaihi. The use of counterterrorism laws and courts to prosecute non-terrorists remains a key problem.

Gender discrimination excludes women from many aspects of public life. Women are routinely excluded from formal decision-making positions in both government and the private sector, although some women attained leadership positions in business and served in senior advisory positions within government ministries. While we welcome the decision to allow Saudi women to drive which was enacted in June 2018, the male guardianship law is still in place, which prohibits Saudi women from traveling overseas without approval and limits their freedom of movement.

I understand that Saudi Arabia remains a Country of Particular Concern for international religious freedom. Many of those detained for advocacy or dissent are members of Saudi Arabia's Shia minority.

Saudi law does not provide citizens the full ability to choose their government in free and fair elections. Only select members of the ruling family have a voice in the choice of leaders, the composition of the government, or changes to the political system. There are no political parties or similar associations. Even so, in 2015, elections were held for two-thirds of the 3,159 seats on 284 municipal councils; the government appointed the remaining third. Women were allowed to vote and run as candidates for the first time in 2015.

Question. What steps will you take—if confirmed—to support democracy in Saudi Arabia? What do you hope to accomplish through these actions? What are the potential impediments to addressing the specific obstacles you have identified?

Answer. If confirmed, I will make clear that the United States remains deeply concerned by the detention of activists and perceived dissidents in Saudi Arabia and that we take all allegations of abuse and harassment seriously. If confirmed, I will continue to urge the government of Saudi Arabia to ensure the right to a fair trial, freedom from arbitrary and extrajudicial detention, transparency, and rule of law. If confirmed as Ambassador, I will call on the government of Saudi Arabia to treat prisoners and detainees humanely, and to ensure that allegations of abuse are investigated quickly and thoroughly.

Women's rights are a critical goal for U.S. foreign policy, and I fully commit to making it a key element of my potential tenure as ambassador. Through Vision 2030 and other reform efforts, the Saudis have made progress, but it is clearly not enough. We have pressed them on this issue for years, and I will continue to do so.

Finally, if confirmed as Ambassador, I will note U.S. support for expanding this participatory process for municipal elections.

Question. How will you utilize U.S. government assistance resources at your disposal, including the Democracy Commission Small Grants program and other sources of State Department and USAID funding, to support democracy and governance, and what will you prioritize in processes to administer such assistance?

Answer. If confirmed, I plan to leverage U.S. foreign assistance, along with other tools available to the U.S. government, to advance our foreign policy goals ?and national security interests, including through support for democracy and governance. If confirmed, I will ensure that U.S. foreign assistance resources and programs sup-

port civil society organizations, promote inclusive participatory governance, and further respect for human rights.

Question. If confirmed, do you commit to meet with civil society members, human rights and other non-governmental organizations in the U.S. and with local human rights NGOs, and other members of civil society in Iraq? What steps will you take to pro-actively address efforts to restrict or penalize NGOs and civil society via legal or regulatory measures?

Answer. If confirmed as Ambassador, I intend to meet with the full range of Saudi society, as well as non-governmental organizations in the United States that work on issues related to Saudi Arabia. I will make clear to Saudi leadership that the United States supports the important role civil society plays in every country.

Question. If confirmed, do you commit to meet with democratically oriented political opposition figures and parties? What steps will you take to encourage genuine political competition? Will you advocate for access and inclusivity for women, minorities and youth within political parties?

Answer. There are no political parties or similar associations in Saudi Arabia. However, if confirmed as Ambassador, I will strongly advocate for the inclusion of women, minorities, and youth in public life. If confirmed, I will strongly advocate for women's inclusion in formal decision-making positions in both government and the private sector.

Question. Will you and your embassy team actively engage with the government of Saudi Arabia on freedom of the press and address any government efforts designed to control or undermine press freedom through legal, regulatory or other measures? Will you commit to meeting regularly with independent, local press in Iraq?

Answer. At every opportunity, if confirmed, I will underscore the United States' enduring commitment to human rights, including freedoms of conscience, expression, peaceful assembly, and movement. If confirmed, I will meet with independent, local press.

Question. Will you and your embassy team actively engage with civil society and government counterparts on countering disinformation and propaganda disseminated by foreign state or non-state actors in the country?

Answer. Yes, if confirmed my embassy team and I will engage with a diverse cross-section of Saudi society on freedom of thought and expression, as well as the importance and value of a free and open press.

Question. Will you and your embassy teams actively engage with the government of Saudi Arabia on the right of labor groups to organize, including for independent trade unions?

Answer. Saudi law does not provide for the right of workers to form and join independent unions, nor does it provide for the right to collective bargaining or the right to conduct legal strikes. Even so, if confirmed, I will underscore to Saudi leadership that the United States is a strong advocate for the human rights and labor rights of workers across the globe, and evaluates each country's labor rights in our annual Human Rights Report.

Question. Will you commit to using your position, if confirmed, to defend the human rights and dignity of all people in Iraq, no matter their sexual orientation or gender identity? What challenges do the lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender and queer (LGBTQ) people face in Saudi Arabia? What specifically will you commit to do to help LGBTQ people in Saudi Arabia?

Answer. Under sharia as interpreted in Saudi Arabia, consensual same-sex sexual conduct is punishable by death or flogging. If confirmed, I pledge to support and defend the rights of LGBTQ Saudis.

RESPONSES TO ADDITIONAL QUESTIONS FOR THE RECORD
SUBMITTED TO GENERAL JOHN ABIZAID BY SENATOR BENJAMIN L. CARDIN

Question. The U.S. and Saudi Arabia share clear strategic interests in countering Iranian destabilizing activities, countering terrorism, and ensuring the free flow of oil and commerce to global markets. They also share a strong security partnership. As Ambassador, how will you leverage and restructure this relationship to further a principled U.S. foreign policy that takes a firm stance on human rights, protection

of civilians in Yemen, and holds our partner accountable, particularly when it receives substantial U.S. support?

Answer. I firmly believe that direct, respectful, engagement on tough issues advances U.S. interests and messages American values to the world. We should always seek to embed our values in our broader foreign policy imperatives in the Middle East—stability, security, and economic prosperity. Each of these priorities is advanced by our close relationship with Saudi Arabia—we are able to influence, steer, and achieve results because of our ability to have honest, often difficult conversations with Saudi leadership. If confirmed, I will prioritize those engagements as ambassador.

Question. Are there specific incentives or punitive steps you would recommend to encourage or demand the development of more open, participatory, and transparent governance in the kingdom?

Answer. In all our relationships around the world, the United States has traditionally encouraged more open, participatory, and transparent governance. The tools and levers we use may differ. In the case of Saudi Arabia, I believe we should commend ongoing reforms and regularly encourage adherence to rule of law and protection of human rights, while also seeking to preserve the longstanding relationship that has allowed us to achieve mutual objectives in the region over many decades. Partnership with the United States is a significant incentive in its own right, and the political, security, and economic benefits that come with it should always underpin our engagements overseas in order to advance American values and ideals.

Question. How might Saudi leaders respond to efforts by the United States to withhold or condition the provision of arms sales and security assistance in order to compel policy changes?

Answer. I recognize that U.S. government foreign assistance and the reputational incentives a partnership with the United States offers is in some cases a useful tool to encourage countries to adopt policy changes that favor U.S. interests. In Saudi Arabia, I believe our strong partnership over many decades has allowed us to secure U.S. interests in the region, roll back the malign influence of Iran, and counter violent extremist groups, such as al-Qa'ida and ISIS.

I believe U.S. priorities are advanced by our close relationship with Saudi Arabia, not in spite of it. We are able to influence, steer, and achieve results because of our ability to have honest, often difficult conversations with Saudi leadership. We should not, however, take these relations for granted. As we work through our differences, we want to maintain our commitment as a reliable partner while insisting on full accountability.

Question. Until there is more clarity on the circumstances of the Khashoggi murder and the trials of the unnamed Saudi suspects, would you agree that it is appropriate to defer travel to the United States of individuals thought to have a role in it?

Answer. Yes, and I understand the Secretary of State approved a policy on October 23, 2018 restricting visas for all individuals suspected of involvement in this horrific crime. There are also human rights-related visa restrictions that apply to those involved in an extrajudicial killing.

Question. What leverage, if any, do you believe Saudi investments in U.S. Treasury securities, Saudi support for the denomination of international oil sales in U.S. dollars, and Saudi purchases of U.S. defense articles and services, provide the Saudi government relative to the United States?

Answer. Saudi Arabia's investments in the United States are significant, with over $14 billion in foreign direct investment in 2018. These investments benefit Saudi Arabia as well as the United States, and our country remains the key engine of the world economy. Saudi Arabia, like so many countries, is attracted to the U.S. market for its stability, quality, and continued potential for growth.

Saudi Arabia remains a leading player in the global oil market, and use of the U.S. dollar as the primary currency of oil and other international trade is important to U.S. national security. Dollar-denominated energy trade gives the United States leverage over those using our currency.

Saudi Arabia is—by far—the largest purchaser of U.S. defense equipment, with currently over $100 billion in active Foreign Military Sales cases. These sales provide significant income and growth for U.S. businesses, support U.S. jobs, and enhance our military interoperability.

Question. How should the United States respond to implied or explicit threats by Saudi officials to change patterns of bilateral investment, defense ties, or energy policies?

Answer. The United States should respond strongly and affirmatively to secure U.S. interests. The U.S.-Saudi relationship relies on cooperation and shared interests, and I believe the benefits of our relationship are well known to Saudi Arabian authorities. A breakdown in our relations would serve neither country's interests.

Question. What are the kingdom's red lines with regard to a solution to the conflict in Yemen?

Answer. Houthi missile launches and UAV strikes pose a serious security threat to Saudi Arabia. The Kingdom will not tolerate this threat along its southern border. As part of the political resolution to the Yemen conflict, the Houthis must disarm. They must also credibly break ties with the Iranians.

Question. What role might Saudi Arabia be willing to accept for the Houthi movement in the future governance of Yemen and on what terms?

Answer. Saudi Arabia understands that the Houthis must play some role in Yemen's future government in order for any political resolution to endure. The Houthis have not yet decided whether they are a political party, a religious group, or both. There is an outstanding question of whether they truly seek a political role. Saudi Arabia's primary interest is a stable southern neighbor that can repel Iran's destabilizing activities. The Houthis must put down their heavy weapons and sever ties with Iran. These are the government of Yemen's terms, these are Saudi Arabia's terms. They are also in line with U.S. interests. If confirmed, I will work to support a political solution that addresses these issues.

Question. What would be the pros and cons of providing security assistance or guarantees to Saudi Arabia to support a future ceasefire arrangement and peace deal in Yemen?

Answer. Saudi Arabia was a key contributor to the Hudaydah ceasefire agreement the Yemeni government and Houthis reached in Sweden, and it is honoring and using its influence to advance that agreement on the ground. I believe our strong bilateral relationship has allowed us to rely on the Kingdom's diplomatic influence at several key junctures since the Sweden agreement. While the Kingdom has already shown a strong commitment to the peace process, providing security assistance or guarantees to the Saudis could further bolster those efforts. Such guarantees, however, must not embolden any party to walk away from the negotiating table and would require close consultations with Congress.

Question. What is your assessment of Crown Prince Mohammed bin Salman's leadership and decision making since 2015? What implications might his consolidation of bureaucratic authority and assertion of control over formerly distinct Saudi security forces have for the security and stability of the kingdom?

Answer. I share Administration concerns regarding instances of Saudi decision-making that came with little or no warning and consultation. If confirmed as Ambassador, my duty will be to engage Saudi leadership, including the Crown Prince, on the vast range of political, economic, and security issues that underpin the U.S.-Saudi relationship, to maximize coordination and avoid surprises. We should encourage reforms that are beneficial to U.S. interests and represent our values. I understand that State Department officials frequently stress to the Saudis that political repression endangers the many positive reforms—such as economic diversification, curbs the religious police, and authorization for women to drive—that the Crown Prince has enacted.

Question. What implications might these developments have for regional security?

Answer. Saudi Arabia can help confront common foes and shape and promote regional stability. If confirmed, I will work with the Saudi government to secure U.S. interests, encourage reforms that represent our values, and help guide the region to a positive future.

Question. How essential is the crown prince's personal leadership to the continuation and success of policy changes that the United States has welcomed since 2015, such as the kingdom's Vision 2030 initiative and various social liberalization efforts that recognize Saudi women's rights?

Answer. Vision 2030 is a bold plan that seeks to transform and diversify the Kingdom's economy, employ more Saudis, liberalize the country's culture, and promote greater inclusion of women in society and the workplace. This is critical for the

Kingdom's long-term development, and the Crown Prince has shown a firm commitment to that goal.

At the same time, supporting and advancing women's rights is a critical goal for U.S. foreign policy, and if confirmed, I fully commit to making them a key element of my potential tenure as ambassador. Through Vision 2030 and other reform efforts, the Saudis have made progress, but it is clearly not enough. We have pressed them on this issue for years, and I will continue to do so, if confirmed.

Question. What are the prospects for success of the kingdom's Vision 2030 and fiscal balance initiatives?

Answer. Vision 2030 has the potential to fundamentally reform the Kingdom's economic and social trajectory. Its success would further solidify the country's influence in the region and world, a positive prospect for American interests as close partners.

Question. What specific steps do you believe the United States should take to end the rift between Saudi Arabia and Qatar, two key U.S. allies in the region?

Answer. The President and Secretary Pompeo have been clear that the Gulf dispute has gone on too long. The dispute benefits our adversaries and harms our mutual interests. The Administration continues to underscore to the parties the political, economic, security, and social benefits of Gulf unity; this is something I look forward to working on if confirmed.

Question. What signs would you look for to suggest the conflict is "ripe" for solution?

Answer. The situation is already ripe to be resolved. GCC+2 countries have participated together in many events and exercises, most recently at the February meeting of the Middle East Strategic Alliance in Washington. While aware of the deep divisions that led to the rift, we are hopeful the parties will take additional steps to build confidence and end the dispute. Significant political, economic, security, and human linkages underpin Gulf relations, and an immediate end to the dispute will help all parties involved and rekindle the unity of the Gulf.

Question. The U.S. government has been trying to do more to build up ties between the GCC states for years, including proposals in 2005 to create a "GCC Plus Two" that included Jordan and Egypt. What is different about the Middle East Strategic Alliance proposal?

Answer. The Middle East Strategic Alliance (MESA) aims to enhance resiliency in the Gulf region through engagement in the political, security, energy, and economic spheres. MESAis designed to bolster connectivity, interoperability, and collective security among our partners in this critical region. If confirmed, I will work to promote this initiative as it advances U.S. interests in the region.

Question. What should the U.S. do differently than it has done in the past?

Answer. As I understand the concept, MESA's strategic approach—encompassing political, security, energy, and economic components—allows us to work with the Gulf region and close regional partners in a comprehensive manner, based on multiple pillars of engagement, in contrast to earlier iterations of similar concepts.

Question. What is the status of U.S.-Saudi dialogue negotiations concerning a civilian nuclear cooperation agreement?

Answer. I understand that the United States and Saudi Arabia have been in discussions on a 123 agreement since 2012, though I am not in a position to discuss the current status of negotiations.

Question. Why does Saudi Arabia want to develop domestic uranium enrichment technology?

Answer. My understanding is the Saudis have natural mineral deposits they hope to utilize in the future. The United States has a long-standing policy of seeking to limit the spread of enrichment and reprocessing technologies around the world. If confirmed as ambassador, I will support pursuing the strongest nonproliferation standards in negotiations with Saudi Arabia.

Question. How confident are you that Saudi Arabia's nuclear ambitions are wholly civilian in nature?

Answer. Saudi Arabia is a party to the Nuclear Nonproliferation Treaty (NPT). It has committed never to acquire nuclear weapons and to apply full-scope IAEA safeguards to all peaceful nuclear activities. The United States remains committed to holding all states accountable to their obligations under the NPT and IAEA safeguards agreements.

Question. As you may know, Senator Rubio and I recently introduced a bipartisan resolution to call on Saudi Arabia to immediately release detained women's rights activists, arrested after May 2018, as well as other rights defenders, both male and female. Do you commit to work with the administration to press the government of Saudi Arabia to immediately release all political prisoners, human rights defenders, journalists, and bloggers, including Raif Badawi, Waleed Abu al-Khair, and Aziza al-Yousef?

Answer. If confirmed, I will make clear that the United States remains deeply concerned by the detention of activists and dissidents in Saudi Arabia and that we take all allegations of abuse seriously. I will continue to urge the government of Saudi Arabia to ensure fair trial guarantees, freedom from arbitrary and extrajudicial detention, transparency, and rule of law. If confirmed as Ambassador, I will call on the government of Saudi Arabia to treat prisoners and detainees humanely, and to ensure that allegations of abuse are investigated quickly and thoroughly and anyone found responsible is held accountable.

Question. What are your most meaningful achievements to date in your career to promote human rights and democracy? What has been the impact of your actions?

Answer. Having served in the U.S. Army for 34 years, I have devoted my life to defending U.S. values and human rights around the world. I participated in or led in the following: the rescue of U.S. students in Grenada; served as an unarmed U.N. observer in Lebanon; participated in operations in Northern Iraq to protect the Kurds and preserve peace and stability; after the 2006 earthquake I led efforts to provide relief supplies and military assistance to Pakistan; established the Provincial Reconstruction Team concept in both Iraq and Afghanistan; and led evacuation operations for American civilians in Lebanon. Throughout my career, I have been dedicated to the democratic principles upon which our country was built and I have advocated for the universal respect of human rights. These were particularly difficult to in operations in Iraq and Afghanistan.

The world we live in remains challenging; however, I believe my impact on younger U.S. officers concerning the respect for the rule of law, democracy and universal human rights has been significant.

Question. What are the most pressing human rights issues in Saudi Arabia? What are the most important steps you expect to take—if confirmed—to promote human rights and democracy in Saudi Arabia? What do you hope to accomplish through these actions?

Answer. The State Department's most recent Human Rights Report on Saudi Arabia documents significant restrictions on freedom of expression and civil society. At least 120 Saudis remain in Saudi government detention for activism, criticism of government leaders, impugning Islam or religious leaders, or "offensive" internet postings. The use of counterterrorism laws and courts to prosecute non-terrorists remains a key problem. There are credible reports that some of the detainees have been mistreated or tortured, including U.S. citizen Walid Fitaihi. I am aware that the Department has designated Saudi Arabia a Country of Particular Concern under the International Religious Freedom Act given significant restrictions on freedom of worship. Many of those detained for advocacy or dissent are members of Saudi Arabia's Shia minority.

Gender discrimination excludes women from many aspects of public life. Women are routinely excluded from formal decision-making positions in both government and the private sector, although some women attained leadership positions in business and served in senior advisory positions within government ministries.

If confirmed, I will make clear that the United States remains deeply concerned by the detention of activists and perceived dissidents in Saudi Arabia and that we take all allegations of abuse seriously. I will continue to urge the government of Saudi Arabia to ensure fair trial guarantees, freedom from arbitrary and extrajudicial detention, transparency, and rule of law. If confirmed as Ambassador, I will call on the government of Saudi Arabia to treat prisoners and detainees humanely, and to ensure that allegations of abuse are investigated quickly and thoroughly and anyone found responsible is held accountable.

Women's rights are a critical goal for U.S. foreign policy, and I fully commit to making them a key element of my potential tenure as ambassador. The Saudis have made progress, but it is clearly not enough. We have pressed them on this issue for years, and I will continue to do so.

Question. If confirmed, what are the potential obstacles to addressing the specific human rights issues you have identified in your previous response? What challenges will you face in Saudi Arabia in advancing human rights, civil society and democracy in general?

Answer. Our advocacy is challenged by the absence of any Saudi law protecting freedoms of religion and thought, expression, peaceful assembly, and association, as well as a deeply conservative culture that does not favor universal equality of men and women in society. While we welcome the decision to allow Saudi women to drive which was enacted in June 2018, we remain concerned that the male guardianship law is still in place, which prohibits Saudi women from traveling overseas and limits their freedom of movement.

Question. Are you committed to meeting with human rights, civil society and other non-governmental organizations in the U.S. and with local human rights NGOs in Saudi Arabia? If confirmed, what steps will you take to pro-actively support the Leahy Law and similar efforts, and ensure that provisions of U.S. security assistance and security cooperation activities reinforce human rights?

Answer. If confirmed as Ambassador, I intend to meet with the full range of Saudi society, as well as non-governmental organizations in the United States that work on issues related to Saudi Arabia. I will make clear to Saudi leadership that the United States supports the important role civil society plays in every country. I will commit to uphold the Leahy Law, and will also commit to our Conventional Arms Transfer policies that require human rights to be considered as a factor in any arms transfer or licensing decision.

Question. Will you and your embassy team actively engage with Saudi Arabia to address cases of key political prisoners or persons otherwise unjustly targeted by Saudi Arabia

Answer. Freedom of expression and thought are not enshrined in Saudi law. At least 120 Saudis remain in Saudi government detention for activism, criticism of government leaders, impugning Islam or religious leaders, or "offensive" internet postings. There are credible reports that some of the detainees have been mistreated or tortured, including U.S. citizen Walid Fitaihi.

I will make clear that the United States remains deeply concerned by the detention of activists and perceived dissidents in Saudi Arabia and that we take all allegations of abuse seriously. I will continue to urge the government of Saudi Arabia to ensure fair trial guarantees, freedom from arbitrary and extrajudicial detention, transparency, and rule of law. If confirmed as Ambassador, I will call on the government of Saudi Arabia to treat prisoners and detainees humanely, and to ensure that allegations of abuse are investigated quickly and thoroughly and those found responsible are held accountable.

Question. Will you engage with Saudi Arabia on matters of human rights, civil rights and governance as part of your bilateral mission?

Answer. At every opportunity, I will underscore the United States' enduring commitment to human rights and fundamental freedoms. If confirmed, I will meet with the full range of Saudi society, including independent, local press as well as non-governmental organizations in the United States that work on issues related to Saudi Arabia. I will make clear to Saudi leadership that the United States supports the important role civil society plays in every country.

Question. Do you commit to bring to the committee's attention (and the State Department Inspector General) any change in policy or U.S. actions that you suspect may be influenced by any of the President's business or financial interests, or the business or financial interests of any senior White House staff?

Answer. I commit to comply with all relevant federal ethics laws, regulations, and rules, and to raise concerns that I may have through appropriate channels.

Question. Do you commit to inform the committee if you have any reason to suspect that a foreign government, head of state, or foreign-controlled entity is taking any action in order to benefit any of the President's business or financial interests, or the interests of senior White House staff?

Answer. I commit to comply with all relevant federal ethics laws, regulations, and rules, and to raise concerns that I may have through appropriate channels.

Question. Do you or do any members of your immediate family have any financial interests in Saudi Arabia?

Answer. My investment portfolio includes companies that have a presence in Saudi Arabia. My investment portfolio also includes diversified mutual funds that may hold interests in companies with a presence in Saudi Arabia; however, such funds are exempt from the conflict of interest laws. I am committed to ensuring that my official actions will not give rise to a conflict of interest, will divest my interests

in those companies the State Department Ethics Office deemed necessary to avoid a conflict of interest, and will remain vigilant with regard to my ethics obligations.

Question. Research from private industry demonstrates that, when managed well, diversity makes business teams better both in terms of creativity and in terms of productivity. What will you do to promote, mentor and support your staff that come from diverse backgrounds and underrepresented groups in the Foreign Service?

Answer. Throughout my career I have been dedicated to mentoring minority, women and disadvantaged soldiers and ensuring that diverse populations faced no systemic or organizational barriers to promotion and advancement. I will continue to do so if confirmed as an Ambassador of the United States.

Question. What steps will you take to ensure each of the supervisors at the Embassy are fostering an environment that is diverse and inclusive?

Answer. If confirmed, I will by my own personal example ensure that diversity issues are discussed and implemented and ensure that all applicable State Department policies are understood and followed. I share your belief that diverse teams not only make the Embassy stronger, but make the United States stronger, and set a positive tone for those who are watching us in the host nation.

Question. How do you believe political corruption impacts democratic governance and the rule of law generally, and in Saudi Arabia specifically?

Answer. Saudi contacts from a broad range of backgrounds routinely cite anti-corruption safeguards and accountability among their top concerns for government reform. government measures, including investigations by the Public Prosecutor's Office (PPO), to deter and combat corruption enjoy strong public support.

Question. What is your assessment of corruption trends in Saudi Arabia and efforts to address and reduce it by that government?

Answer. King Salman and Crown Prince Mohammed bin Salman have prioritized efforts to prevent and punish public sector and government contract corruption. Saudi authorities, including the Public Prosecutor's Office (PPO), continue to aggressively pursue corruption cases. These efforts enjoy broad public support.

While the explicit goal of anti-corruption efforts should be supported, any detentions and prosecution must respect the rights of the accused, be supported by strong evidence, transparency, and a fair judicial process. Such efforts must be free of political influence, and guarantee the humane treatment of any individuals involved.

Question. If confirmed, what steps will you take to strengthen good governance and anticorruption programming in Saudi Arabia?

Answer. If confirmed, I will engage the Saudi government on additional efforts to stamp out corruption, but will emphasize the importance of transparency and due process as Saudi authorities investigate corruption and hold accountable those who violate Saudi anti-corruption laws. I will stress that the best way to build public confidence in government anti-corruption efforts and to deter wrongdoing is to release as much information as possible about corruption cases and ensure that those accused of criminal corruption are afforded the opportunity to defend themselves before the law; this will make prosecutions more credible and blunt accusations of political influence.

RESPONSES TO ADDITIONAL QUESTIONS FOR THE RECORD
SUBMITTED TO GENERAL JOHN ABIZAID BY SENATOR BOB PORTMAN

Question. I would like to ask about ongoing operations in Yemen. As you are aware, we have a very robust Foreign Military Sales program with Saudi Arabia. Recently, it has been found that the United Arab Emirates has transferred U.S. provided vehicles and weapons to known terrorist groups. If confirmed, what steps will you take to ensure Saudi Arabia fulfills their obligations under Foreign Military Sales rules?

Answer. Recent media reports alleging that the Coalition provided U.S.-origin Mine-Resistant Ambush Protected (MRAP) vehicles and other equipment to Yemeni forces and other third parties without the consent of the U.S. government are concerning. All recipients of U.S. origin equipment are expected to adhere to commitments governing procurement of U.S. defense equipment. If confirmed, I am committed to working with the Saudis to ensure they follow all rules and regulations surrounding the transfer of U.S. equipment.

Yemen.

Question. Right now, there appears to be no end in sight to the fighting in Yemen. The Saudis see the Houthis as an existential threat to their security. What do you see as realistic strategic goals for the Saudi's in Yemen, and what do you see as U.S. influence "levers" we can pull to push the Saudis and Emiratis to end this conflict?

Answer. One of our shared national security interests with Saudi Arabia is to stop the growing malign influence of Iran, both in the Arabian Peninsula and globally. To that end, we are leveraging constant diplomatic engagement to seek a solution to the conflict in Yemen. We have messaged clearly that a political solution—not a military one—is the only viable option for ending this conflict. The Saudis have supported political negotiations and the United Nations Special Envoy's efforts, adhering to the terms agreed to in Sweden for a general ceasefire in and around the port of Hudaydah, and directly urging the Republic of Yemen government to maintain its presence at the negotiating table. Saudi Arabia also shares our goal of eliminating violent extremist forces operating in Yemen, including al-Qa'ida and ISIS, and through many years of close cooperation, we have secured significant progress on that front. Working with Department of Defense partners, we will continue to engage the Coalition and regional leaders at all levels.

Question. I would like to discuss human trafficking. As you may be aware, Senator Corker, the former Chairman of this committee, passed on to me the responsibility for continuing his work on ending modern slavery. The State Department's 2018 report on trafficking in persons found that "Saudi Arabia does not fully meet the minimum standards for the elimination of trafficking, however it is making significant efforts to do so." There are currently over 11 million third country nationals working in the service industry in Saudi Arabia and many of them are at risk of human trafficking. Saudi Arabia is currently a "Tier 2" Watch List country and was granted a waiver from downgrade. If confirmed, what steps will you take to work with Saudi Arabia to eliminate human trafficking?

Answer. The administration continues to take the issue of trafficking in persons (TIP) very seriously and presses governments around the world, including the Saudi government, to develop and implement anti-trafficking initiatives. I am concerned by Saudi Arabia's efforts to address human trafficking and, if confirmed, I will engage Saudi officials on four key areas: 1) significantly strengthened law enforcement efforts to convict traffickers, particularly for forced labor offenses; 2) expanded reforms to the sponsorship-based employment—or kafala—system; 3) improved efforts to proactively identify and protect potential trafficking victims and ensure they are not punished for unlawful acts committed as a direct result of being subjected to trafficking, including immigration law contraventions and prostitution; and, 4) implementation of the Saudi government's five-year National Action Plan to combat TIP.

RESPONSES TO ADDITIONAL QUESTIONS FOR THE RECORD
SUBMITTED TO GENERAL JOHN ABIZAID BY SENATOR EDWARD J. MARKEY

Nuclear Cooperation with Saudi Arabia

Question. Senior Saudi officials have declared that under certain circumstances, Saudi Arabia might develop nuclear weapons. These officials also have insisted that Saudi Arabia be able to produce its own nuclear fuel, raising fears that it will be diverted into a covert weapons project. The Trump administration appears intent on proceeding with negotiations to achieve a "123" nuclear cooperation agreement with the Saudis, despite these statements and the findings from the House oversight committee regarding financial connections between administration officials and firms pushing for this deal.

- If confirmed, what will you do to ensure that the United States only shares nuclear technology under a "gold standard" 123 agreement—one that prohibits Saudi Arabia from enriching uranium and reprocessing plutonium?

Answer. The United States has a long-standing policy of seeking to limit the spread of enrichment and reprocessing technologies around the world. If confirmed as ambassador, I will support pursuing the strongest nonproliferation standards in negotiations with Saudi Arabia.

Question. If confirmed, how will you ensure that the Americans involved in any Saudi nuclear negotiations are free of financial conflicts of interest?

Answer. Federal ethics rules apply to all U.S. government employees and include relevant recusal obligations with respect to particular matters that would have a direct and predictable effect on the financial interests of those employees. If confirmed, I would expect all U.S. government employees involved in such negotiations to abide by their relevant obligations and will insist on full accountability and compliance with financial disclosure rules.

Question. Some countries—like the United Arab Emirates and Egypt—have language in their 123 agreements permitting them to request to renegotiate the terms of these agreements should other countries in the region receive more favorable terms. If the United States were to conclude a 123 agreement with Saudi Arabia that did not include a Saudi commitment to forgo all uranium enrichment and reprocessing, do you anticipate these countries would ask the United States to renegotiate their 123 agreement terms?

Answer. I cannot speculate as to the potential actions of these other governments, but I am aware of these concerns.

Question. In a recent speech at the Hudson Institute, Assistant Secretary for International Security and Nonproliferation Chris Ford stated that 123 agreements "are a critical part" of civil nuclear cooperation with the United States, "but they need not be viewed as the only tool, for not all countries that wish to develop better civil nuclear relationships with the United States." He stated that, "to help provide an additional way to catalyze and nurture cooperative relationships, we are working to expand the use of less formal, non-binding bilateral political arrangements more akin to a memorandum of understanding (MOU) than to a full 123." If confirmed, would you endorse engaging in the type of cooperation with Saudi Arabia Assistant Secretary Ford described in his remarks?

Answer. If confirmed, my charge would be specific to Saudi Arabia. I would support continuing discussions with Saudi Arabia on a 123 agreement that includes the strongest nonproliferation standards.

Question. Do you believe the United States should engage in civilian nuclear cooperation of any kind with Saudi Arabia at present given its stated willingness to pursue nuclear weapons?

Answer. As Saudi Arabia expands and diversifies its economy under Vision 2030, alternate means of energy production are a reasonable avenue to lessening the country's dependence on fossil fuels. Safe, secure civilian nuclear power is one route to achieving that goal.

The United States has significant strategic, commercial, and nonproliferation incentives to conclude a 123 agreement with Saudi Arabia. Bringing into force such an agreement would provide substantial economic opportunities for U.S. firms and ensure the Saudi nuclear power program is subject to the highest nonproliferation, safety, and security standards required by any nuclear supplier in the world. In the absence of a 123 agreement, U.S. firms will lose the opportunity to compete and will likely be replaced by state-owned enterprises from other countries with lower nonproliferation standards.

Saudi Arabia is a member of the Nuclear Nonproliferation Treaty (NPT) and a strong security partner of the United States. It has committed never to acquire nuclear weapons, and to apply full-scope International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) safeguards to all peaceful nuclear activities. The United States remains committed to holding all states accountable to their obligations under the NPT and IAEA safeguards agreements.

Question. It is longstanding, bipartisan U.S. policy to actively work against the spread of nuclear weapons to any country, friend or foe. If confirmed, would you continue to support this policy approach?

Answer. Yes, if confirmed I will actively work against the spread of nuclear weapons to any country.

Presence of State Department Officials in U.S. government Meetings

Question. CNN reported on March 7 that officials and staffers in the U.S. embassy in Riyadh were excluded from Jared Kushner's late-February meetings in Riyadh with Saudi officials including the Crown Prince and thus unaware of the details of those meetings. Reports indicate that only a senior State Department official focused on Iran joined Mr. Kushner's meetings. Do you believe it is appropriate for career State Department officials stationed at an embassy to be excluded from official meetings visiting U.S. delegations have with the host government? If confirmed, would you oppose U.S. government meetings that do not include State Department staff? What steps would you take to ensure career State Department officials in

Saudi Arabia are not excluded from official meetings visiting U.S. delegations have with Saudi government officials?

Answer. If confirmed, my policy as Ambassador will be to have an Embassy assigned representative at every official meeting to the extent possible. The U.S. government should always act as one unit in the execution of foreign policy. As I noted in my testimony, if confirmed, I will join with the many U.S. government interlocutors from Washington, within the U.S. Mission to Saudi Arabia, and elsewhere to advance U.S. interests in Saudi Arabia as the Ambassador and Chief of Mission in the most coordinated manner possible.

Murder of Jamal Khashoggi and Human Rights in Saudi Arabia

Question. The Trump administration has asserted that, "the President maintains his discretion to decline to act on congressional committee requests when appropriate." However, the Global Magnitsky Act states that, "not later than 120 days after receiving a request from the chairperson and ranking member of [the Senate Foreign Relations Committee] with respect to whether a foreign person has engaged in [a human rights violation], the President shall:

> "(A) Determine if that person has engaged in such an activity; and
>
> "(B) Submit a classified or unclassified report to the [requesters] with respect to that determination that includes (i) a statement of whether or not the President imposed or intends to impose sanctions with respect to the person; and (ii) if the President imposed or intends to impose sanctions, a description of those sanctions."

- What is the legal rationale for how the language in this U.S. law permits the president to decline to act as outlined in bullets A and B? Do you agree with that rationale?

Answer. I know the administration takes Global Magnitsky sanctions very seriously and has taken concrete steps, including designating 17 Saudi officials for sanctions, in response to the horrific killing of Mr. Khashoggi. If confirmed, I will work with the relevant stakeholders in the interagency to utilize the Global Magnitsky sanctions program as an important tool of foreign policy.

Question. Why, in your view, has the Trump administration failed to sanction the Crown Prince of Saudi Arabia for the murder of Jamal Khashoggi, a U.S. resident, while the administration has used Global Magnitsky sanctions against two high-ranking officials in the government of Turkey, a NATO ally, for the detention of an American?

Answer. As I am not yet a member of the administration, I am not privy to these discussions nor have I been briefed on any intelligence matters. I have seen the Secretary's public statements regarding the need for transparency in the Saudi investigation and for there to be accountability for anyone involved in Mr. Khashoggi's murder, including the highest ranking officials of the Saudi government. If confirmed, I will also push for this accountability in line with the advancement of U.S. foreign policy interests as laid out by the President.

Question. Major human rights groups have called for an independent investigation into Khashoggi's murder. Do you support such an inquiry? If so, what entities are in your view appropriate to conduct such an investigation? Would a U.N.-led investigation be appropriate?

Answer. The administration has been clear that the murder of Jamal Khashoggi was a heinous crime. Human rights groups and other organizations have my full support to pursue independent inquiries.

The administration supports U.N. Special Rapporteur Agnes Callamard's global mandate to investigate extra-judicial, summary, or arbitrary executions. It is my understanding that State Department officials met with her, at her request, in Washington to discuss several matters, including the murder of Jamal Khashoggi. If confirmed, I will urge Saudi counterparts to continue their investigation in order to hold those responsible accountable, and to provide appropriate cooperation for Special Rapporteur Callamard's inquiry into the murder of Mr. Khashoggi.

Question. If confirmed, what would you do to secure the release of Dr. Walid Fitaihi, a U.S. citizen and Harvard-trained physician who has been detained by Saudi Arabia since November 2017 without any public charges or trial? Given reports that he may have been tortured, what is the administration doing to protect his rights while he remains in detention?

Answer. I have spent my life defending U.S. citizens and U.S. values. If confirmed, I will continue to do so. I understand U.S. officials in Riyadh and Jeddah are consistently and forcefully engaging Saudi counterparts to ensure Dr. Fitaihi's

safety, rights, and protections under the law, and made several visits to Dr. Fitaihi in recent months. Dr. Fitaihi's situation is of critical importance, and if confirmed, I will continue to elevate his case.

Question. An area of serious concern is the prevalence of anti-Semitic and intolerant messages in Saudi educational textbooks. If confirmed, what priority do you intend to give to this issue, and how would you recommend the administration address this issue with Saudi officials?

Answer. The United States continues to urge the government of Saudi Arabia to counter religious intolerance, including by encouraging educational and textbook reform. They are concerned that hateful language in educational materials not only fosters intolerance and discrimination, but also fertilizes the ground for violent extremism that extends far beyond Saudi Arabia's own borders. Although the Saudi government has vowed to remove objectionable content, textbooks retain inflammatory material hostile to Christians, Jews, and Shia Muslims. I understand that Embassy officials routinely engage with Saudi counterparts on this issue, and support international visitor programs and other programs aimed at expanding religious tolerance and interfaith cooperation. If confirmed, I commit to making this issue a priority, and as noted in my testimony, intolerance and violent religious extremism exported across borders and regions is a problem we need to solve.

Question. In your view, does the U.S. government have the right level of emphasis on human rights in our bilateral relationship with Saudi Arabia?

Answer. Yes, as I know this is a core part of the U.S. Mission to Saudi Arabia's engagement with the Saudi government. That said, we must always seek to emphasize our core American values and ideals, as well as universal human rights and fundamental freedoms, as we expand any international relationship.

Yemen and Humanitarian Access

Question. All parties to the Yemen conflict continue to put a wide range of access constraints in place, from a full blockade of Yemen's ports in 2017, to secondary inspections of humanitarian shipments that have already cleared the U.N. inspection process, to restrictions on humanitarian staff movements and arbitrary delays in approving life-saving projects. If confirmed, what concrete steps will you take to address these access constraints, particularly when it comes to Saudi Arabia and the United Arab Emirates?

Answer. I am seriously concerned about the dire humanitarian situation in Yemen. I understand that maintaining free and unfettered access to all of Yemen's ports of entry—and throughout Yemen—is critical to the humanitarian response. If confirmed, I will continue to urge Saudi Arabia and the United Arab Emirates to increase access and to continue to work closely with the U.N. and its inspection process to make sure humanitarian aid and staff are able to reach the estimated 24 million Yemenis who rely on some form of humanitarian assistance to survive. If confirmed, I intend to work with like-minded partners to address and deter Houthi threats to the Bab al-Mandeb—this will provide assurances to shippers and importers to return to the Red Sea ports, which are located nearest to the populations in most need of aid.

U.S. Weapons Sold to Saudi Arabia and the United Arab Emirates

Question. Recent reporting indicates U.S. weapons and materiel sold to Saudi Arabia and the United Arab Emirates is ending up in the hands of al Qaeda-linked fighters, Salafi militias, and other, non-state factions waging war in Yemen in violation of the terms of these sale agreements. What do you believe the appropriate recourse would be for the United States government if these reports were to be confirmed?

Answer. Recent media reports alleging that the Coalition provided U.S.-origin Mine-Resistant Ambush Protected (MRAP) vehicles and other equipment to Yemeni forces and other third parties without the consent of the U.S. government are concerning. All recipients of U.S. origin equipment are expected to adhere to commitments governing procurement of U.S. defense equipment. If confirmed, I am committed to working with the Saudis to ensure they adhere to all of the requirements regarding the transfer of U.S. equipment.

Question. If confirmed, how will you ensure that any investigation Saudi Arabia conducts into this matter is done in a thorough, transparent manner?

Answer. If confirmed, I am committed to working with the Saudis to ensure they adhere to all of the requirements regarding the transfer of U.S. equipment.

Rift in the Gulf Cooperation Council

Question. How, if at all, does the continued rift within the Gulf Cooperation Council affect U.S. interests? If confirmed, how will you work to press Saudi Arabia toward reconciling its differences with Qatar?

Answer. The President and Secretary Pompeo have been clear that the Gulf dispute has gone on too long. The dispute benefits our adversaries and harms our mutual interests. Both Saudi Arabia and Qatar are close partners with the United States, and the administration continues to underscore to the parties the political, economic, security, and social benefits of Gulf unity. This is something I look forward to working on if confirmed.

RESPONSES TO ADDITIONAL QUESTIONS FOR THE RECORD
SUBMITTED TO GENERAL JOHN ABIZAID BY SENATOR TODD YOUNG

Question. Based on your preparation for this nomination, can you provide an update on the Saudi agreement with Huawei? Do you have any concerns about this agreement? If confirmed, do you anticipate raising those concerns with Riyadh?

Answer. I am aware of the media reports about Saudi Crown Prince Mohammed bin Salman's visit to China in late February and reports of the conversations Saudi Arabia and China have had about Huawei 5G technology. I understand the U.S. government has raised concerns about Huawei technologies with many of our allies, including that Huawei's components present a serious threat to cybersecurity and national security. If confirmed, I will support the administration's position of ensuring the United States and our partners maintain secure and trustworthy networks. The only way to do this is to utilize trusted supply chains to reduce the risk of unauthorized and malicious cyber activity which could disrupt critical services or possibly be manipulated by authoritarian regimes.

RESPONSES TO ADDITIONAL QUESTIONS FOR THE RECORD
SUBMITTED TO GENERAL JOHN ABIZAID BY SENATOR CORY A. BOOKER

Efforts to reduce civilian casualties

Question. On September 12, 2018, Secretary Pompeo certified under Section 1290 of the Fiscal Year 2019 National Defense Authorization Act that Saudi Arabia was taking appropriate steps to avoid disproportionate harm to civilians and civilian infrastructure and complying with applicable agreements and laws regulating defense articles purchased or transferred from the United States.

The certification states: "The Saudi Ministry of Defense committed to fund U.S.-provided training for the Royal Saudi Air Force (RSAF) on minimizing civilian casualties as one component of a $750 million, multi-year Foreign Military Sales training case." What is the status of the implementation of this case and what meaningful and demonstrable improvements has it made in RSAF operations in Yemen?

Answer. I understand that, at the U.S. government's urging, Saudi Arabia has put in place a number of mechanisms to reduce civilian casualties in Yemen, including civilian casualty reduction seminars that focus on intelligence, strike preparation, strike command and control, and investigations. The Saudi-led Coalition has also implemented reviews of civilian casualty incidents by the Joint Incidents Assessment Team, which investigates collateral damage caused by air strikes, determines the cause, and recommends process improvements to mitigate the risk of future incidents.

Question. According to a December 25, 2018, New York Times article, "The coalition routinely ignored a no-strike list—drawn up by the United States Central Command and the United Nations—of hospitals, schools and other places where civilians gathered." Will you commit to ensure that the Saudi-led coalition abides by the no-strike list?

Answer. Yes, I am committed to advancing the Saudi-led Coalition's obligations to abide by the no-strike list.

Question. What other efforts do you plan to undertake to ensure the Saudi-led coalition in Yemen reduces civilian casualties?

Answer. This is an issue I care deeply about having spent my life in the Armed Forces. If confirmed, I will continue to work with Saudi Arabia in advancing its ef-

forts on civilian protection and adherence to international humanitarian law as that country pursues its legitimate national security objectives. Our close relationship with Saudi Arabia ensures we can continue to work with them on this matter.

Shia minority

Question. Although the Saudi government has pledged to undertake significant domestic reforms under Vision 2030 and other programs, the Shia community in Saudi Arabia remains subject to state discrimination and abuses. While I am hopeful that these reforms make meaningful changes that improve conditions for the Shia community, Human Rights Watch documented a number of cases in September 2018 that show continued bias in education materials, religious restrictions, and imprisonment of Shia protestors.

- What efforts will you undertake, if confirmed, to raise concerns voiced by the Shia minority community in Saudi Arabia?

Answer. The Shia minority is marginalized from political, social, and economic life in Saudi Arabia. Intolerance and violent religious extremism exported across borders and regions are difficult problems that we must continue efforts to solve.

If confirmed as Ambassador, I will note U.S. support for expanding the participatory process for religious minorities in Saudi Arabia. I will also make clear that the United States remains deeply concerned by the detention of activists and perceived dissidents in Saudi Arabia and that we take all allegations of abuse seriously. If confirmed, I will urge the government of Saudi Arabia to ensure fair trial guarantees, freedom from arbitrary and extrajudicial detention, transparency, and rule of law. The United States has pressed them on these issues for years, and I will continue to do so.

Question. Are you concerned about members of the Shia community getting caught up in the Saudi government's broad campaign against Iranian influence in the Gulf and if not, why not?

Answer. The State Department's most recent Human Rights Report on Saudi Arabia documents significant restrictions on freedom of expression and civil society. Fundamental freedoms of religion, expression, assembly, and association are not enshrined in Saudi law. I understand that Saudi Arabia remains a Country of Particular Concern for international religious freedom. Many of those detained for advocacy or dissent are members of Saudi Arabia's Shia minority. At least 120 Saudis remain in Saudi government detention for activism, criticism of government leaders, impugning Islam or religious leaders, or "offensive" internet postings. The use of counterterrorism laws and courts to prosecute non-terrorists remains a key problem.

If confirmed, I will pursue American interests, champion our values, our commitments, and our enduring respect for human rights and religious freedom. I will make clear that the United States remains deeply concerned by the detention of activists and perceived dissidents in Saudi Arabia and that we take all allegations of abuse and harassment seriously. If confirmed, I will continue to urge the government of Saudi Arabia to ensure the right to a fair trial, freedom from arbitrary and extrajudicial detention, transparency, and rule of law. I will call on the government of Saudi Arabia to treat prisoners and detainees humanely, and to ensure that allegations of abuse are investigated quickly and thoroughly.

Question. What meaningful domestic reforms will you encourage the government of Saudi Arabia to undertake to improve conditions for the Shia population?

Answer. Vision 2030 is a bold plan that seeks to make the Kingdom more economically competitive and socially open, including through greater inclusion of women in society and the workplace. This is critical for the Kingdom's long-term development, and the Saudi government has shown a firm commitment to that goal. I believe the U.S. government—alongside the full range of American commercial, educational, and societal actors—can play a key supporting role in advancing Vision 2030's stated goals.

Joint Incidents Assessment Team

Question. Numerous U.S. officials have highlighted the Joint Incidents Assessment Team (JIAT) as one of the many reforms that the Saudi-led coalition had implemented in the war in Yemen. However, a Human Rights Watch report from August found that the body routinely cleared the coalition of wrongdoing, and documented 17 instances in which the assessment team's conclusions were profoundly at odds with Human Rights Watch's own findings.

- In response to a previous question I asked of Ambassador Henzel, he replied that the JIAT was "nominally an independent body composed of Coalition members. . . . It is not under a specific country's military authority." If the JIAT is

not under any country's military authority, how do individual coalition members like Saudi Arabia incorporate its findings into their operations and tactics?

Answer. The administration has worked closely with the Joint Incident Assessment Team (JIAT) and Royal Saudi Air Force (RSAF) on best practices for civilian casualty investigations, providing trainings on the Law of Armed Conflict aimed at improving the JIAT's investigations. Additionally, the administration continues to engage the Saudi-led coalition to encourage the swift implementation of recommendations from JIAT. It is my understanding that JIAT recommendations and process improvements are forwarded to the operational commands of Coalition members so that others can revise their tactics and learn from prior incidents.

Question. The Fiscal Year 2019 NDAA Section 1290 certification also states: "Recent civilian casualty incidents indicate insufficient implementation of reforms and targeting practices. Investigations have not yet yielded accountability measures." How does the U.S. envision such investigations yielding accountability measures and what measures would be sufficient in the view of the State Department?

Answer. The Joint Incident Assessment Team makes recommendations based on its investigations; it remains up to the governments of the participating Coalition countries to implement these recommendations. If confirmed, I will continue to urge the JIAT to conduct swift and transparent investigations and the government of Saudi Arabia to implement the JIAT's recommendations in order to hold those responsible for civilian casualty incidents accountable and to implement recommended tactical changes.

Dr. Walid Fitaihi

Question. In March 2019, the New York Times reported that a dual citizen of Saudi Arabia and the United States, Dr. Walid Fitaihi, had been tortured by Saudi officials. Dr. Fitaihi has reportedly been imprisoned since November 2017 without charges or a trial and remains detained for unspecified reasons. While I appreciate you raising his case in your testimony, this ongoing treatment of an American citizen is unacceptable.

- What steps has Embassy Riyadh taken thus far to secure Dr. Fitaihi's release?

Answer. I understand U.S. officials in Riyadh, Jeddah, and here in Washington are consistently and forcefully engaging senior Saudi counterparts to ensure Dr. Fitaihi's safety, rights, and protections under the law, and consular officials have made several visits to Dr. Fitaihi in recent months. I am highly concerned about reports of his abuse and possible torture. Dr. Fitaihi's situation is of critical importance, and if confirmed, I will continue to advocate and elevate his case.

Question. What additional actions will you take, if confirmed, to raise Dr. Fitaihi's case with senior Saudi officials and work to secure his release?

Answer. I have dedicated my life to the protection of U.S. citizens and U.S. national security interests and, if confirmed, that will not change. If confirmed, the protection of all U.S. citizens in Saudi Arabia will be my highest priority. I am committed to raising Dr. Fitaihi's case and others with the highest levels of the Saudi government.

Human Rights and Press Freedom

Question. The Saudi regime exerts a strong grip of control over media in Saudi Arabia and the broader Arab world. This can make it difficult to get trustworthy information about the human rights situation within the Kingdom. News of the detention of activists and dissidents sometimes do not surface for months, and Saudi authorities practice severe intimidation against family members of detainees. Moreover, one of the most chilling messages sent by the murder of Jamal Khashoggi is that no one who dissents from the regime is safe from Saudi Arabia's reach-even outside the country.

- As the U.S. ambassador to Saudi Arabia, will you pledge to meet with journalists, dissidents, and activists in the country and advocate for respect for independent press in your engagement with the Saudi government, if confirmed?

Answer. At every opportunity, I will underscore the United States' enduring commitment to human rights and fundamental freedoms. If confirmed, I will meet with the full range of Saudi society, including independent, local press as well as nongovernmental organizations in the United States that work on issues related to Saudi Arabia. I will make clear to Saudi leadership that the United States supports the important role civil society plays in every country.

Question. Will you commit to pressing the Saudi government to halt their harassment of Saudi journalists and other dissidents who have left Saudi Arabia and live outside the country, if confirmed?

Answer. Yes, if confirmed, I will make clear that the United States remains deeply concerned by the harassment and detention of journalists, activists, and perceived dissidents in Saudi Arabia and that we take all allegations of abuse seriously. I will continue to urge the government of Saudi Arabia to advance freedom of expression and ensure freedom from arbitrary and extrajudicial detention, transparency, and rule of law.

Women's Rights Activists

Question. In November, Amnesty International and Human Rights Watch issued reports about mistreatment of a number of female activists in prison in Saudi Arabia. A sister of one of the activists, Alia Hathloul, wrote a January 13 op-ed for the New York Times confirming many of the allegations of abuse including that Loujain Al-Hathloul had been held in "solitary confinement, beaten, waterboarded, given electric shocks, sexually harassed and threatened with rape and murder."

During your testimony you said, "I feel particularly strongly that Saudi Arabia, like any nation, will benefit greatly by expanding the space for women in public and professional life. Advocating for women's rights is a critical goal for U.S. foreign policy, and I fully commit to making this a key element of my potential tenure as ambassador" I appreciate these views and hope you will give these words meaning through your actions.

Answer. Secretary Pompeo told reporters he raised the cases of these women activists during his meetings in January with King Salman and Crown Prince Mohammed bin Salman. However, since then, Saudi authorities have charged the activists with "coordinated and organized activities. that aim to undermine the Kingdom's security, stability, and national unity." If confirmed, I will make clear that the United States remains deeply concerned by the harassment and detention of activists and perceived dissidents in Saudi Arabia, and will urge the government of Saudi Arabia to advance freedom of expression and ensure freedom from arbitrary and extrajudicial detention, transparency, and rule of law.

Beyond these specific activist cases, gender discrimination excludes women from many aspects of public life. Women are routinely excluded from formal decision-making positions in both government and the private sector, although some women attained leadership positions in business and served in senior advisory positions within government ministries.

Women's rights are a critical goal for U.S. foreign policy, and I fully commit to making them a key element of my potential tenure as ambassador. The Saudis have made progress, but it is clearly not enough. We have pressed them on this issue for years, and I will continue to do so.

Question. What steps will you undertake, if confirmed, to advocate for their cases and request their release from these questionable charges?

Answer. If confirmed, I will make clear that the United States remains deeply concerned by the detention of activists and perceived dissidents in Saudi Arabia and that we take all allegations of abuse seriously. I will continue to urge the government of Saudi Arabia to ensure fair trial guarantees, freedom from arbitrary and extrajudicial detention, transparency, and rule of law. If confirmed as Ambassador, I will call on the government of Saudi Arabia to treat prisoners and detainees humanely, and to ensure that allegations of abuse are investigated quickly and thoroughly and anyone found responsible is held accountable.

Arms Export Control Violations

Question. In late 2018, the New York Times reported that Sudanese forces fighting Yemen had been issued American-made uniforms and weapons. The Saudi government denied this claim stating that American-made weapons had "never been distributed to personnel participating from Sudan as part of the coalition's operations." Nevertheless, there have also been similar reports of reexports of arms and equipment by the United Arab Emirates (UAE) to forces fighting on their behalf in Yemen.

- Has the United States government found the government of Saudi Arabia to have violated any provision of U.S. law or any other bilateral agreement or understanding with regard to the re-export or transfer of U.S. defense articles since the beginning of the Yemen conflict in 2015?

Answer. Recent media reports alleging that the Coalition provided U.S.-origin equipment to Yemeni forces and other third parties without the consent of the U.S.

government are concerning. All recipients of U.S.-origin equipment are expected to adhere to commitments governing procurement of U.S. defense equipment. If confirmed, I am committed to looking into these allegations and working with the Saudis to ensure that they adhere to all of the requirements regarding the transfer of U.S. equipment.

Question. Has the United States investigated the allegation that U.S.-made uniforms and weaponry were provided by the Saudi government to Sudanese forces fighting in Yemen? If not, why not?

Answer. I know the U.S. government takes seriously all reports of unauthorized transfers of U.S.-origin equipment. If confirmed, I am committed to looking into these allegations and working with the Saudis to ensure they adhere to all of the requirements regarding the transfer of U.S. equipment.

NOMINATIONS

TUESDAY, MARCH 12, 2019

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

The committee met, pursuant to notice, at 10:02 a.m. in Room SD–419, Dirksen Senate Office Building, Hon. Marco Rubio, presiding.

Present: Senators Rubio, Johnson, Gardner, Romney, Young, Menendez, Cardin, Murphy, and Kaine.

OPENING STATEMENT OF HON. MARCO RUBIO, U.S. SENATOR FROM FLORIDA

Senator RUBIO. The Senate Foreign Relations Committee will come to order.

This is a nominations hearing for Michael Fitzpatrick to be Ambassador to the Republic of Ecuador and Ronald Johnson, from my home State of Florida, to be the Ambassador to the Republic of El Salvador.

I wanted to take a quick moment, as I am not able to introduce Mr. Johnson from the witness table, to say a few words. I met Mr. Johnson and his wife Alina about 7 years ago when he served as the representative of the Director of National Intelligence and the CIA Director to the U.S. Southern Command. Mr. Johnson has served in the U.S. government for over 3 decades, starting his career as an officer in the U.S. Army. He retired as a colonel in 1998 and joined the U.S. intelligence community where he currently serves as the Central Intelligence Agency's science and technology liaison to the United States Special Operations Command in Tampa, Florida. He has worked on a wide variety of issues throughout his career and is fluent in Spanish. And his experience and background make him an excellent candidate to lead the U.S. mission in San Salvador.

I welcome the two nominees here today with us. Ambassadors, as we all know, play a critical role in advancing U.S. foreign policy and objectives, and thank you for your willingness to serve and continue to serve our country, in the case of both of you.

We will have an opportunity to discuss two different positions in two countries which are undergoing democratic progress and are taking important steps to improve their economy, security, and their bilateral relations with the United States.

I would like to start by emphasizing the importance of the electoral process in El Salvador, as the country has elected a new leader. I recently had the opportunity to speak with President-elect

Nayib Bukele and congratulated him on his recent victory. We were very cognizant of the importance of this process for the region as the first presidential election of this year. Our Ambassador and embassy personnel closely monitored this process and shared with us that the elections were transparent and the elections were credible. And I want to thank our embassy personnel for playing a supporting role through that process. It was the first time El Salvador had used their own electoral software, and the system, by all accounts, seemed to work very well. This was a key step in restoring confidence for the Salvadoran people and their government and institutions. There were international observation missions that monitored the elections from both the European Union and the Organization of American States. There was also large participation of civil society organizations.

The United States is committed to working with President-elect Bukele and his transition team as they assume the presidency on the 1st of June. This relationship between the U.S. and El Salvador provides an opportunity to work on issues related to cooperation in both security and migration. And the chairman of the Homeland Security Committee, Senator Johnson, is here and he knows well the importance of the migration issue, particularly as it regards El Salvador.

However, there are, as I said, many challenges that remain. El Salvador has the highest concentration of gang members per capita in Central America. These gangs are responsible for a higher percentage of homicides than in neighboring countries. While El Salvador has worked to lower the rates of homicide, there is still much work to be done.

On the economy, it is my hope the United States will work with President-elect Bukele and his new team to help initiatives to jump start what has proven to be a stagnant economy.

Here is a side note that is of importance. China continues to grow in its efforts to expand its influence and its presence in the western hemisphere, and I hope that we remain engaged in addressing this and particularly the influence of the Chinese government and Communist Party in El Salvador. Last year, I and others were deeply disappointed to see El Salvador under the current administration break its diplomatic relations with another fellow democracy, Taiwan, and instead embrace Communist China. I believe—many of us believe—this was a grave mistake and one that will prove to be costly and short-sighted given China's debt trap diplomacy and economic exploitation globally.

Following El Salvador's decision which, by the way, was following the lead of other Latin American countries who have caved to Chinese pressure, I joined Senator Gardner, a member of this committee, in introducing legislative action that dealt with U.S. assistance to El Salvador over this move.

I am pleased that President-elect Bukele has said that he will reassess the existing relationship with China to make necessary policy changes from the previous administration.

At the same time, I also hope that the U.S. will become more fully engaged and prepared to support our friends and partners who are being bullied and pressured by China to ensure they do

not become vulnerable to these kinds of aggressive Chinese government tactics.

By the way, President-elect Bukele will be visiting Washington this week, and we have a real opportunity to strengthen the U.S.-El Salvador partnership and gain an important ally on issues of regional and global importance. And the embassy will play a key role in that front.

Ecuador, under President Moreno is making efforts to liberalize the economy and to seek broader private investment. He has been working to promote public-private partnerships for government projects in areas such as infrastructure, telecommunications, and energy. I am pleased that the administration's fiscal year 2019 budget request would provide foreign assistance to strengthen the rule of law and build civil society capacity to counter instability and violence in Ecuador.

The U.S. also operates Peace Corps programs in Ecuador that support 110 volunteers.

In June of last year, Vice President Pence visited Ecuador and held talks with President Moreno to broaden the bilateral dialogue and strengthen U.S.-Ecuadorian relations in a number of areas such as security, economic cooperation, migration, and democratic governance. The Vice President recognized the efforts being made by Ecuador to encourage private investment. They also announced a mutual commitment to reactivating a bilateral trade and investment council before the end of 2018 and a commitment to address the influx of more than 150,000 Venezuelan citizens who have fled the nightmare that is Maduro's Venezuela.

In closing, both positions will be critical to ensuring that U.S. interests are advanced here in our own region.

And once again, I want to thank both of you and your families for your service and commitment to our country and your willingness to continue to serve it abroad.

And now the ranking member, Senator Cardin.

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

Senator CARDIN. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Let me thank both of our nominees for their willingness to serve our country. These are very challenging times. It is not easy to represent America anywhere in the world, and the challenges in our own hemisphere are great today. So I thank both of you for your willingness to serve, and we thank your families because we know this is a family sacrifice we appreciate very much.

The two countries are critically important. El Salvador is a country that has a lot of impact here in America, 2 million Americans are of Salvadoran decent. In my home State of Maryland, 100,000 of our population trace their roots to El Salvador.

We also have the immediate issue of the temporary protective status for Salvadorans. About 200,000 in the United States are under the TPS, which is being challenged by the President and, right now, protection in our courts. But it is an uncertain future. Once again, in Maryland, we have a higher percentage than most of the Salvadoran TPS cases. So this is of immediate interest.

I have had a chance to meet with both of the nominees, and we have had, I think, very robust, good discussions and I appreciate that opportunity.

I have underscored particularly in our hemisphere but globally as well that our missions are critically important to promote human rights, good governance. These are challenges that are taking place in both El Salvador and Ecuador today. There are different circumstances.

In El Salvador, we have had a commitment to help the people of El Salvador with regional security issues, with economic issues so there is an economic future other than trafficking in drugs or extortion, and to deal with governance issues, which is critically important to deal with the issues of governance. We have funded those programs. We could argue whether we need to do a better job, a more focused job. That is an issue that this Congress is still wrestling with.

I was in El Salvador in 2015 and saw firsthand how the gangs ravage the communities. The FBI allowed me to be embedded for a day, and it was eye-opening to me to see the risks that families face in neighborhoods that look like nice neighborhoods. But the gang activities are pervasive. So the challenges there are great.

And we look forward to a discussion today as to how our mission in El Salvador can promote American values, provide safety for the people of El Salvador, and stop some of the pressures we have seen on migration because people leave because of the problems in the country. The best investment for us to make is to shore up these issues as we have been working on now for the last several years.

In Ecuador, we have hope. The administration has shown some degree of sensitivity towards reform on good governance. The question is can we continue that momentum that we have seen in that country.

As the chairman has pointed out, even though Ecuador is 1,000 miles away from Venezuela, they have had a real influx of Venezuelan refugees. My number is about 200,000. I think you said 150,000. But it is a large number that have exited Venezuela that are now in Ecuador. That has a major impact on a small country. It causes us to understand that we are going to have challenges and we need to work with the new government to make sure the reforms stay in place and that the impact of the Venezuelan crisis does not impede the progress that we have seen in Ecuador.

We have new leaders in both countries. We look forward to a robust relationship, improving America's relationship in our own hemisphere and America's leadership in our hemisphere. And I look forward to hearing from our nominees.

Senator RUBIO. Thank you both for being here. I just want to say it is not often there are two Ron Johnsons in one place at a time.

Senator JOHNSON. We got to hang together.

[Laughter.]

Senator RUBIO. Anyway, it is tough to vote against Ron Johnson.

Well, Mr. Johnson, let us start with you since Senator Johnson is here with us. Thank you for being here and thanks for your service.

STATEMENT OF RONALD DOUGLAS JOHNSON, OF FLORIDA, TO BE AMBASSADOR EXTRAORDINARY AND PLENIPOTENTIARY OF THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA TO THE REPUBLIC OF EL SALVADOR

Mr. JOHNSON. Thank you, Senator, and thanks for that warm introduction.

Chairman Rubio, Ranking Member Cardin, and distinguished members of the committee, I am truly honored to appear before you today as the President's nominee to serve as United States Ambassador to the Republic of El Salvador. I am grateful to President Trump for the faith and confidence he has placed in me and to Secretary Pompeo for his support. I am humbled by the opportunity to serve our country at such an important time in our history, and I am grateful to you for your consideration of my nomination.

I am supported in this endeavor by a strong and patriotic family. My wife Alina to my right immigrated to this country over 50 years ago from Cuba. She has actively contributed to my service to this country for over 38 years, and it has not always been easy. My government careers have required frequent separations and service in high-risk areas. Together we have raised four grown children, Robert, Lori, Michael, and Joshua. Our youngest son Joshua was the fourth generation of Johnsons to serve this country in combat.

I would also like to mention my mother-in-law, Helen Arias. As an airline employee in Cuba, when communists took over the country, she helped thousands of children flee to the United States aboard Pan Am flights through a program called Operacion Pedro Pan. Today at 95 years young, she loves the United States as only someone who has lived under tyranny can.

I first represented the United States in El Salvador in 1984 as an active duty Army officer. Then the country was embroiled in a horrible civil war that would last for over 12 years, ravage the countryside, and claim the lives of over 70,000 people. Since that conflict ended in 1992, the Salvadoran people have exhibited a strong commitment to democracy through free and fair elections and the peaceful transfer of power. The most recent example of this is the February 3rd presidential election where President-elect Nayib Bukele won a clear victory in a competitive multi-party race.

El Salvador has accomplished much since the war ended, but much work remains to be done.

For the United States, combating transnational crime and stemming illegal immigration are the key priorities. Our strategy for Central America focuses on advancing security, prosperity, and good governance to address these priorities that are linked to slow economic growth and unemployment.

There is clearly a need for increased security, but we must also work together simultaneously to develop a broader economic agenda. El Salvador's growth rate of 2 percent per year over the last 10 years is simply too low to provide economic opportunities and viable options for young Salvadorans. Working together, we need to focus on making El Salvador more attractive to business, instead of a place where businesses have to add the price of extortion to the cost of operating. We must work together to make illicit activities less lucrative and to produce dignified alternatives that help Salvadoran youth make the right choice.

The United States is El Salvador's number one trade partner and largest source of foreign investment. There are currently over 300 U.S. businesses operating in El Salvador, but there could be more. If confirmed, I will make the combined issues of security and prosperity my highest priority.

I know our governments share the same concerns regarding illegal immigration and gang violence.

The government of El Salvador is working closely with us now to educate its citizens on the dangers associated with the long journey to the U.S. border and to discourage individuals from traveling to the United States without a visa.

There are multiple gangs in El Salvador where violence is the centerpiece of the gang's power, its influence, and reach.

In El Salvador, gang membership is illegal, and the Salvadoran government works with the U.S. embassy's international narcotics and law enforcement unit and other offices to disrupt and dismantle gangs and other transnational criminal organizations. These programs focus on strengthening the capacity of Salvadoran law enforcement and criminal justice systems through a three-part approach: regional coordination and information sharing; bottom-up community anti-gang efforts designed to improve relationships between communities and the police; and finally, top-down institutional reform to strengthen investigation and prosecution of criminal actors. If confirmed, one of my top priorities will be to expand these programs and to build stronger cooperation among regional partners and U.S. law enforcement. Gang violence is a multinational problem, and combating it will require multinational cooperation.

El Salvador has made progress and there are indicators that should help us be optimistic.

El Salvador's Plan El Salvador Seguro has helped to reduce the murder rate by over 55 percent. And looking at the long term, World Bank statistics indicate that from 1990 to 2017 life expectancy increased from 64 to 74 years, while per capita income rose and extreme poverty dropped significantly.

We are on the right path, but let there be no doubt. It is a path. Continued progress requires broad, sustained, and persistent engagement and a willing partner. If we are respectful of each other's concerns and limitations, we can work together toward a cooperative and mutually beneficial relationship.

I will treat people with dignity, honesty, and respect. I will prioritize our efforts in a way that is impactful and beneficial to both sides, and I will make those priorities clear to my staff and to our partners.

Chief of Mission San Salvador is no easy assignment, but I believe my experience of over 4 decades of government service, along with my knowledge of the region and my deep respect for the Salvadoran people have prepared me well to represent America's interests and to achieve greater regional security and prosperity.

If confirmed, I will safeguard our citizens, our embassy, and our reputation, and I will help build a more peaceful, secure, and prosperous relationship between the United States and the Republic of El Salvador. Your counsel and leadership would be crucial for this

to work, and if confirmed, I look forward to working with you and your staffs toward that goal.

It is an honor to be before you today, and I would be pleased to answer your questions.

[The prepared statement of Mr. Johnson follows:]

PREPARED STATEMENT OF RONALD DOUGLAS JOHNSON

Chairman Rubio, Ranking Member Menendez, and distinguished members of the committee, I am truly honored to appear before you today as the President's nominee to serve as the United States Ambassador to the Republic of El Salvador.

I am grateful to President Trump for the faith and confidence he's placed in me, and to Secretary Pompeo for his support. I am humbled by the opportunity to serve our country in this capacity at such an important time in our relationship with El Salvador and I am grateful to you for your consideration of my nomination.

I am supported in this endeavor by a strong and patriotic family. My wife, Alina, immigrated to this country over 50 years ago from Cuba. She has actively contributed to my service to this country for over 38 years, and it has not always been easy. My government careers have required frequent separations and service in high-risk areas. Together we've raised four grown children, Robert, Lori, Michael, and Joshua. Our youngest son Joshua is the fourth generation of our family to have served our country in combat.

I'd also like to mention my Mother-in-Law, Helen Arias. As an airline employee in Cuba, when communists took over the country she helped thousands of children flee to the United States aboard Pan-Am flights through a program called "Operation Pedro Pan." Today at 95 years young, she loves the United States as only someone who has lived under tyranny can.

I first represented the United States in El Salvador in 1984, when the country was embroiled in a horrible Civil War that would last for over twelve years, ravage the countryside, and claim the lives of over 70,000 people. Since that conflict ended in 1992, the Salvadoran people have exhibited a strong commitment to democracy through free and fair elections and the peaceful transfer of power. The most recent example of this is the February 3rd presidential election, where President-elect Nayib Bukele won a clear victory in a competitive multi-party race.

El Salvador has accomplished much since the war ended, but much work remains to be done.

For the United States, combating transnational crime and stemming illegal immigration are the key priorities. They are linked to slow economic growth and unemployment. There's clearly a need for increased security but we must also work together to simultaneously develop a broader economic agenda. El Salvador's growth rate of 2 percent per year over the last 10 years, is simply too low to provide economic opportunities and viable options for young Salvadorans. Working together we need to focus on making El Salvador more attractive to business, instead of a place where businesses have to add the price of extortion to the costs of operating. We must work together to make illicit activities less lucrative and to produce dignified alternatives that help Salvadoran youth make the right choice.

The United States is El Salvador's number one trade partner and largest source of foreign investment. There are currently over three hundred U.S. businesses operating there but there could be more. If confirmed I will make the combined issues of security and prosperity my highest priorities.

I know our governments share the same concerns regarding illegal immigration and gang violence.

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There are multiple gangs in El Salvador where violence is the centerpiece of the gang's power, influence and reach.

In El Salvador gang membership is illegal and the government works with the Embassy's International Narcotics and Law Enforcement unit and other offices to disrupt and dismantle gangs and other transnational criminal organizations. These programs focus on strengthening the capacity of Salvadoran law enforcement and criminal justice systems through a three part approach: 1) Regional coordination and information sharing; 2) Bottom-up community anti-gang efforts designed to improve relationships between communities and the police; and 3) Top-down institutional reform to strengthen investigation and prosecution of criminal actors. If confirmed, one of my top priorities will be to expand these programs and to build

stronger cooperation among regional partners and U.S. law enforcement. Gang violence is a multi-national problem and combating it will require multi-national cooperation.

El Salvador has made progress and there are indicators that should help us be optimistic.

El Salvador's "Plan El Salvador Seguro" has helped to reduce the murder rate by over 55 percent. And looking at the long term, World Bank statistics indicate that from 1990 to 2017 life expectancy increased from 64 to 74 years, while per capita income rose and extreme poverty dropped significantly.

We are on the right path but let there be no doubt, it is a path. Continued progress requires broad, sustained and persistent engagement and a willing partner. If we are respectful of each other's concerns and limitations, we can work together toward a cooperative and mutually beneficial relationship. I will treat people with dignity, honesty and respect. While I will be and effective negotiator, I will also be a good listener. I will prioritize our efforts in a way that is impactful and beneficial to both sides and I'll make those priorities clear to my staff and to our partners.

Chief of Mission San Salvador is no easy assignment, but I believe my experience of over four decades of government service, along with my knowledge of the region and my deep respect for the Salvadoran people have prepared me well to represent America's interests and to advance this relationship. If confirmed I will safeguard our citizens, our embassy, and our reputation, and I will help build a more peaceful, secure, and prosperous relationship between the United States and the Republic of El Salvador. Your counsel and leadership would be crucial for this to work and I look forward to working with you and your staffs in this endeavor.

It is an honor to be before you today and I would be pleased to answer any questions.

Senator RUBIO. Thank you very much.

Mr. Fitzpatrick?

STATEMENT OF MICHAEL J. FITZPATRICK, OF VIRGINIA, A CAREER MEMBER OF THE SENIOR FOREIGN SERVICE, CLASS OF MINISTER–COUNSELOR, TO BE AMBASSADOR EXTRAORDINARY AND PLENIPOTENTIARY OF THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA TO THE REPUBLIC OF ECUADOR

Mr. FITZPATRICK. Thank you very much. Mr. Chairman, Ranking Member, distinguished members of the committee, it is an honor to appear before you this morning as the President's nominee to serve as the next United States Ambassador to the Republic of Ecuador.

I would like, first, to recognize some members of my family, if I may, without whose strong and continuing support I likely would not be here today. First, my dear wife Silvana, originally from Peru, joins us today. I would like to recognize her and our daughter Michelle both for their repeated personal sacrifices as they too have so proudly joined me in serving our nation as representatives abroad. My brother John, my sister-in-law Ellen, and their son William also join us here today.

Mr. Chairman, during my 33 years with the State Department, I have been honored to represent the United States while living in seven countries on five continents and traveling to scores of other nations around the world. If I am confirmed, I believe that my longstanding involvement and deep familiarity with both this region and our government's best practices will be of great value to me not only in leading our strong interagency teams at Embassy Quito and Consulate General Guayaquil, but also in partnering with the government of Ecuador under the leadership of President Lenin Moreno.

The United States has a distinct opportunity to advance our relationship with both the people and government of Ecuador by devel-

oping a genuine partnership. Chief among our shared interests in my mind are democracy, prosperity, and security.

The first responsibility of any U.S. ambassador must be to ensure the safety and security of our citizens. I assure you that, if confirmed, I will continue to prioritize investments and activities that protect the growing number of our citizens who live in or visit Ecuador, including for the security of U.S. government personnel in country.

President Moreno has sought to enhance democratic rights and practices and to fight corruption while modernizing and opening up Ecuador's economy. He has also welcomed greater international cooperation, including with the United States, in addressing complex regional and global challenges. Especially as transnational criminal organizations seek to deepen their presence, we should respond positively to offers to cooperate with Ecuadorian efforts to fortify their public institutions, reduce international crime, and enhance border protection, while safeguarding legitimate travel.

In short, Mr. Chairman, if confirmed, I will work in Ecuador to advance U.S. values and interests. That begins with pursuing a shared vision of democratic governance, transparent economic development, free and fair commerce, and a fair, open, and secure environment in which all may pursue their individual God-given talents.

I would like to express my appreciation to this committee and its members for your support for U.S. engagement with Ecuador at this important time in our country's relationship and for your consideration of my nomination today. Thank you, Mr. Chairman, Ranking Member, and members of the committee. I look forward to answering any questions you may have.

[The prepared statement of Mr. Fitzpatrick follows:]

PREPARED STATEMENT OF MICHAEL J. FITZPATRICK

Mr. Chairman, Ranking Member, distinguished members of the committee, it is an honor to appear before you today as the President's nominee for U.S. Ambassador to the Republic of Ecuador.

I would like to recognize some members of my family, without whose strong and continuing support I likely would not be here today. First, my wife, Silvana. Although our daughter, Michelle, cannot be here, she is watching the webcast. I would like to recognize them both for their repeated personal sacrifices as they too have so proudly served our nation as representatives abroad. My brother, John, and my sister-in-law, Ellen, also join us here today.

Mr. Chairman, during my thirty-three years with the State Department—first as a Presidential Management Fellow, then as a career Civil Servant, and now for three decades as a commissioned Foreign Service Officer—I have been honored to represent the United States while living on five continents, and TDY service to a sixth. I have had the opportunity to travel to scores of nations around the world.Nevertheless, it is Latin America where my career began. Latin America has been a constant in my life. And it is Latin America that has been the focus of my most recent assignments: As Chargé d'Affaires, a.i. and Deputy Chief of Mission in Lima, Peru; as the Interim United States Representative to the Organization of American States; and most recently, as Deputy Assistant Secretary of State for the Andes, Brazil and the Southern Cone. I believe this long-standing involvement and understanding will be of great value to me, if confirmed, both in leading our Missions in Guayaquil and Quito, and in partnering with the government of Ecuador, under the leadership of President Moreno.

Since his inauguration in 2017, President Moreno has: repeatedly advanced efforts to enhance democratic rights and practices, notably press freedom; launched an anti-corruption campaign that resulted in the imprisonment of his own Vice President; repealed some authoritarian decrees targeting civil society; and, welcomed

greater international cooperation, including from the United States, in addressing complex international challenges.

The United States thus has a distinct opportunity now to advance our relationship with both the government and people of Ecuador, for us to rebuild a genuine partnership in pursuit of shared interests. Given that this has not always been the case, it is incumbent upon us, I believe, not to squander this occasion. Chief among the many opportunities, in my mind, as we seek to build a stronger bilateral compact are: Democracy, Prosperity, and Security.

Let me speak to each of those, starting with the last, though hardly the least, of these three: Security.

Security

Indeed, the first responsibility of any U.S. Ambassador must be to ensure the safety and security of our citizens. Ecuador is, with good reason, an increasingly attractive destination for Americans, be they tourists, students, entrepreneurs, or retirees. I assure you that, if confirmed, I will continue to prioritize investments and activities that protect all of our personnel and citizens in Ecuador.

Ecuador also now faces significant challenges from narco-trafficking and transnational crime. Mexican cartels, seeking to transit cocaine from the neighboring nations of Peru and Colombia to the United States and world markets, have expanded their presence in Ecuador. Former members of the FARC launched multiple armed attacks over the last year along Ecuador's common border with Colombia. The government of Ecuador has demonstrated a clear desire to partner with the United States, Colombia, Peru, and Mexico to combat transnational organized crime and strengthen its security, prosecutorial and judicial institutions. We should respond positively, cooperating with Ecuador—particularly through capacity-building efforts and the sharing of best practices—in their efforts to fortify public institutions, reduce international crime and enhance border protection while safeguarding legitimate travel.

Democracy

A presidentially supported public referendum on constitutional reforms won handily last year. Among other steps, this re-introduced a two-term limit to the presidency. Although this represents a step towards deeper democratization, persistent social and fiscal challenges will continue to weigh on governance.

The United States should continue to promote the rule of law and the freedom of speech and association; this will help revitalize civil society, restore confidence in national institutions and foster greater support for shared values and policies. We must also support Ecuador in its efforts to tend to the significant number of Colombian, and increasingly, Venezuelan, refugees and migrants, with emphasis on protecting the rights of the most vulnerable among them.

Prosperity

External economic shocks have contributed to the ousting of three democratically elected presidents of Ecuador since the late 1990s. While record-high oil prices helped underwrite the public largesse of President Moreno's immediate predecessor, fate has not so blessed his own administration. Yet his government gains international support for its steps to increase transparency, strengthen fiscal institutions and re-establish a competitive private-sector driven economy. I commit to work, if confirmed, with both the public and private sectors to address business environment deficiencies. Together, we can reduce trade barriers, promote investor-friendly practices, increase infrastructure investments and reduce corruption while providing greater employment opportunities.

In sum, Mr. Chairman, if confirmed, I will work in Ecuador to advance U.S. values and interests. That begins with pursuing a shared vision of good governance, transparent economic development, free and fair commerce, and a fair, open and secure environment in which all may pursue their individual, God-given talents.

I would like to express my appreciation to this committee and its members for your support for U.S. engagement with Ecuador at this important time in our countries' relationship—and for your consideration of my nomination. Thank you Mr. Chairman, Ranking Member, and members of the committee. I look forward to answering any questions you may have.

Senator RUBIO. Thank you both for being here.

I will only ask one question, then defer my time to the members who may have to go somewhere else.

So, Mr. Fitzpatrick, I wanted to ask you at the outset. One of the highest profile irritants in the relationship historically has been

Julian Assange's status abroad under the protection of diplomatic protection of the government. What update can you give us on that? And what role will that play, do you believe, in your service to our country from the embassy?

Mr. FITZPATRICK. Yes, sir. I am deeply concerned about Julian Assange and Wikileaks hostile activities and intent to undermine U.S. democracy and national security. Mr. Assange's nearly 7-year stay in the Ecuadorian embassy has permitted him to meddle in U.S. affairs and to harm our national security. That is a problem, and letting it drag on much longer would continue to harm our interests and I believe Ecuador's interests as well.

If confirmed by the Senate, I would continue to raise our significant concerns regarding Mr. Assange, and at every appropriate opportunity, I would urge the government to pursue a rapid resolution of this issue. I would also expect, if confirmed, to remain in very close contact with the members of this committee.

Let me say we respect many of the reform efforts undertaken by the Moreno administration, but Mr. Assange does, as I said, damage to U.S. national security and the United States will have to assess a bilateral relationship accordingly.

Senator RUBIO. Thank you.

The ranking member.

Senator CARDIN. Once again, thank you to both of you.

Both El Salvador and Ecuador are democratic states. Both have significant challenges in dealing with impunity and corruption. This is not a new subject. We have been working on the impunity problems in this region for a very long time. We have seen in the Northern Triangle different efforts with integrity commissions. President-elect Bukele has indicated that he intends to seek a commission that will deal with this issue, with the assistance of international organizations.

Can you tell us, Mr. Johnson, your priority in dealing with this issue of fighting corruption in El Salvador and how you believe the United States can assist the government in implementing such a policy?

Mr. JOHNSON. Thank you, Senator.

I certainly recognize that we do have issues with corruption. In fact, one of the previous presidents of El Salvador is in prison now for corruption charges, while another is under asylum in Nicaragua. I do not think one shoe fits all, but I am committed—I know I am committed to support anything that will help reduce corruption in El Salvador.

Like you, I am encouraged by President-elect Bukele's comments. I am not privy to the details on how he plans to move forward. I think that will largely depend on the President-elect and his cabinet as he assembles his administration. But I certainly anticipate, if confirmed, to play a role in helping him to put together a commission that will be effective in ensuring that there is transparency in such agreements, as the one that was made with China, and that we can work together with the attorney general to fight corruption throughout the country.

Senator CARDIN. One thing is clear to me. There are international standards for fighting corruption. And that is one of the reasons why the different models that have been used in Central

America have relied in various measures on the help of the international community, some 39 nations, other things that have been done. But there are standards, and it is important. And I would just urge you in your conversations with the Salvadoran government to recognize that it is important that they take advantage of the help of international organizations to give legitimacy to their efforts to fight corruption.

Mr. Fitzpatrick, in Ecuador, the government has indicated that they are going to set up some type of corruption commission. They have not indicated much more than that. There are some conversations about links to the United Nations or OAS or other international organizations.

Can you just assure us that this will be a top priority as to how Ecuador institutionalizes their commitment to fight corruption in their country?

Mr. FITZPATRICK. Yes, sir, Senator. Absolutely I concur with that.

We do not have many details of this announcement by President Moreno to establish an international anti-corruption commission. As you mentioned, they have discussed linking it with both the United Nations and the Organization of American States. Of course, the OAS has a number of international conventions on anti-corruption which we in the United States have strongly supported in the past. We look forward to getting a lot more information and some details from the government and looking for ways that we can partner with them in implementing this as they move forward.

Senator CARDIN. And once again, I would urge the American presence to explain how it is important to engage the international community in fighting corruption so there is again credibility in efforts being made.

Mr. Johnson, I mentioned TPS in my opening statement. We have had some different views here on the TPS issue. My understanding is that the mission in San Salvador has been very open about their concerns about the TPS not being extended for the Salvadorans that are here in this country. My question to you is that will you assure us that you will provide independent advice as to the circumstances within El Salvador that would affect the return of the 200,000 that are currently under TPS status as to whether they could safely be repatriated back to their country or whether TPS should be extended. There are certain standards that we use in extending TPS, and we depend upon having the independent advice of the mission.

Now, the ultimate decision will not be made by the mission, but it is important that we get that independent advice. And what I have seen to date would indicate that the TPS should be extended. Will you make that commitment to us?

Mr. JOHNSON. Absolutely, sir. You have my commitment. I understand my role on the ground is to provide ground truth dealing with capacity and the capability of the Salvadoran government to receive people back, as well as with the U.S. embassy's capacity to take care of any of those that have children or spouses that are U.S. citizens. You have my commitment, sir.

Senator CARDIN. Thank you.

Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Senator RUBIO. Senator Johnson?

Senator JOHNSON. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

I want to first thank both nominees for your past service and your willingness to serve in these new capacities.

And, Mr. Johnson, I really hope that your name is not an impediment to getting votes. If so, I apologize right now.

When I went down to Guatemala and Honduras the first time about 4 years ago, I was surprised when they talked about the two challenges: corruption and impunity. And corruption—we have already talked about that. Impunity

—I really never heard that before. And, of course, it all relates to the drug cartels who are untouchable, and that just creates a level of impunity for the extortionists and kind of the destruction of these public institutions and it leads to corruption.

I have recently met with the new Ambassador to Mexico a couple times, and she has brought in a number of her representatives. In our last discussion, it was pretty interesting. The representatives were talking about how they wanted to cooperate with America. They are getting more information on the people coming to this country, their country illegally from Guatemala, covering that border.

But they spent a lot of time talking about development. And after I kind of listened to their presentation, one thing that is pretty obvious to me is there was no mention whatsoever of combating the drug cartels and transnational criminal organizations.

You speak in your testimony about the need for economic opportunities for Salvadorans or Guatemalans or Hondurans. That is crucial, but you cannot get private investment in an unsecure situation. And you mentioned in your testimony gang violence is a multinational problem and combating it will require multinational cooperation. Is that not the first step? And how do we in a multinational way effectively begin to break up these drug cartels which are just a scourge to the region?

And I have said repeatedly the reason we have an unsecure border is our insatiable demand for drugs that has given rise to these drug cartels who have just expanded their product line into human trafficking and sex trafficking. But we have to effectively address that multinationally. How do we do that? You have a great deal of experience in the region.

Mr. JOHNSON. Sir, thank you for that question.

And you have hit on two major points. One is the apprehension and the arrest, if you will, of people that are involved in these types of criminal activities, and the other is how well we are able to prosecute them and hold them accountable once they have been arrested. And that is exactly the way I would approach it.

Number one, there is currently a Northern Triangle agreement and task force against gangs, not necessarily against drugs but usually where there are drugs, there are gangs involved. I am not familiar with the task force. I have not visited, but I intend to make that one of my priorities to get familiar with it. It is based on personal relationships and building trust to teach them to cooperate with each other and share this information. And I think it is important because if you look at that region, you can commit crimes in one country, and when you know things are getting a little hot there, you go across the border and you seek refuge in the

other. So if we can help them learn to trust each other and share that information, I think we will have a lot more success with that part of it.

The other part you mentioned is immunity. The current prosecution rate is at about 11 percent in El Salvador, so there is a 90 percent chance or so that if you are apprehended, that you will be released. I know one of my priorities will be to work with the new attorney general and the Department of Justice, with judges, with prosecutors, and I would look at programs that we can bring down that would help train them, advise them, and mentor them through the process.

Senator JOHNSON. A very chilling story that I was told when I was down there. And we all know the examples of brutality. I do not even want to talk about them in an open hearing. But if you are a new member of the police force in one of these countries, you get a little DVD, and on that DVD, it shows video of your children and your wife going to church or going into school.

How can you expect police forces to show the courage to combat those drug cartels that have almost unlimited resources, the billions of dollars from the drug trafficking? Does that not almost require a multinational force that is under that type of threat? Again, you can work with institutions, but do we not need an outside force to really combat this effectively with those individuals in country being under that kind of threat?

Mr. JOHNSON. Sir, if confirmed, I would be willing to look at anything we can do to increase security for the personnel in El Salvador that face these threats. It will not be the first time I have dealt with this. In Iraq, we lost more people when they were on leave than we did when they were on duty because people would hunt them down in their homes. I think it is a very chilling tragedy for someone who is making the decision to serve their country and defend their neighborhoods in El Salvador in a lot of cases, and they have to worry about their loved ones and their security. That is something I will be committed to look into early. And I have a little bit of experience working on those issues, and we will look at everything we can do to help them increase that security.

Senator JOHNSON. Well, I want to work with you in that capacity and try and put this task force together because that is what is going to be required.

Mr. JOHNSON. Thank you, Senator. I look forward to that.

Senator RUBIO. Senator Kaine?

Senator KAINE. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

And congratulations to both of you for your nominations.

Mr. Johnson, I want to go back to the anti-corruption agenda of the new president of El Salvador, President Bukele, because it is reminiscent of the election of Jimmy Morales to be president of Guatemala. Jimmy Morales kind of came out of a nontraditional political background. President-elect Bukele is the first to be elected without the support of either side of the civil conflict in El Salvador for the last 30 years. So he is coming in, a young, dynamic mayor of San Salvador, without the traditional political background.

President Morales in Guatemala—anti-corruption was the lead theme of the campaign. There was a U.N. CICIG, an anti-corrup-

tion organization, already in place when he got there that he pledged to work together with. Shortly after becoming president, he has, together with other officials, attacked that anti-corruption agency over and over again. Those attacks have often been litigated in the Guatemalan courts, and the courts of the country have tended to side with the commission rather than the president. The president and his cabinet ordered the anti-corruption agency out of the country about 2, 3 months ago.

So with experience in this region, what might you offer to us, sort of your thoughts about how the new president of El Salvador in pursuing a similar strategy, being elected on an anti-corruption platform, suggesting that we will try to set up an international independent anti-corruption agency? What might we do to help that be successful?

Mr. JOHNSON. Thank you, Senator.

I think corruption is a very serious problem, and it bleeds off a lot of the resources that could go to other more serious problems that help drive illegal immigration and prosperity and violence in the country.

I have not had the opportunity to speak with President-elect Bukele about the details of his plan moving forward. I look forward to doing that. Like you, I am extremely encouraged by the remarks that I have heard him make. I mentioned once before I do not think one shoe fits all, so I am not sure exactly how we would bring or the Salvadorans would bring a commission or an organization of some type together to fight corruption, but I have to believe he is serious about it.

And I think another thing that is important to keep in mind with President-elect Bukele—like you said, he did not come from one of the two major parties that exist in country. The National Assembly in El Salvador has 84 seats. His party has 10. So his success is going to largely depend upon his ability to garner support from some of these other parties, and that remains to be seen. But I feel very positive about his ability to do that. And I look forward to working with him and with this body to assist in any way we can.

Senator KAINE. I really appreciate it. It is a tall order. I lived in Honduras, and there are similar issues there and a similar commitment by the current government to tackle some of these issues. And yet, the OAS declared the most recent presidential elections in Honduras so fundamentally flawed that the OAS suggested they needed to be re-run. So this is a tall order for the new government, and I encourage your attention to it.

If I could ask you, Mr. Fitzpatrick. The Vice President was there visiting recently President Moreno, and talked a lot about the economy and this idea of a reactivation of the trade and investment council. To support President Moreno in his reforms, one of the best things we could do is help President Moreno in his effort to build more strength in the Ecuadorian economy. It has been hit by declining oil prices. Talk a little bit about the trade and investment council and what we might be able to do as the United States through that vehicle to help the economy be more successful.

Mr. FITZPATRICK. Yes, sir. Thank you, Senator.

The United States remains Ecuador's number one trading partner by far. Free trade and open markets are in our mutual interest.

As you mentioned, the first meeting of the trade and investment council occurred I believe in November, the first time in about 9 years that they actually met. The next time the council should meet is I believe in June coming forth in Ecuador.

I believe, if confirmed, there are a number of things I would like to do to pursue the issues related to the TIC. First of all, I would like the opportunity to speak directly to the United States private sector, both in the United States and in Ecuador, to learn more not just from the briefing papers frankly, but from the actual participants in international commerce to understand from them the impediments that they are still facing, the irritants that exist in our bilateral commercial relations.

Clearly President Moreno is trying to take a number of steps to open up their economy, to reengage with the international global markets. That is all to the good. It is something we should be encouraging them on. But again, as I suggested, there are some bilateral irritants, whether it is access for agricultural products into their market, whether it is intellectual property rights enforcement, et cetera. There are a number of issues like that that I think are ripe for us to consider through the trade and investment council.

Senator KAINE. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

I look forward to supporting you both.

Senator RUBIO. Thank you.

And Senator Romney turns 49 today. It is his birthday.

Senator ROMNEY. Thank you. I appreciate your noticing that. And you are 29?

[Laughter.]

Senator RUBIO. I feel 30.

[Laughter.]

Senator ROMNEY. Thank you.

I do not think there is any question in people's minds about the significance of America's role in the world impacting not just the world but also America. One only need to look at what is happening in your respective countries that you hope to represent us in. Clearly the health and well-being of Latin America has an enormous impact on our country, on our citizens with regard to everything from gangs like MS–13 to drugs to trade and so forth. And so I want to express my appreciation to both of you for your willingness to take on assignments in these countries and to help foster relations that will improve the lives of Americans, as well as improve the lives of people in these wonderful nations.

Mr. Johnson, with the election of a center right president in El Salvador, there is hope on the part of many that this might begin a trend and that other nations in Central America that have been hostile to our interests and hostile to their own well-being might be encouraged. As I recall, he won without a runoff, over 50 percent of the vote, first time running for national office in this nation. And so there are many of us that have very high hopes that he will be successful, and this might spread to neighbors.

And I am interested in what your objectives, what your priorities would be as you look at helping a new president deal with everything from MS–13 to corruption in his government to doing his best to keep FMLN from rearing its head again in a violent way.

And then, Mr. Fitzpatrick, I am interested in a follow-up, after Mr. Johnson has spoken, about whether there is a growing trend in Latin America, as you see it, that might be more beneficial to the people of those nations and to the prospects of prosperity and peace.

Yes, Mr. Johnson?

Mr. JOHNSON. Happy birthday, Senator.

Senator ROMNEY. Thank you. You are very kind.

Mr. JOHNSON. Thank you for the question.

I think it is a very complex issue. There are not a lot of simple answers, but I have two simple priorities and that is security and prosperity. And if we look at the other issues, the violence, the narcotics issues, human trafficking, it all sort of folds under those two main topics. I can assure you that will be my priority. I think it will also be the priority of the new president-elect and his administration.

Like you, I am very excited about the promise that his election shows, and as we look at other countries in Central America and in South America, I am very interested in how the political climate is changing in the region. We have all been paying a lot of attention on the news recently to the developments in Venezuela, for example. I think Central American and South American countries are paying a lot of attention to that as well. So I think what happens in Venezuela will have an impact throughout the region.

I think the election in El Salvador will have an impact throughout the region. And anything that happens regarding security or the problems that we have discussed in the country of El Salvador will certainly have an impact on its neighboring countries in the Northern Triangle and in the upper part of Central America.

Senator ROMNEY. Thank you.

Mr. Fitzpatrick?

Mr. FITZPATRICK. Yes, sir. I would echo much of what Mr. Johnson said particularly about the priorities of prosperity and security. Security first. Without security, prosperity simple is not possible. And one need look no further than Venezuela for proof positive of that today.

In the case of Ecuador, for counternarcotics purposes, it is a transit country, not a producing country, but it is wedged, if you will—Ecuador—between Peru and Colombia, the number one and two producing nations in the world. Under President Moreno, he has reengaged with the United States but also with his immediate neighbors on counternarcotics in a range of areas. And we look forward to deepening and strengthening that regional cooperation on this transnational threat.

Just in the last few months, through his good offices and interagency support by the United States, we have reinitiated maritime air patrol activities, and they have already seized north of 13 metric tons of cocaine on the high seas in Ecuador. That is just one example of one of the benefits of cooperation. But frankly, I see it as a simple indicator of the scale of the threat. If there were 13 metric tons that we were able to seize in a few flights, how much is getting by?

And so it is incumbent on us, I believe, to double down with this administration of President Moreno and the Ecuadorian people who

also, as was said earlier, can look 1,000 miles away and see the threats coming out of Venezuela not only in terms of their own security, but frankly for their own prosperity and democratic future.

Senator ROMNEY. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Senator RUBIO. Senator Menendez?

Senator MENENDEZ. Mr. Chairman, I want to wish our colleague happy birthday. Now that I know that Twinkies is your favorite dessert, when I need something, I will bring a package over. So happy birthday.

Mr. Chairman, I have a statement that I would like to be included for the record.

Senator RUBIO. Without objection.

[The prepared statement of Senator Menendez follows:]

OPENING STATEMENT SENATOR ROBERT MENENDEZ

I want to thank Senators Rubio and Cardin for chairing today's hearing. I also want to congratulate Mr. Fitzpatrick and Mr. Johnson on your nominations. Today's hearing is an important opportunity to discuss relations with Ecuador and El Salvador—two important U.S. partners.

In Ecuador, are witnessing a transformation. President Moreno deserves credit for supporting efforts to reinstate presidential term limits and improve press freedoms. Together, our governments have resumed counternarcotics and security cooperation, and reinstated the U.S.-Ecuador Trade and Investment Council to strengthen economic ties.

President Moreno has also shown leadership in recognizing Venezuelan Interim President Guaidó, and we are collaborating to address the regional impact of Venezuela's migration crisis.

Despite this notable progress, one specific irritant in the bilateral relationship remains. I will ask Mr. Fitzpatrick about how it might be resolved and look forward to his response.

Mr. Johnson, if confirmed, you will arrive in San Salvador in a moment of transition and opportunity for strengthening our bilateral ties. Since 2014, the U.S. has expanded our engagement with El Salvador to facilitate the conditions for security and prosperity, and address the issues forcing people to flee their countries. But, progress has been piecemeal.

President-elect Nayib Bukele has proposed new initiatives to strengthen governance and combat impunity, and potentially reverse President Sanchez Ceren's unfortunate decision to break ties with Taiwan. These would be welcome developments.

I also look forward to discussing the issue of the TPS designation for El Salvador. In November 2017, the Trump administration announced an end to TPS for roughly 195,000 Salvadorans that have been residing in the U.S. legally since 2001, including more than 6,800 with TPS in my state of New Jersey. These TPS holders have, by some estimates, 217,000 U.S. citizen children, including and 3,900 U.S.-born children in New Jersey. While the administration's decision to terminate TPS for El Salvador is under review by the courts and the administration extended TPS designations until 2020 in compliance with court directives, I am concerned about the future of TPS. And, I am very concerned about how State Department leadership ignored the assessments and recommendations of our ambassadors.

So, there is much to discuss and I look forward to hearing from both of our nominees.

Senator MENENDEZ. Congratulations to both of you on your nominations.

Mr. Johnson, a series of my friends have asked me to be nice to you as if I am not nice to every nominee that comes before us.

[Laughter.]

Senator MENENDEZ. So I do not know what he means, but anyhow, I just want you to know you have friends in the community.

Mr. Fitzpatrick, last month, the Moreno government reached initial agreement on a $4 billion IMF package, which would be in ad-

dition to $6 billion in support from the Inter-American Development Bank, World Bank, and other financial institutions.

What does the magnitude of this financial package say about the scope of the economic challenges that President Moreno inherited from his predecessor? And what is your assessment of the Moreno government's ability to successfully manage and implement such a major financial package?

Mr. FITZPATRICK. Yes, sir. The $10.2 billion package to be provided by the IMF and a number of international financial institutions, as I understand it, is to be spread out over a 3-year period. It is important for the macroeconomic stability of Ecuador, and of course, greater economic prosperity in Ecuador is important to the United States as well.

I think the government of President Moreno took a fair amount of time in their first year trying to understand the books, if you will, the financial situation that they were left with from the Correa administration, and the debt situation was, undoubtedly, worse than they had been led to believe initially. But President Moreno has taken strong and I think courageous steps to reengage with the IMF, to reengage with the international financial institutions, to seek support from the United States, and to reopen his economy to the global markets. That is going to cost him politically I believe in the short term at home, but longer term, if we walk the walk with them, if we stand by them through this process, I believe they will come out stronger at the end.

Senator MENENDEZ. Do you believe they have the ability to implement such a large package?

Mr. FITZPATRICK. Yes, I believe they do.

Senator MENENDEZ. And will you, as our Ambassador, if confirmed, to the extent that we are investing some significant money through these institutions, monitor what is going on as it relates to implementation of those obligations?

Mr. FITZPATRICK. Absolutely, sir.

Senator MENENDEZ. Let me ask you—I know you addressed somewhat of this. But with reference to Mr. Assange, what is your understanding of Wikileaks interference in our 2016 elections?

Mr. FITZPATRICK. Sir, I am very aware of the January 2017 assessment by the ODNI about Wikileaks' involvement in that working with Russian elements through the GRU to intervene in and to influence our elections in 2016 through the use of the GRU, in particular to relay U.S. victim information. Then CIA Director Pompeo said in April 2017—and of course, he is now my boss, the Secretary of State. He said it is time to call out Wikileaks for what it really is, a non-state, hostile intelligence service often embedded by state actors like Russia.

Senator MENENDEZ. So you accept the intelligence community's determination and the Secretary of State's former comments when he was the CIA Director?

Mr. FITZPATRICK. I do, sir.

Senator MENENDEZ. As such, President Moreno refers to Assange as an inherited problem, and that is true to an extent. But what is the Moreno government going to do to manage Assange's presence and limit his ability to interfere in foreign elections? And will

you make this one of your top priorities in your intercession with the Moreno government?

Mr. FITZPATRICK. If confirmed, I certainly commit, sir, to make that a priority, absolutely.

Several months back, the Moreno administration issued a new set of requirements for their, shall we say, house guest in their embassy in London. He has now been there 6 and a half years. But in the fall, a number of additional restrictions were placed on him, including restricting his access to the Internet. He, as I understand it, has in some ways separated himself from Wikileaks, and yet he is still officially the publisher of Wikileaks and we still hold him responsible for what Wikileaks does.

Their foreign minister, I understand, has been engaged directly with the government of the United Kingdom to work out potential ways to resolve this problem in the short term. I sense increasing frustration on the part of the government of President Moreno. He has called this a pebble in the shoe. It is long past time to take that pebble out of the shoe.

Senator MENENDEZ. It is a big pebble.

Mr. FITZPATRICK. It is a big pebble. It is getting bigger. Yes, sir.

Senator MENENDEZ. Mr. Johnson, do you believe that the government of El Salvador has the capacity to guarantee the safety of more than 195,000 TPS beneficiaries and their 217,000 U.S. citizen children?

Mr. JOHNSON. Thank you, Senator.

I have not had an opportunity to see it firsthand. I know that is a lot of people for a small country to absorb, especially if they were expected to do it all in a short period of time. That said, I am very clear on what my responsibilities are in regard to TPS, and that is to provide ground truth on what the impact might be and on the capacity and the capability of the government to repatriate its citizens and on the U.S. embassy's capability——

Senator MENENDEZ. Will you give honest and unfettered information to your superiors and to this committee, if asked, about what is the consequences of 400,000 and more people being returned to El Salvador?

Mr. JOHNSON. Yes, sir. I take a great deal of pride in honesty and accuracy, and I will commit to speaking truth.

Senator MENENDEZ. Two final questions, if I may, Mr. Chairman.

During El Salvador's recent presidential campaign, one of President-elect Bukele's most popular campaign proposals was that he would set up an internationally supported commission against impunity to work with El Salvador's attorney general investigating and prosecuting some of the politically thorniest corruption cases. Similar commissions in Guatemala and Honduras have made real progress with some difficulty.

Do you believe that El Salvador faces challenges with accountability and impunity, and would you support this proposal to create an internationally backed commission?

Mr. JOHNSON. Sir, I have not had an opportunity to speak with President-elect Bukele. I am encouraged by his words on anti-corruption. I also understand we have a new attorney general in El Salvador that I look forward to working with. I think I can safely say that I would be committed to helping anyone as they put to-

gether a commission or an organization or a plan that would help stem corruption and impunity in El Salvador.

Senator MENENDEZ. I appreciate that.

Do you have any direction by the State Department on this question? Have you been given any direction in your briefings in preparation of this hearing as to whether this is something we support or not?

Mr. JOHNSON. Sir, I have not been given any direction on that specific issue. I have been given a great deal of help in assembling information, but not that specific issue, no, sir.

Senator MENENDEZ. Given the extensive cooperation between Ambassador Manes and former Attorney General Melendez—no relationship to me. That is an "l" not an "n"—would you prioritize a close relationship with the new attorney general, Raul Melara?

Mr. JOHNSON. Absolutely, sir. I think that is one of those critical relationships that the embassy will have.

Senator MENENDEZ. I appreciate that.

Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Senator RUBIO. Thank you.

I will be the last question unless someone else shows up or Senator Romney has anything additional, having reserved the time.

Just on the issue of El Salvador, I would hate for our relationship to solely be defined by the issue of migration, but it most certainly is a big one. And I have often argued that perhaps the best—not that we do not do other things on border security, but the most effective thing we can do on border security is to help nations address the reasons why people are leaving those countries in the first place. We do not have a migratory crisis from Costa Rica, Chile, Peru, Argentina. It does not mean we have zero, but it is not the same pressure. And I think when you look at some of the lowest levels of growth in investment, El Salvador has the highest homicide rate in Central America. And it is no surprise that we are seeing this sort of migratory crisis.

That said, last year, the statistics say that at the southwest border, the number of apprehensions of Salvadorans declined, while those from Honduras and Guatemala increased.

So in a two-part question, to what extent has the work we have done or the security plan El Salvador is attributed to that decline, and what do we need to do to build on that progress in El Salvador?

Mr. JOHNSON. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

I think that if you look at, in particular, INL's program in 15 municipalities in El Salvador where they have focused on the issue of security and building relationships between the community and the police department and on improvements in the judiciary system, we have seen the murder rate drop in those municipalities by over 50 percent. Some are 55 percent and higher.

What I would propose to do, if confirmed, is spend a great deal of time looking at what are the best practices in those municipalities, what are we doing that perhaps is not contributing, and look to expand the program to other areas, and look to take resources from things that are maybe not giving us a lot of impact and apply them to other things that are showing success. And I agree with

you. The numbers are down from El Salvador, and I think it can be contributed to the efforts of Plan Seguro El Salvador.

Senator RUBIO. And I would just suggest, if confirmed and when you are there, that is how you could be most helpful to those of us who continue to advocate for addressing the root causes of migration and to identify the programs that work best and I think also would be helpful for the new administration to be able to address those because it builds on the second part. I have highlighted about how they have the lowest levels of growth in investment in the region.

The President-elect recently revealed a national development plan that calls for a new airport, a new railway line. It is not clear yet how they plan to pay for it, but the concern always becomes is that China has become an expert at swooping in and providing a bunch of money and the workers, by the way, to their benefit, and then they trap you in this debt situation. And then they leverage that in international forums in foreign policy.

If you could briefly describe, first of all, how much of a focus will that be of your time there to ensure that that does not happen to our detriment? And second, what can we do from the embassy to make El Salvador a more attractive place for other investment partners, including U.S. partners, to be able to come in and contribute to that?

Mr. JOHNSON. Sir, I will answer the second part first. I think to make it more attractive to other investors from the U.S. and from other countries, we have to establish security. We have to reduce the amount of extortion that these businesses are paying, and they have to be able to know they can come there and hire employees that can come back and forth from work to home without having to pay gangs to cross their territory.

Regarding China, the bad news is China has expanded its engagement in the western hemisphere quite a bit in the last 10 years. The good news is it has not proven to be very effective, and I think there is plenty of evidence if you look at places where they are heavily invested. And two of those would be Venezuela and Nicaragua. They have not followed through with their promises. You frequently see construction projects that they build that do not provide jobs to local citizens, but they bring in their own people to do the work. They bring in their own supplies. They do not purchase local supplies. They do not have good environmental programs to ensure the environment is protected. And I think there is plenty of evidence.

My job would be to sit down with the government of El Salvador with the various people in the legislative assembly and others in the administration to ensure that they have seen these examples and that they understand what the risks are of dealing with China.

Senator RUBIO. And I think that is important simply because we hear complaint from the region, which is you asked us not to break with Taiwan. You asked us to be wary of Chinese investment, but you provide no alternative. And so in particular, you have a new president coming in who needs to address this. There is money available there from a third country even if it comes with a lot of strings attached. And there has not been in the past a feeling that the U.S. or others have been able to step to the plate and fill the

gap. So any role we can do in that regard—and you have touched on several of the impediments—is important, and I hope will become a centerpiece of your service there, if confirmed.

Mr. Fitzpatrick, on the issue of Ecuador, they face one of the biggest fiscal deficits in all the region. I think it is about 6 percent of their gross domestic product at least a couple of years ago. And they are now undergoing, under President Moreno, efforts to sort of open up the economy and to seek more private investment. They have announced they are going to privatize a number of their state companies. He is also promoting public-private partnerships for government projects, all this hoping to generate $1.5 billion to $2 billion to investment in infrastructure and telecommunications and things of this nature.

What is, in your view, the primary obstacles to investment right now in Ecuador?

Mr. FITZPATRICK. Sir, I think some of the primary obstacles for American investors in particular is assureties about—well, first of all, import restrictions, but more broadly, assureties about getting a fair shake.

You and Mr. Johnson were just discussing the role of China. Of course, China has been a major player in Ecuador in recent years. The Ecuadorians have also discovered the potential of a debt trap with China, but they have also discovered as well, as was suggested, that the Chinese do not always play well in terms of labor rights, recognition of environmental rules in order they play fair in terms necessarily of transparency on loans and investments.

I believe the United States and the American private sector, when they are presented a fair playing field, they can compete and compete strongly and well. And it is our job in the State Department in particular to go bat for American companies, to go bat for the American private sector, and to ensure that they get a fair and transparent hearing. And when there are indications that they are not and that they are not able to compete competitively and free and fairly, whether publicly or privately, we take the issues up, as appropriate, with the government.

Senator RUBIO. And then one more point on the history of Ecuador. They seemed to have gotten hit twice now. First, a 50-some odd year, 40-some odd year—I guess 52–53-year—conflicts inside of Colombia had a huge spillover effect for them and continue to this day as recently as, I guess, a year ago or so. There was the abduction of the journalist—the two Ecuadorian journalists, and then they were later killed. But obviously, now the spillover effect of Venezuela, a different figure, between 150,000 and 200,000. We have seen sort of that produce a local reaction already of some societal pressures within Ecuador as any country would have of this size when assuming so many people at once.

What is your understanding of what can be done to help, obviously, I think it brings to light the reality of the Venezuela conflict is not just constrained to Venezuela. It has a regional impact.

So the two-part question is what is the risk and the threats to Ecuador if in fact that situation in Venezuela remains unresolved and actually is exacerbated? Say another 2 million people were to leave as the U.N. projects in the next year or more, and some per-

centage of those wind up in Ecuador. What would be the impact to Ecuador?

And second, what does Ecuador need now, given all the other challenges they are facing with the debt and so forth? What can we do to be of assistance to them?

So the two-part, what would be the impact if Venezuela is not resolved and 2 million more people leave, and what can we do to help them with their current challenges?

Mr. FITZPATRICK. Thank you, Senator. You are quite right to be concerned about the potential impact.

Ecuador historically has been very open to international migration through its country—to its country and through its country. Currently only about a dozen countries in the world—citizens of a dozen countries are required visas even to travel to Ecuador. So they are very pro-migration, if you will, internationally.

That said, I have heard the numbers from the U.N. lately, as many as 220,000 currently in Ecuador. Obviously, that fluxes over time. But I think you are right that the numbers are only likely to increase as the situation in Venezuela gets worse.

There have been some unfortunate recent incidents in Ecuador of xenophobia and some criminality. It is important that Ecuadorians I believe continue their openness and welcoming of Venezuelans and other migrants as they have so ably and capably welcomed Colombians for so many years, as you said, fleeing violence next door. But there is no doubt that given the current situation, economic situation, it is increasingly difficult for them.

The United States has, therefore, stepped forward with increasing amounts of humanitarian assistance for Ecuadorian communities, as well as for the Colombians and Venezuelans that are now relocated to Ecuador. Currently it is about $20 million we have provided over the last 2 years. I would imagine as the situation gets worse in Venezuela, the need will only increase.

So what they need now immediately is continued cooperation with all their regional partners. Ecuador is hosting a number of migratory conferences as the region tries to deal with the outflow from Venezuela. I think some technical assistance, the skills, the capabilities, the technologies that the United States can bring to bear would be of help to them.

Senator RUBIO. I would just add the Ecuadorian embassy has told us the number is as high as 280,000. So we started at 150,000. It has climbed to 280,000 in the short time we started this. Nonetheless, it is a very significant burden for a country of the size. And by the way, this is not over a 20-year period. This is over a 3 or 4-year period.

So I think it just calls to mind, in the case of Ecuador, here we have a new president who has sort of realigned the nation's foreign policy and practices to be friendlier towards the United States and their neighbors in the region, but whose success is threatened by both the preexisting debt issue, which at some point they may need to have to go to outside finance to sort of deal with, and secondarily, with this neighboring crisis, which continues to escalate with an unpredictable future ahead.

And I just think it, once again, touches on the point that one of the best things that we could do to help Ecuador, as well as Colom-

bia and other countries in the region, is do all we can to be supportive of a democratic transition that brings stability to Venezuela and takes away this crisis, which extends beyond Venezuela and actually threatens to severely harm, if not collapse, the success of the region because whether it is Ecuador or whether it is Colombia or Peru, these are important anti-drug partners as well whose ability to commit resources to that is constrained even further by the influx of this crisis.

So it is complex but it is an important issue that I think bears to mind why this is really a regional crisis and not a localized one.

I tell all of our nominees that the shorter the hearing, the better the news is for both of you. Usually people that are going to have some problems have a lot of people show up and ask a lot of questions, and the crowd is full and the cameras are here. If I were ever nominated for something, the less people that are there and the less questions you are asked, the better sign it is. That has at least been the history. Anything can happen. But I think you both have done very well today, and I appreciate both of you coming and giving us the time and your willingness to continue to serve.

The record of this hearing is going to remain open for another 48 hours. So it is possible written questions may be submitted, and I hope we can get those answered if the are submitted—questions for the record—quickly so we can expedite this and see when the chairman sets up our next steps.

But, again, thank you both for being here and your families.

And with that, this hearing is adjourned.

[Whereupon, at 11:10 a.m., the hearing was adjourned.]

Additional Material Submitted for the Record

RESPONSES TO ADDITIONAL QUESTIONS FOR THE RECORD
SUBMITTED TO RONALD JOHNSON BY SENATOR ROBERT MENENDEZ

TPS for El Salvador

On July 7, 2017, the U.S. Embassy in El Salvador sent an unclassified cable numbered San Salvador 860, with recommendations regarding Temporary Protected Status for El Salvadorans. The cable warned that the government of El Salvador lacked the capacity to guarantee the safety of more than 195,000 TPS beneficiaries or their 217,000 U.S.-citizen children, and that they would be vulnerable to gang recruitment, as a result. The cable also stated that repatriating so many people could accelerate unauthorized immigration to the U.S., and concluded that it is in the U.S. national interest to extend the TPS designation for El Salvador. In the end, we know the Trump administration ignored these assessments and tried to end TPS anyway. If confirmed, at some point it will be your responsibility to write a similar cable.

Question. Do you believe the government of El Salvador has the capacity to guarantee the safety of the more than 195,000 TPS beneficiaries and their 217,000 U.S. citizen children?

Answer. The Department of Homeland Security provided a delayed effective date of 18 months for El Salvador to permit an orderly transition both for those individuals returning home and for the government. My understanding is the phase-out period will provide TPS beneficiaries time to arrange for their departure and the government of El Salvador time to prepare for the reception and reintegration of their citizens. It is also my understanding that the administration is expending significant time and effort working with the government of El Salvador and the other

Northern Triangle governments to address the security and prosperity of Salvadorans and others in the region. I also understand that the U.S. Embassy in El Salvador has met with host government counterparts to encourage further development of programs and services that can facilitate the successful reintegration of their nationals, including TPS returnees. If confirmed, I will continue to work closely with the government of El Salvador to strengthen its ability to safely and successfully reintegrate their returning nationals and support its security and prosperity-focused efforts.

Question. Do you believe repatriated TPS beneficiaries and their U.S. citizen children would be vulnerable to gang recruitment in El Salvador?

Answer. I am concerned with the security situation posed by gangs in El Salvador, including gang recruitment of minors. I understand the U.S. government has hosted immigration workshops in El Salvador to explore challenges and best practices in reintegration. I also understand that the U.S. Embassy in El Salvador has met with host government counterparts to encourage further development of programs and services that can facilitate the successful reintegration of their nationals, including TPS returnees. If confirmed, I will continue to work with the government of El Salvador to strengthen its ability to safely and successfully reintegrate their returning nationals and ensure the U.S. Embassy is able to assist U.S. citizens, including minor children.

Question. Do you agree that the destabilizing impact of repatriating hundreds of thousands of people to El Salvador could accelerate unauthorized immigration to the U.S.?

Answer. I understand that the multi-year U.S. Strategy for Central America seeks to address the underlying economic, security, and governance challenges that contribute to illegal immigration. I also understand that the U.S. Embassy in El Salvador has met with host government counterparts to encourage further development of programs and services that can facilitate the successful reintegration of their nationals, including TPS returnees. If confirmed, I will work to redouble the efforts to strengthen El Salvador's ability to reintegrate all returning nationals, including TPS returnees.

Question. Do you believe that repatriating hundreds of thousands of people to El Salvador could have the collateral impact of undermining our bilateral cooperation with the Salvadoran government?

Answer. A secure and stable Central America contributes to a safer and more prosperous United States by addressing the security, governance, and economic drivers of illegal immigration in Central America. If confirmed, I will continue to advance the Department's work with the government of El Salvador to advance these objectives. I understand the U.S. Embassy in El Salvador has met with host government counterparts to encourage further development of programs and services that can facilitate the successful reintegration of their nationals, including TPS returnees. If confirmed, I will continue to work with the government of El Salvador to strengthen its ability to safely and successfully reintegrate and provide for its nationals, including TPS returnees.

Question. Do you believe it is in the U.S. national interest to extend the TPS designation for El Salvador?

Answer. A secure and prosperous Central America contributes to a safer and more prosperous United States by addressing the security, governance, and economic drivers of illegal immigration in Central America. If confirmed, I will continue to work with the government of El Salvador to strengthen its ability to safely and successfully reintegrate and provide for its nationals, including TPS returnees.

Taiwan

Question. El Salvador cut its ties to Taiwan and established sovereign relations with China on August 21 of last year, reducing the number of countries that still recognize Taiwan to 17. This change was directly related to growing Chinese influence in the Western Hemisphere.

- What are the prospects for President-elect Nayib Bukele reversing El Salvador's recognition of Taiwan?

Answer. I have not had the chance to meet President-elect Nayib Bukele and am not able at this time to assess the likelihood of his reversing El Salvador's recognition of Taiwan.

Question. What do you think are the prospects for limiting Chinese influence in El Salvador, and.

Answer. We encourage Latin American leaders to choose high quality, transparent, inclusive, and sustainable foreign investment, and we want to ensure development financing does not result in unsustainable debt. When evaluating types of partnerships and investment relationships, Latin American leaders must ensure they are getting the best deal for their country and their people over the long term.

It is my understanding that the U.S. Mission San Salvador has focused on promoting transparency for government decision-making with regard to all foreign investments and has been successful in raising public awareness of the risks connected with corrupt investment practices and excessive debt. If confirmed I would be a strong advocate for investments that are transparent, commercially motivated, private sector-led, and that respect national sovereignty and apply best international practices. If these practices are followed, the government of El Salvador will be able to make decisions that benefit the Salvadoran people and consider the interests of key partners such as the United States.

Weak Rule of Law/Governance Driving Migration

Question. It is widely understood that poor security conditions and high levels of violence are drivers of migration in Central America, but weak rule of law, corruption, and the lack of democratic governance also contribute to increased migration. I would like to ask how U.S. policy could support the fight against corruption, strengthen the rule of law, and ultimately support Salvadoran efforts to create stable and durable democratic governance.

- What is your assessment about how weak rule of law and a lack of democratic governance drive migration?

Answer. I understand pervasive corruption, impunity, weak institutions, and lack of transparency erode prosperity and undermine security in El Salvador. These conditions allow for permissive environments in which transnational criminal organizations thrive. Corruption strains a government's ability to address complex security, economic, and governance challenges—the interrelated root causes that drive illegal immigration toward the United States. Improving democratic governance, strengthening institutions and the rule of law, and tackling corruption and impunity are among the most urgent challenges that countries like El Salvador face. If confirmed, I will underscore in my engagement with the Salvadoran government the importance of its collective action in the fight against corruption.

Question. What is your assessment of the challenges to democratic governance faced by El Salvador today? Where would you place anti-corruption efforts as a priority in El Salvador?

Answer. I understand corruption in El Salvador is a significant problem and is a drag on the economy, weakens government institutions, hampers the fight against narcotics trafficking and insecurity, and contributes to illegal migration flows. The successful prosecution of former President Saca for corruption by former Attorney General Melendez indicates that parts of the government of El Salvador are committed to fighting corruption and building strong democratic institutions. There is much more yet to be done. The U.S. Strategy for Central America aims to secure U.S. borders and protect U.S. citizens by addressing the interrelated security, governance, and economic challenges that drive illegal immigration and illicit trafficking. The U.S. government supports the fight against corruption by helping to strengthen government institutions by mentoring prosecutors, training law enforcement, and providing other technical assistance. If confirmed, I will continue to prioritize U.S. government efforts to combat corruption and impunity in El Salvador.

Question. Do you see a role for the U.S. in supporting anti-corruption efforts, and efforts to strengthen the rule of law? What tools do you think you would need to further this effort?

Answer. I understand the United States has consistently supported El Salvador's current and former attorneys general in their efforts to tackle corruption and prosecute high-level officials for their crimes. If confirmed, I will continue to support the U.S. government's efforts to provide training and assistance to Salvadoran institutions to strengthen the rule of law. My understanding is U.S. assistance seeks to support more effective, transparent, and accountable judicial institutions; combat corruption and impunity; promote accountability; uphold the rule of law; and increase access to justice. If confirmed, I will continue to support these efforts to build upon U.S. support for good governance and anticorruption efforts in El Salvador.

International Commission Against Impunity

Question. During El Salvador's recent presidential campaign, one of President-elect Nayib Bukele's most popular campaign proposals was that he would set up an internationally-supported commission against impunity to work with El Salvador's attorney general on investigating and prosecuting some of the politically thorniest corruption cases. Similar commissions in Guatemala and Honduras have made real progress, despite some difficulties.

- Do you believe that El Salvador faces challenges with accountability and impunity?

Answer. I understand pervasive corruption, impunity, weak institutions, and lack of transparency erode prosperity and undermine security in El Salvador. These conditions allow for permissive environments in which transnational criminal organizations thrive. Corruption strains a state's ability to address complex security, economic, and governance challenges—the interrelated root causes that drive illegal immigration toward the United States. I understand improving democratic governance, strengthening institutions and the rule of law, and tackling corruption and impunity are among the most urgent challenges that El Salvador faces. If confirmed, I will underscore in my engagement with all branches of the Salvadoran government the importance of their collective action in the fight against corruption and commit to supporting its efforts to do so.

Question. Will you support President-elect Bukele's proposal to create an internationally-backed commission to help investigate and prosecute cases?

Answer. I understand President-elect Bukele expressed a desire to form an independent anticorruption commission. While it is up to the Salvadoran people and their leaders to decide what is best for their country, it is essential any anti-corruption efforts build on El Salvador's progress to-date in combatting corruption and impunity.

If confirmed, I will continue U.S. support for the Salvadoran government's efforts to strengthen its institutions to fight corruption and impunity and will look forward to assessing all available options related to these priorities to ensure the U.S. can support most effectively to achieve measurable results.

Collaboration with Attorney General

Question. El Salvador's legislative assembly elected a new Attorney General just last December, replacing Douglas Melendez, a proven and brave prosecutor who led several important investigations to uphold accountability and the rule of law.

- Do you believe that El Salvador faces challenges with accountability and impunity?

Answer. I understand the United States has consistently supported El Salvador's current and former Attorneys General in their efforts to tackle corruption and prosecute high-level officials for their crimes. I also understand that the Current Attorney General, Raul Melara, has made clear his commitment to partnering with the United States government to address corruption in El Salvador. If confirmed, I will continue to support Mission San Salvador's efforts to provide training and assistance to Salvadoran institutions working to strengthen the rule of law, including the Attorney General's office.

Question. Will you support President-elect Bukele's proposal to create an internationally-backed commission to help investigate and prosecute cases?

Answer. U.S. assistance seeks to support more effective, transparent, and accountable judicial institutions; combat corruption and impunity; promote accountability; uphold the rule of law; and increase access to justice. These efforts seek to build on the recent Salvadoran successes to combat impunity and transnational organized crime. If confirmed, I will continue to support these and other efforts to build upon U.S. support for good governance and anticorruption efforts in El Salvador.

Promoting the Rule of Law

Question. The recently-approved foreign assistance appropriation for FY19 includes a section on Central America and is relevant for El Salvador. As the nominee for Ambassador, I want to make sure that you are comfortable with it. The language makes clear that we will continue to provide assistance to El Salvador to help it build democratic institutions and fight corruption, and that if the government in San Salvador is not seriously committed to these goals, we will not waste U.S. taxpayer dollars and will look to move that money elsewhere.

- Can you tell the committee what evidence you will be looking for that the Salvadoran government is serious about fighting corruption and improving the performance of the judiciary, the Attorney General's office, and the police?

Answer. A lack of transparency, corruption, weak institutions, and high impunity rates pose significant obstacles to advancing human rights, civil society and democracy in El Salvador. Addressing these issues is essential to effectively combat transnational organized crime, and will require sustained support and commitment by both the government and the people of El Salvador. If confirmed, I will continue the U.S. government's efforts to develop trusted and capable judicial institutions. Specifically, I would plan to continue to support the Salvadoran Attorney General in efforts to combat corruption and criminality and strengthen the capacity of his office and other justice sector entities.

U.S. assistance has enabled El Salvador to conduct more complex investigations and become trusted partners of U.S. law enforcement. It is my understanding that Salvadoran institutions can now deliver high-impact results due to U.S. support, such as the successful prosecution of former President Saca for corruption. A continuation of high-impact investigations and prosecutions would send a strong signal to the Salvadoran people that their institutions of government will combat corruption.

MS-13

Question. The administration has focused a great deal of time and media attention on MS-13, and while there is no doubt that MS-13 is an important and dangerous actor contributing to crime and violence in El Salvador, the government has engaged in iron-fisted anti-gang efforts that can prove counterproductive. El Salvador has one of the region's largest prison overpopulation rates, and neighborhood sweeps result in the imprisonment of scores of young men and women, often without criminal charges. By some estimates, 50% of prisoners in El Salvador have not been charged with any crime, and these prisoners can wait as long as two years for release. Moreover, during those two years they are forced to live in inhumane and dangerous conditions in which they are forced to join prison gangs simply to survive. As a result, many are innocent when they enter prison, but find themselves deeply integrated into criminal life upon their release.

- What can the U.S. do to encourage a new approach to Salvador's gang problems?

Answer. Gang violence and criminality, such as extortion, undermine the security of El Salvador and have led to a large prison population. El Salvador also continues to face serious human rights challenges and the Department, through INL and USAID, is working to help Salvadoran authorities develop a professional, credible, and effective judicial system to address corruption, uphold the rule of law, and respect human rights. The United States works to encourage and assist the Salvadoran government with institutional reforms that will equip police and justice entities, including the prisons, to effectively investigate, prosecute, and hold accountable individuals and organizations, including gang members, that break Salvadoran law. If confirmed, I look forward to working with the new administration in El Salvador to discuss the best way forward on this complex issue to ensure human rights and the rule of law are upheld while we tackle gang violence and other pressing security issues.

Question. USAID supports gang prevention and reduction programs, and there is evidence that these programs have an impact. Will you continue to support these programs?

Answer. It is my understanding that the U.S. Mission in El Salvador is working with the government of El Salvador to institutionalize proven prevention programs,. If confirmed, I would work to support gang prevention and reduction programs and build the evidence-base for what works in reducing crime and violence in this region, partnering with U.S.-based organizations that have proven experience addressing these types of challenges in gang-ridden cities like Los Angeles and Chicago.

Migration

Question. Salvadorans are leaving their country in very high numbers, and it's not just single men looking for work. We are seeing, at our border, a lot of families with children, sometimes children without their parents.

- Can you give us your assessment of why so many people are leaving, and what can be done to address the conditions—like gang crime and domestic violence—that contribute to this?

Answer. I understand many Salvadoran citizens continue to undertake dangerous and illegal journeys to reach the United States often citing insecurity, limited economic opportunities, and a desire for a better future as among the reasons why they left El Salvador. I also understand the U.S. government, as a part of the multi-year U.S. Strategy for Central America, seeks to assist Central American governments as they work to address the underlying economic, security, and governance conditions that drive illegal immigration. If confirmed, I will continue to prioritize diplomatic engagement and foreign assistance programs that can help address the drivers of illegal immigration.

Democracy

Question. What are the most important actions you have taken in your career to date to support democracy and human rights? What has been the impact of your actions?

Answer. Throughout my over four decades of service to the United States, I have supported and defended freedom, democracy, strong rule of law, and the promotion of human rights and individual liberty around the world, engaging with foreign leaders and citizens in Latin America and the Middle East. As a military officer, I was responsible for promoting respect for democracy and human rights in interactions with foreign personnel and for reporting to my chain of command any known or suspected violations. Throughout my government service, I have held numerous leadership positions that required me to teach formal classes to both U.S. and foreign personnel on human rights, and I have advised and mentored foreign partners on the importance of gaining the support of the local population by treating them with respect and fairness. Most recently, as an advisor to senior military commanders, I briefed them on human rights allegations to help them prioritize the protection of human rights as a key component of their interactions with foreign leaders and organizations.

Question. What issues are the most pressing challenges to democracy or democratic development in El Salvador? These challenges might include obstacles to participatory and accountable governance and institutions, rule of law, authentic political competition, civil society, human rights and press freedom. Please be as specific as possible.

Answer. A lack of transparency and government accountability, endemic corruption, weak institutions, violations of human rights, and high impunity rates are among most pressing challenges to democracy in El Salvador.

Question. What steps will you take—if confirmed—to support democracy in El Salvador? What do you hope to accomplish through these actions? What are the potential impediments to addressing the specific obstacles you have identified?

Answer. I believe it is essential for the United States to work with civil society, business communities, journalists, religious leaders, and academic institutions in El Salvador to address these challenges to democracy. If confirmed, I will continue to provide strong support for the important efforts of the Salvadoran Attorney General to combat corruption, impunity, and criminality; build judicial institutions; strengthen the rule of law; and hold government and security leaders accountable to the Salvadoran people for violations of the law.

It is my understanding that the Attorney General's office does not have adequate resources to investigate complicated financial crimes to investigate high-level corruption and the National Civilian Police needs more training and additional resources. If confirmed, I will work to prioritize U.S. government support to address these challenges.

Question. How will you utilize U.S. government assistance resources at your disposal, including the Democracy Commission Small Grants program and other sources of State Department and USAID funding, to support democracy and governance, and what will you prioritize in processes to administer such assistance?

Answer. U.S. foreign assistance to El Salvador supports the U.S. Strategy for Central America, which includes security, economic opportunity, and governance objectives. I understand U.S. government support has enabled Salvadoran law enforcement to conduct complex investigations and become better partners for U.S. law enforcement to more effectively fight crime and tackle gang violence, especially related to MS-13. Additionally, U.S. assistance combats gang violence by strengthening the capacity of Salvadoran law enforcement and the justice sector through a three-pronged approach of community engagement, institutional reform, and increased information-sharing.If confirmed, I will work to build the capacity of Salvadoran law enforcement institutions, increase information-sharing to fight crime and gang vio-

lence, and support the National Civil Police's (PNC) efforts to provide for greater security and the protection of human rights for the Salvadoran people.

Question. If confirmed, do you commit to meet with civil society members, human rights and other non-governmental organizations in the U.S. and with local human rights NGOs, and other members of civil society in El Salvador? What steps will you take to pro-actively address efforts to restrict or penalize NGOs and civil society via legal or regulatory measures?

Answer. Yes, I commit to meeting with civil society members, human rights and other non-governmental organizations in the United States, with local human rights NGOs, and other members of civil society in El Salvador I also commit to address with the Salvadoran government any restrictions on the fundamental freedoms and rights of civil society to advocate with their government.

Question. If confirmed, do you commit to meet with democratically oriented political opposition figures and parties? What steps will you take to encourage genuine political competition? Will you advocate for access and inclusivity for women, minorities and youth within political parties?

Answer. Yes, if confirmed, I commit to meet with democratically-oriented political opposition figures and parties and encourage genuine political competition as part of strengthening democratic institutions and governance in El Salvador. I will advocate for the rights of women, minorities, and youth to engage in the democratic process.As demonstrated by the recent presidential election in which outsider Nayib Bukele won a competitive multiparty race, El Salvador has a functioning democracy and Salvadorans value their democratic system. If confirmed, I will be a strong advocate for the rule of law and human rights that are the foundation of the democratic system. Where appropriate, I would support election monitoring. I would speak publicly in favor of free and fair elections and I would encourage the investigation and prosecution of criminal attempts to violate the integrity of elections.

Question. Will you and your embassy team actively engage with El Salvador on freedom of the press and address any government efforts designed to control or undermine press freedom through legal, regulatory or other measures? Will you commit to meeting regularly with independent, local press in El Salvador?

Answer. Yes, if confirmed, I will work with the U.S. Mission in El Salvador to actively engage with the government of El Salvador on freedom of the press and address any government efforts designed to control or undermine press freedom through legal, regulatory or other measures. I also commit to meeting regularly with independent, local press in El Salvador.

Question. Will you and your embassy team actively engage with civil society and government counterparts on countering disinformation and propaganda disseminated by foreign state or non-state actors in the country?

Answer. Yes, if confirmed, I will work with the U.S. Mission in El Salvador to actively engage with civil society and government counterparts on countering disinformation and propaganda disseminated by foreign state or non-state actors in the country.

Question. Will you and your embassy teams actively engage with El Salvador on the right of labor groups to organize, including for independent trade unions?

Answer. If confirmed, I will work with the U.S. Embassy in El Salvador and actively engage with the government of El Salvador on the right of labor groups to organize, including for independent trade unions.

Question. Will you commit to using your position, if confirmed, to defend the human rights and dignity of all people in El Salvador, no matter their sexual orientation or gender identity? What challenges do the lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender and queer (LGBTQ) people face in El Salvador? What specifically will you commit to do to help LGBTQ people in El Salvador?

Answer. If confirmed, I commit to using my position to advance U.S. interests and values and defend the human rights and dignity of all people in El Salvador, regardless of sexual orientation or gender identity.

It is my understanding that lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender and queer (LGBTQ) people in El Salvador face discrimination, marginalization, and violence directed against them. If confirmed, I will set an example for all mission personnel and for the government and people of El Salvador in respecting the dignity, value, and equality of all persons. .I would also encourage the government of El Salvador to investigate and prosecute all crimes committed, including those against

marginalized populations, to ultimately prevent impunity and strengthen the rule of law and access to justice for all people.

Administrative

Question. Do you agree that any targeting of or retaliation against career employees based on their perceived political beliefs, prior work on policy, or affiliation with a previous administration, is wholly inappropriate and has no place in the federal government? If confirmed, what will you do to ensure that all employees under your leadership understand that any retaliation, blacklisting, or other prohibited personnel practices will not be tolerated?

Answer. Yes, I agree that any targeting of or retaliation against career employees based on their perceived political beliefs, prior work on policy, or affiliation with a previous administration, is wholly inappropriate and has no place in the federal government. Department employees, like all federal employees, are subject to restrictions on engaging in partisan political activity while at work and outside of work. If confirmed, I will ensure that prohibited personnel practices, including retaliation and blacklisting, will not be tolerated under my leadership and that all employees understand and are in strict compliance with federal statutes, the Hatch Act, Department policy, and federal ethics laws concerning political beliefs or previous work on policy or affiliation with a previous administration.

Question. Has anyone ever made a formal or informal complaint or allegation of sexual harassment, discrimination (e.g., racial, ethnic, religious, etc.), or inappropriate conduct against you, in a workplace or any other setting? If so, please describe the nature of the complaint or allegation, your response, and any resolution, including any settlements.

Answer. No.

Question. Have you ever addressed concerns or allegations of sexual harassment, discrimination (e.g., racial, ethnic, religious, etc.), or inappropriate conduct made against any employee over whom you had supervisory authority? If so, please describe the outcome and actions taken.

Answer. No.

RESPONSES TO ADDITIONAL QUESTIONS FOR THE RECORD
SUBMITTED TO RONALD JOHNSON BY SENATOR BENJAMIN L. CARDIN

Question. What are your most meaningful achievements to date in your career to promote human rights and democracy? What has been the impact of your actions?

Answer. Throughout my over four decades of service to the United States, I have supported and defended freedom, democracy, strong rule of law, and the promotion of human rights and individual liberty around the world, engaging with foreign leaders and citizens in Latin America and the Middle East. As a military officer, I was personally responsible for promoting the respect for democracy and human rights in interactions with foreign personnel and for reporting to my chain of command any known or suspected violations. Throughout my government service, I have held numerous leadership positions that required me to teach formal classes to both U.S. and foreign personnel on human rights, and I have advised and mentored foreign partners on the importance of gaining the support of the local population by treating them with respect and fairness. Most recently, as an advisor to senior military commanders, I briefed them on human rights violation allegations against foreign leaders and organizations to help them prioritize the protection of human rights as a key component of their interactions with foreign leaders and organizations.

Question. What are the most pressing human rights issues in El Salvador? What are the most important steps you expect to take—if confirmed—to promote human rights and democracy in El Salvador? What do you hope to accomplish through these actions?

Answer. I believe the most pressing human rights issues in El Salvador come from organized criminal elements, including local and transnational gangs and narcotics traffickers. These individuals and entities commit violent crimes, including murder, extortion, kidnapping, and human trafficking, and they threaten and intimidate police, judicial authorities, the business community, journalists, women, and members of vulnerable populations. I also have serious concerns regarding allegations of unlawful killings, forced disappearances, torture at the hands of sus-

pected gang members and security forces and harsh prison conditions, arbitrary arrest and detention, and children enslaved in horrific conditions of child labor If confirmed, I will work to support current U.S. efforts to address these issues, promote democratic governance and the rule of law, protect human rights, and partner with the Salvadoran Public Ministry and civil society to effectively combat corruption and impunity and achieve greater government transparency and accountability to Salvadoran citizens, fewer homicides and violent crimes, and less illegal migration to the U.S.

Question. If confirmed, what are the potential obstacles to addressing the specific human rights issues you have identified in your previous response? What challenges will you face in El Salvador in advancing human rights, civil society and democracy in general?

Answer. A lack of transparency and government accountability, endemic corruption, weak institutions, and high impunity rates pose significant obstacles to advancing democracy, human rights, and the rule of law in El Salvador. I believe it is essential for the U.S. to work with civil society, business communities, journalists, religious leaders, and academic institutions in El Salvador to address these challenges. If confirmed, I will work to continue strong U.S. support for the important efforts of the Salvadoran Attorney General to combat corruption, impunity, and criminality; build judicial institutions; strengthen the rule of law; and hold government and security leaders accountable to the Salvadoran people for violations of the law.

Question. Are you committed to meeting with human rights, civil society and other non-governmental organizations in the U.S. and with local human rights NGOs in El Salvador?

- If confirmed, what steps will you take to pro-actively support the Leahy Law and similar efforts, and ensure that provisions of U.S. security assistance and security cooperation activities reinforce human rights?

Answer. Yes, I am committed to and look forward to meeting with human rights, civil society, and other non-governmental organizations in the U.S. and with local human rights NGOs in El Salvador.

If confirmed, in accordance with the Leahy law and all applicable legal requirements, I will work to continue U.S. efforts to thoroughly vet all foreign security force personnel and units prior to them receiving U.S. government—funded assistance. If information is found related to a gross violation of human rights, I will review and recommend appropriate actions be taken to ensure U.S. taxpayer dollars follow all applicable U.S. laws and work to assist the Salvadoran government in bringing the responsible parties to justice.

Question. Will you and your embassy team actively engage with El Salvador to address cases of key political prisoners or persons otherwise unjustly targeted by El Salvador?

Answer. Yes, if confirmed, I will work with my embassy colleagues to actively engage with Salvadoran government officials to address cases of key political prisoners or persons otherwise unjustly targeted by the Salvadoran government, especially if they are U.S. citizens.

Question. Will you engage with El Salvador on matters of human rights, civil rights and governance as part of your bilateral mission?

Answer. Yes, if confirmed, I will engage with the Salvadoran government and Salvadoran people on matters of human rights, civil rights, and democratic governance issues as part of our Mission's priorities.

Question. Do you commit to bring to the committee's attention (and the State Department Inspector General) any change in policy or U.S. actions that you suspect may be influenced by any of the President's business or financial interests, or the business or financial interests of any senior White House staff?

Answer. I commit to comply with all relevant federal ethics laws, regulations, and rules, and to raise concerns that I may have through appropriate channels.

Question. Do you commit to inform the committee if you have any reason to suspect that a foreign government, head of state, or foreign-controlled entity is taking any action in order to benefit any of the President's business or financial interests, or the interests of senior White House staff?

Answer. I commit to comply with all relevant federal ethics laws, regulations, and rules, and to raise concerns that I may have through appropriate channels.

Question. Do you or do any members of your immediate family have any financial interests in El Salvador?

Answer. No. Neither I, nor any members of my immediate family, have financial interests in El Salvador.

Question. Research from private industry demonstrates that, when managed well, diversity makes business teams better both in terms of creativity and in terms of productivity. What will you do to promote, mentor and support your staff that come from diverse backgrounds and underrepresented groups in the Foreign Service?

Answer. If confirmed, I look forward to leading the team of U.S. and Salvadorian nationals at Embassy San Salvador and to tapping the unique and diverse talents each person brings to promote U.S. foreign policy objectives in El Salvador. At the State Department's core are its people. The Department is committed to fostering a workforce that reflects the diverse people it represents. Diversity not only enhances our effectiveness but also promotes a workplace culture that values the efforts of all members and enhances the professional experience of our valued public servants. The Department's diversity efforts are outlined in its 2016 Diversity and Inclusion Strategic Plan. If confirmed, I will prioritize a variety of training opportunities, mentoring, and career development programs to ensure employees have the skills necessary for current and future work assignments.

Question. What steps will you take to ensure each of the supervisors at the Embassy are fostering an environment that is diverse and inclusive?

Answer. The State Department is committed to equal employment opportunity (EEO) and ensuring the Department's work environment is free from prohibited discrimination and harassment in all phases of employment—including hiring, evaluation, promotion, and training. This includes improving and enhancing mentorship programs, expanding outreach to managers who make hiring decisions, and encouraging collaboration with external partners. If confirmed, I will strongly communicate the Department's EEO policies in my mission and ensure they are followed. If confirmed, I will also take advantage of the variety of programs the Department offers to help supervisors work with a multicultural staff.

Question. If the Salvadoran president requests U.S. assistance in forming this commission, how can the U.S. support such an effort?Answer:

Answer. The U.S. government supports the Salvadoran government's efforts to combat corruption and impunity. If confirmed, I commit to working to continue this close collaboration with President-elect Nayib Bukele and his government to further advance these priorities. I understand President-elect Bukele has expressed a desire to form an independent anticorruption commission to build on El Salvador's progress to-date in combatting corruption and impunity. If confirmed, I commit to continuing U.S. support for the Salvadoran government's efforts to strengthen its institutions to fight corruption and impunity and will look forward to assessing all available options related to these priorities to ensure the U.S. can support most effectively to achieve measurable results.

Question. How do you believe political corruption impacts democratic governance and the rule of law generally, and in El Salvador specifically?

Answer. I understand that pervasive corruption, impunity, weak institutions, and lack of transparency erode prosperity and undermine security in El Salvador. These conditions allow for permissive environments in which transnational criminal organizations thrive. Corruption strains a government's ability to address complex security, economic, and governance challenges—the interrelated root causes that drive illegal immigration toward the United States. Improving democratic governance, strengthening institutions and the rule of law, and tackling corruption and impunity are among the most urgent challenges that countries like El Salvador face. If confirmed, I will underscore in my engagement with the Salvadoran government the importance of its collective action in the fight against corruption.

Question. What is your assessment of corruption trends in El Salvador and efforts to address and reduce it by that government?

Answer. I understand that corruption in El Salvador is a significant problem and is a drag on the economy, weakens government institutions, hampers the fight against narcotics trafficking and insecurity, and contributes to illegal migration flows. The successful prosecution of former President Saca for corruption by former Attorney General Melendez indicates that parts of the government of El Salvador are committed to fighting corruption and building strong democratic institutions. There is much more yet to be done. The U.S. Strategy for Central America aims to secure U.S. borders and protect U.S. citizens by addressing the interrelated secu-

rity, governance, and economic challenges that drive illegal immigration and illicit trafficking. The U.S. government supports the fight against corruption by helping to strengthen government institutions by mentoring prosecutors, training law enforcement, and providing other technical assistance. If confirmed, I will continue to prioritize U.S. government efforts to combat corruption and impunity in El Salvador.

Question. If confirmed, what steps will you take to strengthen good governance and anticorruption programming in El Salvador?

Answer. I understand the United States has consistently supported El Salvador's current and former attorneys general in their efforts to tackle corruption and prosecute high-level officials for their crimes. If confirmed, I will continue to support the U.S. government's efforts to provide training and assistance to Salvadoran institutions to strengthen the rule of law. My understanding is U.S. assistance seeks to support more effective, transparent, and accountable judicial institutions; combat corruption and impunity; promote accountability; uphold the rule of law; and increase access to justice. If confirmed, I will continue to support these efforts to build upon U.S. support for good governance and anticorruption efforts in El Salvador.

Question. If confirmed, will you commit to implementing all three pillars of the Strategy, including economic and governance efforts?

Answer. If confirmed, I commit to working to support U.S. government assistance across all three pillars and furthering our diplomatic engagement with our Salvadoran partners. The U.S. Strategy for Central America is a comprehensive effort that takes a holistic approach to security, economic, and governance drivers of illegal immigration and illicit trafficking by enhancing regional economic opportunity, reducing insecurity and violence, and strengthening democratic institutions. Furthermore, U.S. assistance complements the $8.6 billion that Northern Triangle countries themselves are investing to address these goals.

Question. How can the U.S. assist El Salvador in tackling gang violence while still respecting human rights and the rule of law?

Answer. U.S. government foreign assistance to El Salvador supports the U.S. Strategy for Central America, which includes both security and governance objectives. U.S. support has enabled Salvadoran law enforcement to conduct complex investigations and become better partners for U.S. law enforcement to more effectively fight crime and tackle gang violence, especially related to MS-13. Additionally, INL programs combat gang violence by strengthening the capacity of Salvadoran law enforcement and justice sector through community engagement, institutional reform, and increased information sharing. As a result of these efforts, the homicide rate in El Salvador was reduced by over 50 percent from 2015 to 2018, and greater information-sharing between Salvadoran, Guatemalan, Honduran, Mexican, and U.S. law enforcement entities has resulted in better identification of gang members, human smugglers, and drug traffickers. I believe that the U.S. needs to continue these efforts in building capacity of Salvadoran entities responsible for fighting crime and gang violence while also prioritizing clear protection for human rights and the rule of law.

If confirmed, I will work to ensure U.S. efforts continue to build the capacity of Salvadoran law enforcement institutions, increase information sharing to fight crime and gang violence, and support the National Civil Police's (PNC) efforts to provide for greater security and the protection of human rights.

Question. Do you commit to reporting and addressing allegations of human rights abuses and extrajudicial killings by the Salvadoran security forces?

Answer. If confirmed, I commit to reporting and addressing allegations of human rights abuses and extrajudicial killings by the Salvadoran security forces and to proactively supporting the Leahy law and all applicable legal requirements so that U.S. security assistance and security cooperation activities reinforce human rights. I also commit to supporting efforts by Salvadoran authorities to investigate and hold accountable those responsible for current and past human rights violations.

RESPONSES TO ADDITIONAL QUESTIONS FOR THE RECORD
SUBMITTED TO RONALD JOHNSON BY SENATOR CHRISTOPHER MURPHY

Question. Do you agree with the assessment that it's important for El Salvador to confront the crimes of the past, and will you be supportive of their doing so?

Answer. Yes, it is important for El Salvador to continue to confront the crimes of the past and uphold adherence to the rule of law. I understand the U.S. government supports the efforts undertaken in El Salvador's judicial system to fairly and independently investigate, prosecute, and adjudicate historical war crimes and crimes against humanity, narco-trafficking, and corruption. The search for the disappeared and ongoing investigations and proceedings in El Salvador for historical atrocity crimes committed during the internal armed conflict can restore dignity to victims, inspire trust in state institutions, and serve as a positive example to countries around the world about how to address legacies of violence. If confirmed, I will underscore to the Salvadoran government the importance of ensuring accountability for crimes of the past through fair and independent proceedings and support the government's efforts to uphold the rule of law and bring about justice for victims.

Question. Do you believe El Salvador has major problems with corruption and impunity, and will you support President-elect Bukele's proposal to create an internationally backed commission to help investigate and prosecute cases?

Answer. I understand that pervasive corruption, impunity, weak institutions, and lack of transparency erode prosperity and undermine security in El Salvador. These conditions allow for permissive environments in which transnational criminal organizations thrive. Corruption strains a state's ability to address complex security, economic, and governance challenges—the interrelated root causes that drive illegal immigration toward the United States. I understand that improving democratic governance, strengthening institutions and the rule of law, and tackling corruption and impunity are among the most urgent challenges that El Salvador faces. If confirmed, I will underscore in my engagement with all branches of the Salvadoran government the importance of their collective action in the fight against corruption and commit to supporting its efforts to do so.

The successful prosecution of former President Saca for corruption by former Attorney General Melendez indicates that parts of the government of El Salvador are committed to fighting corruption and building strong government institutions. There is much more yet to be done. I understand that the U.S. government supports the Salvadoran government's efforts to combat corruption and impunity. If confirmed, I commit to working to continue this close collaboration with President-elect Nayib Bukele and his government to further advance these priorities. I understand President-elect Bukele has expressed a desire to form an independent anticorruption commission to build on El Salvador's progress to-date in combatting corruption and impunity. If confirmed, I commit continuing U.S. support for the Salvadoran government's efforts to strengthen its institutions to fight corruption and impunity and will look forward to assessing all available options related to these priorities to ensure the U.S. can support most effectively to achieve measurable results.

Question. What should we be doing to improve their crime fighting strategies, and to ensure they are a strong effective institution that respects human rights?Answer:

Answer. U.S. government foreign assistance to El Salvador supports the U.S. Strategy for Central America, which includes both security and governance objectives. U.S. support has enabled Salvadoran law enforcement to conduct complex investigations and become better partners for U.S. law enforcement to more effectively fight crime, especially related to MS-13 investigations. U.S. assistance has also strengthened information sharing between Salvadoran, Guatemalan, Honduran, Mexican, and U.S. law enforcement entities and resulted in better identification of gang members, human smugglers, and drug traffickers. I believe that the U.S. needs to continue these efforts in building the capacity of Salvadoran entities responsible for fighting crime while also prioritizing clear protection for human rights and the rule of law.

If confirmed, I will work to ensure U.S. efforts continue to build the capacity of Salvadoran law enforcement institutions, increase information sharing to fight crime, and support the National Civil Police's efforts to provide for greater security and the protection of human rights.

Question. Will you support a continuing emphasis in our assistance programs on these kinds of community based violence prevention programs?

Answer. Through INL and USAID, the United States provides comprehensive community-based violence-prevention programs. These programs seek to engage youth at-risk for migrating to the U.S. or joining gangs, build relationships between police and communities they serve, prevent crime recidivism, and support intelligence-led policing, thorough investigations, and professional prosecutions to achieve reductions in the rates of homicides and other crimes in El Salvador. If confirmed, I will work to support current U.S. efforts where I see measurable impact

and results in the communities where we are working, including community-based violence-prevention programs to support U.S. interests in El Salvador.

RESPONSES TO ADDITIONAL QUESTIONS FOR THE RECORD
SUBMITTED TO RONALD JOHNSON BY SENATOR EDWARD J. MARKEY

Question. Civil society in El Salvador, international human rights organizations, and investigative journalists repeatedly have expressed concerns regarding excessive use of force by security officers, including in units that receive training from the United States:

- If confirmed, what concrete actions would you take or what changes would you make to ensure that Salvadoran security forces uphold human rights? What thresholds would you use to ascertain whether that United States should continue to provide security funding?

Answer. El Salvador faces serious human rights challenges. I understand the Department of State is working to help the Salvadoran government develop a professional, credible, and effective police force that is free of corruption, upholds the rule of law, and respects human rights. If confirmed, I will be a strong advocate for human rights, police training and professionalization, and accountability. I would also report accurately on conditions on the ground and continue to support U.S. efforts to address human rights challenges by training the Salvadoran government, and partnering with civil society. I look forward to assessing all available options related to these priorities to ensure the U.S. can support effectively to achieve measurable results.

I understand the State Department conducts Leahy vetting prior to providing assistance to police or security forces. If confirmed, I would continue to support the Leahy vetting program to ensure that any units or individuals that do not meet these standards or are unable to pass Leahy vetting lose eligibility to receive support from the United States.

Question. As part of U.S. support for combating corruption and impunity in Central America, the U.S. Embassy has worked closely with—and provided increased levels of funding to—the Attorney General's office and yet, as you stated in your testimony, El Salvador has only an 11 percent prosecution rate. Civil society organizations in El Salvador have also documented repeated occasions on which the Attorney General's office has protected members of the right-wing ARENA party from investigation and prosecution:

- With a new Attorney General who has close ties to the ARENA party, what role should the U.S. Embassy play with regard to ensuring that justice is carried out effectively and evenly in El Salvador? What specific programs and policies should the U.S. promote in order to improve the justice system?

Answer. Former Attorney General Melendez, with U.S. assistance, made great strides in the fight against corruption, including the prosecution of former President Saca and former Attorney General Martinez for corruption. Current Attorney General Melara just took office in January and has expressed his desire to partner with the United States government to address corruption in El Salvador. It is critical that the United States continue to support the strengthening of the Attorney General's Office as an institution. The Attorney General's office needs resources and technical skills to continue building its investigative capacity to prosecute financial crimes.Transparency in government operations and tenders is essential to improving the justice system, thus making impunity impossible. If confirmed, I would work to continue the U.S. Embassy's efforts to advocate for fairness and transparency in government processes in El Salvador.

The Salvadoran people have grown impatient with the lack of progress against corruption, and on February 3, 2019, the Salvadoran people elected Nayib Bukele who ran on an anti-corruption platform. Bukele has expressed a strong interest in cooperating with U.S. anti-corruption efforts. The United States is currently supporting anticorruption efforts through both USAID and INL programs, including cooperating with U.N. Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC) efforts to stand up an anti-corruption unit in the Attorney General's office. If confirmed, I would work to continue strong support to address corruption and impunity challenges in El Salvador.

Question. In October 2018, a district court judge issued a preliminary injunction to prevent the federal government from terminating temporary protected status for

several countries, including El Salvador. The order granting the injunction states, "terminating TPS status may have adverse ramifications internationally." The judge points to an October 2017 memo by the Assistant Secretary for International Affairs in OP&S, which warns, "returning aliens to [Nicaragua and El Salvador] would put a strain on these countries' systems:"

- Do you believe that El Salvador is prepared to repatriate its nationals? Do you agree that the return of its nationals would put a strain on El Salvador's systems? What types of obstacles and consequences may occur?

Answer. If confirmed, as with all issues pertaining to our relationship with El Salvador, I commit to report accurately on the conditions on the ground, including its ability to receive its nationals. I understand that the U.S. Embassy in El Salvador has met with host government counterparts to encourage further development of programs and services that can facilitate the successful reintegration of their nationals, including TPS returnees. If confirmed, I will continue to work with the government of El Salvador to strengthen its ability to safely and successfully reintegrate and provide for its nationals, including TPS returnees, as well as to ensure the U.S. Embassy in El Salvador is able to assist U.S. citizens, including minor children, who may accompany TPS returnees.

Question. You stated in your testimony that you were in El Salvador in 1984 with the U.S. Armed Forces. How would you evaluate U.S. policy in El Salvador at that time in terms of its successes and failures? What lessons from that era can we apply to our contemporary bilateral relations?

Answer. As a military officer, I was personally responsible for demonstrating respect for human rights in all interactions with foreign personnel and for reporting any known or suspected violations during my service in El Salvador. Throughout my over four decades of service of the United States, I have supported and defended democracy around the world, engaging with foreign leaders and populations to highlight the virtues of democracy and a rules-based system without impunity. The United States is the example that many seek to emulate and it is important for us to remain engaged and to ensure that we set the right example and demonstrate American values in everything we do.

During my career, I observed that when U.S. assistance is linked to demonstrable and verifiable progress, we can make a lasting impact. When we do not measure results, results are ephemeral at best. In El Salvador, the United States played a key role in the 1992 peace accords that led to a democratic society. Since then, El Salvador has had six peaceful transitions of power, including the ongoing transition to President-elect Nayib Bukele who won a competitive multiparty race on February 3, 2019. Our persistent and constructive engagement in El Salvador eventually helped create the basis for peace. The huge loss of human life during the civil war has hindered development in El Salvador to this day and explains much of the country's security and economic problems. However, I believe the country is now on the verge of compounding the slow progress it has been making and is ready to move forward rapidly to address its security, prosperity, and governance challenges. President-elect Nayib Bukele has asked for continued engagement and support from the United States and has stated his desire to be a model small-nation partner with the United States. We should constructively embrace his offer, remain engaged, and, above all, continue to live and represent our values in El Salvador.

RESPONSES TO ADDITIONAL QUESTIONS FOR THE RECORD
SUBMITTED TO MICHAEL FITZPATRICK BY SENATOR ROBERT MENENDEZ

Question. What does the magnitude of this financial package say about the scope of the economic challenges that President Moreno inherited from his predecessor?

Answer. The IMF fiscal package of $4.2 billion, together with approximately $6 billion from other international financial institutions, offers the Ecuadorian government low-cost finance and expert advice on how to reorient the Ecuadorian economy toward a market-led model. The Moreno government has exerted significant efforts to resolve legacy issues, including debts, left by the Correa administration. Public spending is unsustainable, with persistent public deficits. Heavy tax burdens, complex bureaucracy, and inflexible labor laws constrain growth.

To respond to these challenges, President Moreno and his economic team adopted an economic plan (Plan Prosperidad) that focuses on reducing government spending and financing the government in a fiscally responsible manner while promoting economic growth and increasing support for social programs.

If confirmed, I will work to support to the Moreno government's efforts as they seek to address these economic challenges.

Question. What is your assessment of the Moreno government's ability to successfully manage and implement this major financial package?

Answer. The Moreno government possesses an economic team of capable, pragmatic advisors with experience in the private sector, including Economic Minister Richard Martinez and Trade Minister Pablo Campana, who are committed to see through the successful implementation of Plan Prosperidad and the international financial institutions' support package. The international institutions financing the assistance package have pledged technical support to the Moreno government throughout its implementation.

Question. If confirmed, what efforts would you take to help USAID reopen its offices in Ecuador?

Answer. USAID and U.S. Department of State assistance in Ecuador enhances the ability of diverse civil society actors to work effectively and collaboratively, including with the Ecuadorian government, to encourage good governance, protect human rights and fundamental freedoms, promote transparency, deter corruption, and strengthen legislative and judicial institutions.

If confirmed, I will engage the Moreno government and USAID colleagues to continue efforts to identify areas for cooperation and ensure judicious investment of U.S. government funding and gear technical assistance towards preserving and furthering democratic freedoms in Ecuador. I will look for opportunities to expand Ecuador's inclusion in regional USAID initiatives, and will continue working towards the re-establishment of a USAID staffing presence in our Embassy.

Question. What is your assessment of Ecuador's ability to manage this massive influx of Venezuelan refugees?

Answer. In line with its human mobility policy, Ecuador generously hosts the largest number of recognized refugees in Latin America, approximately 67,000 Colombian refugees, even as it continues receiving and providing services to growing numbers of Venezuelan refugees and migrants. According to official Ecuadorian government statistics, more than 950,000 Venezuelans legally entered Ecuador in 2018, a 231 percent increase over the 288,005 who entered in 2017. As of March 10, more than 87,000 Venezuelans have legally entered Ecuador thus far this year. An estimated 20 percent remain in Ecuador, with the rest continuing on to Peru or Chile. The Ecuadorian government and International Organization for Migration estimate about 300,000 Venezuelans are now living in Ecuador. International organizations report Venezuelans are arriving ill, malnourished, in need of shelter, and vulnerable to human trafficking.

The government of Ecuador has shown political will to continue hosting migrants and refugees, but it lacks the resources and capacity for a sustained response to the large influx of Venezuelans entering its country in addition to its existing population of Colombian refugees and migrants. Venezuela's neighbors have worked together to respond to the exodus of Venezuelans fleeing the political repression and economic disaster caused by the former Maduro regime. The Ecuadorian government has convened a series of regional technical meetings, called the "Quito Process," to discuss entry and regularization requirements for Venezuelans, as well as a regional donor conference to discuss funding needs. It is clear that Ecuador, as a small country with its own serious economic problems, will need continued international support to bear the burden of hosting an unprecedented number of refugees and migrants

Question. If confirmed, what type of cooperation with the Moreno government would you prioritize in order to support their efforts to address the Venezuelan migration crisis and uphold their international commitments?

Answer. It is my understanding that sustained levels of international assistance will be necessary to support Ecuadorian efforts to effectively address the Venezuelan refugee and migration crisis and uphold their international commitments. If confirmed, I will continue to prioritize efforts that help strengthen the government of Ecuador's capacity to identify, assist, and provide protection to the most vulnerable Venezuelan refugees and migrants. Since 2018, the United States has provided more than $15 million in humanitarian assistance to protect and assist Venezuelans in Ecuador. These funds provide emergency food, medicine, education, and protection to the most vulnerable Venezuelans and are in addition to nearly $5 million in targeted humanitarian assistance for Colombian refugees and migrants in Ecuador.

If confirmed, I will urge the Ecuadorian government to continue working closely with various humanitarian organizations, and other international and non-govern-

mental organizations, to ensure the delivery of life-saving aid to Venezuelans and other vulnerable migrants and refugees and to assist in their integration into communities in Ecuador. I would also engage both publicly and privately with governmental and non-governmental opinion makers to ensure sustained support for continued international coordination in response to the crisis in Venezuela.

Question. What is your understanding of WikiLeaks interference in our 2016 elections?

Answer. It is my understanding that Julian Assange and WikiLeaks have engaged in hostile activities with the intent to undermine U.S. democracy and national security. I am aware of the ODNI's January 6, 2017 "high confidence" assessment that Russian efforts to influence the 2016 U.S. presidential election included the use of the Russian military's General Staff Main Intelligence Directorate (GRU) to relay U.S. victim data obtained in cyber operations to WikiLeaks.

I am also aware of that report's assessment that "the Kremlin's principal international propaganda outlet RT has actively collaborated with WikiLeaks. I am aware that, according to Russian and Western media, the RT editor-in-chief visited WikiLeaks founder Julian Assange in August 2013 at the Ecuadorian embassy in London, where they discussed renewing his broadcast contract with RT. I have read a number of media reports detailing Mr. Assange and WikiLeaks' interference with the domestic politics of a number of other countries, including some U.S. allies.

Question. WikiLeaks head Julian Assange has been in Ecuador's Embassy in London since 2012 and President Moreno refers to Assange as an "inherited problem." What is the Moreno government doing to manage Assange's presence and limit his ability to interfere in foreign elections?

Answer. The Ecuadorian government has said publicly that Mr. Assange must respect the conditions of his asylum, which include not interfering in the internal political affairs of third countries. In March 2018, the Ecuadorian government cut off Assange's internet access after he violated an agreement not to interfere in the internal affairs of other states by making statements on social media that the Ecuadorians assessed "put into risk their good relations with the United Kingdom, EU states, and other nations."

Answer. In October 2018, the Ecuadorian government gave Assange a set of protocols to address his visits, communications, and medical care; the document states that violation of the protocols could be grounds for terminating his asylum. The protocol stipulates restrictions on Assange's internet access and prohibits political interference in the affairs of other nations or Ecuador's bilateral relations. In February, Foreign Minister Jose Valencia publicly stated it was not feasible for Mr. Assange to remain in their Embassy in London indefinitely and that the situation needed to be resolved as soon as possible.

Question. Do you commit to make Assange's ongoing presence in the Ecuadorian Embassy in London a priority in your interaction with the Moreno government? And, do you commit to keeping members of this committee and our staff informed about your efforts?

Answer. Mr. Assange's harmful activities undermine the national security of the United States and our allies. If confirmed, I will continue to raise at every appropriate opportunity our significant concerns regarding Mr. Assange and urge rapid resolution of the issue with senior officials in the government of Ecuador. I also commit to keeping members of this committee and staff informed about our ongoing efforts.

Question. What do these incidents say about China's environmental record in Ecuador and Latin America at large?

Answer. Alleged incidents of Chinese illegal fishing in Ecuadorian waters and in fragile eco systems like the Galapagos, demonstrate China's poor environmental record in Latin America. The Ecuadorian government remains seriously concerned by the threat illegal Chinese fishing incursions pose to its country's national resources, and is making a good faith effort to control fishing in its territorial waters and exclusive economic zone despite limited resources and capabilities. If confirmed, I will stress that Chinese investments and activities need to adhere to international best practices on environmental impacts as well as transparency, rule of law, and financial sustainability.

Question. How can the U.S. support the government of Ecuador's efforts to counter China's illegal shark fishing?

Answer. The United States government works with the Ecuadorian fisheries service and the Ecuadorian Navy to improve monitoring of illegal, unreported, and un-

regulated fishing. Ecuador's renewed openness and interest to collaborate with the United States provides opportunities to deepen cooperation on illegal fishing.

It is my understanding that Ecuador has reached out to the United States to inquire about purchasing more vessels and radars to assist with maritime surveillance. I believe we should explore options that help the Ecuadorian government improve its maritime capabilities. We could also assist the Ecuadorian government by providing technical assistance to improve their judicial capacity to handle illegal fishing cases. In addition, the United States could encourage Ecuador to expand its regional coordination efforts, both diplomatic and military, to stem the threat of Chinese fishing depredation.

Question. What do you view as the next steps for restoring democratic institutions and norms in Ecuador, and what do you see as the United States' role in supporting these efforts?

Answer. The continued restoration of democratic institutions and norms in Ecuador will require our sustained engagement with both the Ecuadorian government and civil society. U.S. assistance seeks to preserve democratic freedoms, increase broad-based citizen engagement with the national and local government, strengthen legislative and judicial institutions, and support civil society organizations' work to promote and defend human rights and promote transparency and deter corruption within government institutions. It is critical that this work continue.

If confirmed, I will use all the tools at my disposal to assist the government of Ecuador and the nation's citizens in addressing their democratic governance challenges. I am a firm believer in the critical importance of civil society and private sector initiatives to promote government transparency and accountability to the people. The United States promotes its own interests when it supports Ecuador through professional and educational exchanges, and when it makes public statements and engages privately with a wide variety of actors, including government officials, journalists, business leaders, civil society representatives, and the international community. Such engagement deepens our bilateral relationship and helps us promote U.S. national interests in Ecuador.

Question. What next steps would you look to take with the aim of further deepening security cooperation with Ecuador?

Answer. The United States shares Ecuadorian President Lenin Moreno's interests in combating transnational crime and narcotrafficking and promoting regional security. If confirmed, I will seek to deepen our security cooperation with Ecuador by building on the well-established law enforcement relationships and arrangements already in place.

If confirmed, I will work with the Ecuadorian government to improve information sharing and identify ways we can advance our mutual goal of combatting narcotrafficking and transnational organized crime. The establishment of the Office of Security Cooperation and INL funding will significantly assist our efforts. I will look for opportunities to increase scheduled training, including through the U.S.-Colombia Action Plan for Regional Security Cooperation (USCAP), and support greater Ecuadorian-Colombian cooperation and coordination. U.S. continued financial support for operations and training will increase Ecuador's ability to combat its security challenges. In addition, if the Defense Security Cooperation Agency (DSCA) acts to reinstate Ecuador's access to dependable undertaking, it would expedite the Ecuadorians ability to acquire the capabilities needed to be a reliable partner in the region.

Question. What are the most important actions you have taken in your career to date to support democracy and human rights? What has been the impact of your actions?

Answer. The defense of human rights and democracy by the United States, and their promotion, have been constant priorities in my career, as a political officer serving repeatedly in conflict zones. Very early on, I learned that a country's human rights development and its construction of effective democratic institutions were some of the most critical ways to advance U.S. long-term interests and values abroad. I also determined that honest recognition—not just by us but also by our international partners—of the nature and extent of shortcomings is an essential precondition for the political will necessary to make the tough choices required to ensure lasting improvements. My political reporting and advocacy on these issues won Department-wide awards as both a junior-level officer in Peru and as a mid-level officer in Colombia. Most importantly, my work informed U.S. policy choices and the development and execution of U.S. bilateral efforts in difficult circumstances.

The promotion of human rights and democracy has continued to be an integral part of my own diplomatic efforts a senior officer. As Deputy Chief of Mission in

Paraguay, I took specific steps to ensure that all Paraguayan power centers respected the nation's 2008 election of an opposition presidential candidate (after 61 straight years of Colorado Party rule), both as the time of the election, throughout the transition, and following the inauguration. As Deputy Chief of ission in Peru, I helped the Peruvian government recruit, train, and deploy an innovative U.S.-supported, interagency jungle task force to pursue heavily armed narcotics traffickers, and this task force pioneered Peru's inclusion of fully integrated judicial prosecutors to ensure all operations were conducted legally and with public accountability. While leading our Mission to the Organization of American States (OAS) and then again as Deputy Assistant Secretary, I worked closely with Venezuelan democratic forces to defend human rights and promote democratic principles and institutions in the face of sustained attacks by the illegitimate Maduro regime. These efforts, undertaken publicly and privately, at the OAS and with bilateral partners throughout the Americas, in Europe, and elsewhere, contributed significantly to the international repudiation and isolation of the Maduro regime, and laid the groundwork for a future Venezuelan transition to democracy.

Question. What issues are the most pressing challenges to democracy or democratic development in Ecuador?

Answer. President Lenin Moreno's reform agenda includes important steps to advance democracy in Ecuador. Since taking office in May 2017, Moreno has advanced participatory democracy, supported greater press freedom, and repealed several preexisting authoritarian decrees that stifled dissent and unduly restricted freedoms of speech and association. Nevertheless, challenges remain, including a lack of independence in the judicial sector and the need to build capacity among judges and legislators. An inconsistent application of the rule of law remains another challenge, as does the need to expand the reach of effective democratic governance.

If confirmed, I will use all the tools at my disposal to assist the government of Ecuador and its citizens in addressing these democratic governance challenges.

Question. What steps will you take—if confirmed—to support democracy in Ecuador? What do you hope to accomplish through these actions? What are the potential impediments to addressing the specific obstacles you have identified?

Answer. The Ecuadorian government under President Moreno has shown a genuine commitment to addressing many human rights and democratic governance challenges. If confirmed, I will encourage the Ecuadorian government to continue its efforts to improve press freedoms, build greater democratic governance and stronger institutions accountable to the Ecuadorian people, and urge consistent application of the rule of law and greater social inclusion and respect for human rights.Obstacles to the challenges facing Ecuador today will require greater citizen engagement from the Ecuadorian people themselves, civil society, and the business community, to hold the government accountable and urge specific reforms. If confirmed, I will work to support civil society initiatives that promote transparency and accountability; facilitate the sharing of best practices through professional and educational exchanges; and encourage Ecuador's democratic progress through public statements and private engagement with a wide variety of actors, including government officials, journalists, business leaders, civil society representatives, and the international community.

Question. How will you utilize U.S. government assistance resources at your disposal, including the Democracy Commission Small Grants program and other sources of State Department and USAID funding, to support democracy and governance, and what will you prioritize in processes to administer such assistance?

Answer. If confirmed, I will use U.S. government assistance to preserve and expand democratic freedoms, increasing broad-based citizen engagement with national and local government. U.S. assistance in Ecuador enhances the ability of diverse civil society actors to work effectively and collaboratively, including with the Ecuadorian government, to encourage good governance, protect human rights and fundamental freedoms, promote transparency, and strengthen legislative and judicial institutions. I commit to working closely with all of our partners in Ecuador, and all relevant agencies of the U.S. government, to ensure every dollar of U.S. assistance is used wisely and in accordance with U.S. interests in the hemisphere.

Question. If confirmed, do you commit to meet with civil society members, human rights and other non-governmental organizations in the U.S. and with local human rights NGOs, and other members of civil society in Ecuador? What steps will you take to pro-actively address efforts to restrict or penalize NGOs and civil society via legal or regulatory measures?

Answer. Yes. If confirmed, I promise to engage with civil society members, human rights and other non-governmental organizations in the United States, and with local human rights NGOs in Ecuador on human rights, including civil rights and democratic governance. I also commit to engage with the Ecuadorian government, at the highest level necessary, if measures result in restricting NGOs and civil society. Continuing diplomatic engagement is crucial to ensuring Ecuador's democratic reforms reflect international standards and obligations to protect human rights.

Question. If confirmed, do you commit to meet with democratically oriented political opposition figures and parties? What steps will you take to encourage genuine political competition? Will you advocate for access and inclusivity for women, minorities and youth within political parties?

Answer. Yes. If confirmed, I commit to meet with the full range of democratic political and non-governmental organizations and figures, including democratically oriented political opposition figures and parties, and advocate for access and inclusivity for women, minorities, and youth within political parties. To encourage genuine political competition, I will advocate for full respect for freedoms of expression, including for members of the press, and peaceful assembly, as well as genuinely free and fair, electoral processes.

Question. Will you and your embassy team actively engage with Ecuador on freedom of the press and address any government efforts designed to control or undermine press freedom through legal, regulatory or other measures? Will you commit to meeting regularly with independent, local press in Ecuador?

Answer. Yes. If confirmed, I promise to engage the Ecuadorian government, at the highest levels, and civil society to promote freedom of expression, including for members of the press. I also commit to meeting regularly with independent, local press, and will encourage my embassy staff to do the same.

Question. Will you and your embassy team actively engage with civil society and government counterparts on countering disinformation and propaganda disseminated by foreign state or non-state actors in the country?

Answer. Yes. If confirmed, I will engage with civil society and government counterparts on countering disinformation and malign propaganda disseminated by foreign state or non-state actors in Ecuador, and I will ensure my embassy team does the same.

Question. Will you and your embassy teams actively engage with Ecuador on the right of labor groups to organize, including for independent trade unions?

Answer. Yes. If confirmed I will actively engage with the Ecuadorian government at the highest level on the right of members of labor groups, including independent trade unions, to organize. Ecuador's eligibility for the Generalized System of Preferences (GSP) trade program is contingent, in part, on taking steps to afford internationally recognized worker rights, including the right to organize.

Question. Will you commit to using your position, if confirmed, to defend the human rights and dignity of all people in Ecuador, no matter their sexual orientation or gender identity? What challenges do the lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender and queer (LGBTQ) people face in Ecuador? What specifically will you commit to do to help LGBTQ people in country Ecuador?

Answer. If confirmed, I commit to advance U.S. interests and values and defend the human rights and dignity of all people in Ecuador, regardless of their sexual orientation or gender identity. It is my understanding that LGBTI individuals face high levels of bias-motivated violence and discrimination, particularly in education, employment, and access to health services. If confirmed, I will engage with the Ecuador government and civil society on matters of human rights for all people, including marginalized groups. I also commit to ensuring that Mission Ecuador itself serves as a model in respecting the dignity, value, and equality of all persons regardless of sexual orientation or gender identity. I will work with the Ecuadorian government to continue to advance efforts to end violence and discrimination against all marginalized groups, including LGBTI individuals, through a variety of approaches, including programming, regular diplomatic engagement, cooperation with other diplomatic missions, including U.N. agencies, and multi-level engagement with interlocutors throughout the government.

Question. Do you agree that any targeting of or retaliation against career employees based on their perceived political beliefs, prior work on policy, or affiliation with a previous administration, is wholly inappropriate and has no place in the federal government? If confirmed, what will you do to ensure that all employees under your

leadership understand that any retaliation, blacklisting, or other prohibited personnel practices will not be tolerated?

Answer. Yes, I agree that any targeting of or retaliation against career employees based on their perceived political beliefs, prior work on policy, or affiliation with a previous administration, is wholly inappropriate and has no place in the federal government. Department employees, like all federal employees, are subject to restrictions on engaging in partisan political activity while at work and outside of work. If confirmed, I will ensure that prohibited personnel practices, including retaliation and blacklisting, will not be tolerated under my leadership and that all employees understand and are in strict compliance with federal statutes, the Hatch Act, Department policy, and federal ethics laws concerning political beliefs or previous work on policy or affiliation with a previous administration.

Question. Has anyone ever made a formal or informal complaint or allegation of sexual harassment, discrimination (e.g., racial, ethnic, religious, etc.), or inappropriate conduct against you, in a workplace or any other setting? If so, please describe the nature of the complaint or allegation, your response, and any resolution, including any settlements.

Answer. I am not aware of any such complaints.

Question. Have you ever addressed concerns or allegations of sexual harassment, discrimination (e.g., racial, ethnic, religious, etc.), or inappropriate conduct made against any employee over whom you had supervisory authority? If so, please describe the outcome and actions taken.

Answer. I do not recall an instance of such concerns against a specific employee I supervised. I have long worked to ensure a workplace free of harassment and discrimination of any kind.

RESPONSES TO ADDITIONAL QUESTIONS FOR THE RECORD
SUBMITTED TO MICHAEL FITZPATRICK BY SENATOR BENJAMIN L. CARDIN

Question. What are the most important actions you have taken in your career to date to promote human rights and democracy? What has been the impact of your actions?

Answer. The defense and human rights and democracy by the United States, and their promotion, have been constant priorities in my career, as a political officer serving repeatedly in conflict zones. Very early on, I learned that a country's human rights development and its construction of effective democratic institutions were some of the most critical ways to advance U.S. long-term interests and values abroad. I also determined that honest recognition—not just by us but also by our international partners—of the nature and extent of shortcomings is an essential precondition for the political will necessary to make the tough choices required to ensure lasting improvements. My political reporting and advocacy on these issues won Department-wide awards as both a junior-level officer in Peru and as a mid-level officer in Colombia. Most importantly, my work informed U.S. policy choices and the development and execution of U.S. bilateral efforts in difficult circumstances.

The promotion of human rights and democracy has continued to be an integral part of my own diplomatic efforts a senior officer. As Deputy Chief of Mission in Paraguay, I took specific steps to ensure that all Paraguayan power centers respected the nation's 2008 election of an opposition presidential candidate (after 61 straight years of Colorado Party rule), both as the time of the election, throughout the transition, and following the inauguration. As Deputy Chief of Mission in Peru, I helped the Peruvian government recruit, train, and deploy an innovative U.S.-supported, interagency jungle task force to pursue heavily armed narcotics traffickers, and this task force pioneered Peru's inclusion of fully-integrated judicial prosecutors to ensure all operations were conducted legally and with public accountability. While leading our Mission to the Organization of American States (OAS) and then again as Deputy Assistant Secretary, I worked closely with Venezuelan democratic forces to defend human rights and promote democratic principles and institutions in the face of sustained attacks by the illegitimate Maduro regime. These efforts, undertaken publicly and privately, at the OAS and with bilateral partners throughout the Americas, in Europe, and elsewhere, contributed significantly to the international repudiation and isolation of the Maduro regime, and laid the groundwork for a future Venezuelan transition to democracy.

Question. What are the most pressing human rights issues in Ecuador? What are the most important steps you expect to take—if confirmed—to promote human rights and democracy in Ecuador? What do you hope to accomplish through these actions?

Answer. President Lenin Moreno's reform agenda includes important steps to address human rights concerns in Ecuador. Since taking office in May 2017, Moreno has advanced participatory democracy, supported greater press freedom, and repealed several pre-existing authoritarian decrees that stifled dissent and unduly restricted freedoms of speech and association. Nevertheless, challenges remain, including a lack of independence in the judicial sector and the need to build capacity among judges and legislators. An inconsistent application of the rule of law remains another challenge, as does the need to expand the reach of effective democratic governance.; Trafficking in persons remains a serious challenge, as does discrimination against historically marginalized groups and violence against women and children, Afro-Ecuadorians, indigenous, and LGBTI persons.

If confirmed, I will use all the tools at my disposal to assist the government of Ecuador and its citizens in addressing its human rights and democratic governance challenges. In particular, I believe in the critical importance of civil society and private sector initiatives to promote government transparency and accountability to the people. The United States promotes its own interests when it supports Ecuador through professional and educational exchanges, and when it makes public statements and engages privately with a wide variety of actors, including government officials, journalists, business leaders, civil society representatives, and the international community. Such engagement deepens our bilateral relationship and helps us promote U.S. national interests in Ecuador.

Question. If confirmed, what are the potential obstacles to addressing the specific human rights issues you have identified in your previous response? What challenges will you face in Ecuador in advancing human rights, civil society and democracy in general?

Answer. The Ecuadorian government under President Moreno has shown a real commitment to addressing many human rights and democratic governance challenges. Obstacles to the challenges I mentioned earlier will require greater citizen engagement from the Ecuadorian people themselves, civil society, and the business community, to hold government accountable and urge specific reforms. If confirmed, I will encourage the Ecuadorian government to continue its efforts to improve press freedoms, build greater democratic governance and stronger institutions accountable to the Ecuadorian people, and urge consistent application of the rule of law and greater social inclusion and respect for human rights.

Question. Are you committed to meeting with human rights, civil society and other non-governmental organizations in the U.S. and with local human rights NGOs in Ecuador? If confirmed, what steps will you take to pro-actively support the Leahy Law and similar efforts, and ensure that provisions of U.S. security assistance and security cooperation activities reinforce human rights?

Answer. Yes. If confirmed, I will continue the United States' longstanding practice of closely engaging Ecuadorian civil society to ensure I remain attuned fully to the priorities of Ecuadorian citizens on human rights and democratic governance. I commit to working closely with the Ecuadorian government, civil society, and all relevant agencies of the U.S. government to ensure the wise use of every dollar of U.S. assistance, in accordance with all applicable legal requirements, including the Leahy Law.

Question. Will you and your embassy team actively engage with Ecuador to address cases of key political prisoners or persons otherwise unjustly targeted by Ecuador?

Answer. Yes. If confirmed I commit to actively engaging with the government of Ecuador to address cases of any key political prisoners or persons otherwise unjustly targeted by the Ecuadorian government, especially if they are U.S. citizens.

Question. Will you engage with Ecuador on matters of human rights, civil rights and governance as part of your bilateral mission?

Answer. If confirmed, I commit to engage the Ecuadorian government and Ecuadorian people on human rights, civil rights, and democratic governance issues as part of our Mission's priorities. Sustained U.S. diplomatic engagement is critical to ensure that Ecuador upholds its commitments to human rights, rule of law, and democratic governance.

Question. Do you commit to bring to the committee's attention (and the State Department Inspector General) any change in policy or U.S. actions that you suspect may be influenced by any of the President's business or financial interests, or the business or financial interests of any senior White House staff?

Answer. I commit to comply with all relevant federal ethics laws, regulations, and rules, and to raise concerns that I may have through appropriate channels.

Question. Do you commit to inform the committee if you have any reason to suspect that a foreign government, head of state, or foreign-controlled entity is taking any action in order to benefit any of the President's business or financial interests, or the interests of senior White House staff?

Answer. I commit to comply with all relevant federal ethics laws, regulations, and rules, and to raise concerns that I may have through appropriate channels.

Question. Do you or do any members of your immediate family have any financial interests in the Ecuador?

Answer. My investment portfolio consists of diversified mutual funds. The diversified mutual funds are exempt from the conflict of interest laws. Even with that said, I am committed to ensuring that my actions will not give rise to a conflict of interest, and I will remain vigilant with regard to my ethics obligations.

Question. Research from private industry demonstrates that, when managed well, diversity makes business teams better both in terms of creativity and in terms of productivity. What will you do to promote, mentor and support your staff that come from diverse backgrounds and underrepresented groups in the Foreign Service?

Answer. If confirmed, I will consider candidates from diverse backgrounds when seeking to fill high-level positions at the U.S. Mission, as I have done in past assignments. I am committed to promoting, mentoring, and supporting all staff members, especially those from diverse backgrounds and under-represented groups. I believe discrimination in the workplace harms both individual employees and the larger institution. I recognize that each individual employee brings unique strengths, and I will seek to foster a work environment that both reflects and draws upon the rich composition of America's citizenry.

Question. What steps will you take to ensure each of the supervisors at the Embassy are fostering an environment that is diverse and inclusive?

Answer. If confirmed, I will take steps to ensure each of the supervisors at the Embassy fosters a diverse and inclusive work environment. Doing so helps build greater unity within the Mission and allows us to support U.S. interests in Ecuador more effectively. I will communicate these priorities directly to and through Embassy supervisors, supporting greater mentoring for staff, and using employee performance reviews as avenues to encourage a diverse, inclusive, and supportive work environment.

Question. How does political corruption affect democratic governance and the rule of law?

Answer. Political corruption left unchecked, without transparency and accountability to citizens, erodes democratic governance and the rule of law, exacerbates social conflict, enables human rights abuses, and undermines public confidence in the democratic system. Over the past year, we have seen politicians and senior executives tried, convicted, and imprisoned on corruption charges, with several others currently under investigation for the embezzlement of funds, irregularities in procurement, and bribery. The country is in the midst of rebuilding its democratic institutions and capacity now because of the corrosive effects of political corruption in the past.

Question. What is your assessment of corruption trends in Ecuador and efforts to address and reduce them by the government of Ecuador?

Answer. The Ecuadorian government under President Moreno has shown a genuine commitment to addressing the widespread corruption that has long plagued Ecuador and undermined confidence in government institutions. In the last year, we have seen politicians and senior executives tried, convicted, and imprisoned on corruption charges, with several others currently under investigation for the embezzlement of funds, irregularities in procurement, and bribery.

Since taking office, President Moreno has encouraged press reporting on corruption and has supported the independence of government oversight bodies and of the judiciary. He supported the prosecution of government officials involved in the Odebrecht corruption scandal, which led to a six-year jail sentence for his former vice president, Jorge Glas. He has also taken steps to join the Open government

Partnership, a global pact that promotes transparency and accountability in government practices. Ecuador further seeks to join the Extractive Industries Transparency Initiative (EITI).

Question. If confirmed, what steps will you take to strengthen good governance and anticorruption programming in Ecuador?

Answer. If confirmed, I will take efforts to continue U.S. support of the Moreno administration in its work to strengthen democratic governance, encourage greater press freedoms, and fight corruption and impunity. I will also support U.S. assistance for effective programs that can show measurable results in helping the Moreno government accomplish these priorities and increase public transparency, strengthen judicial and legislative institutions, and encourage greater civil society participation in the political process.

Question. Aside from Venezuela, are there any other global issues where you view Ecuador as a potential U.S. partner?

Answer. The United States has clear interests in Ecuador: it has vast hydrocarbons, mining resources, and renewable energy; it has a dollarized economy; and it is strategically important as a South American transshipment point for U.S.-bound illegal drugs and precursor chemicals. The United States and Ecuador have significant opportunities for greater partnership, from pursuing greater energy security to addressing increased narcotics trafficking and dismantling transnational criminal organizations. In addition, the promotion of human rights is a priority for the Moreno administration. In the past year, we have seen an important shift in Ecuadorian voting behavior on human rights-related issues at the OAS and United Nations, including support of human rights and democratic governance in statements or votes on Nicaragua, North Korea, and Syria. The Ecuadorian government has condemned publicly the state of human rights in Nicaragua and engaged the Ortega regime to urge respect for the fundamental rights of Nicaraguans, dialogue with the opposition, and respect for democratic institutions. Ecuador will likely continue playing an important regional role on human rights, particularly through its participation in the OAS Permanent Council Working Group on Nicaragua, which has pursued a peaceful and sustainable solution to the crisis there.

Question. How can we continue to engage with the Ecuadorian government and civil society to consolidate the democratic gains that have been made over the past two years?

Answer. Continued U.S. technical assistance and training for government officials and civil society will be crucial to the Moreno administration as it implements its reform agenda and the Ecuadorian people as they support rebuilding the country's democratic institutions. The United States has a clear interest in supporting strong, stable, and sustainable democratic institutions in Ecuador as a model for other countries in the region turning away from authoritarian regimes. The State Department and USAID support civil society programs to help the government build transparency and strengthen judicial and legislative institutions. As Ecuador's political dynamics evolve and civil society becomes more vibrant, USAID and State support must remain flexible to meet new needs as they arise. Regular U.S. diplomatic engagement and high-level dialogues will likewise be critical to maintaining the momentum of Ecuador's democratic gains as will visits and increased political engagement by Members of the U.S. Congress.

Question. How can we highlight Ecuador's progress to other countries in the region?

Answer. The renewed relationship between the United States and Ecuador, demonstrated through high-level visits and increased bilateral cooperation, highlights U.S. support for Ecuador's progress and reform agenda. The United States can highlight Ecuador's progress and importance as a partner in the region by continuing to publicly express support for its democratic reforms, include Ecuador in regional initiatives, and engage Ecuador in seeking solutions to regional problems.

Question. In which areas does Ecuador still need to improve on governance and human rights?

Answer. While the Moreno administration has made significant strides on governance and human rights in the last two years, particularly in the areas of freedom of expression and association, dismantling ten years of authoritarian, corrupt, and repressive policies and rebuilding independent democratic institutions and greater press freedoms will take time. Continuing vigilance to address corruption and impunity is essential. Strengthening the professionalism and independence of the judiciary and building the capacity of the National Assembly to research and prepare leg-

islation are also necessary to help Ecuador ensure it has a strong system of checks and balances in place. In addition to these governance challenges, Ecuador continues to face alarming reports of torture and abuse by police officers and prison guards, harsh prison conditions, child labor, and marginalized populations suffering disproportionately from discrimination, violence, and social exclusion.

Question. How can we continue Ecuador's support for a return to democracy in Venezuela?

Answer. Ecuador has been a strong supporter of a return to democracy in Venezuela. The Moreno government recognized Interim President Guaid and it has taken a leading role in South America in responding to the humanitarian needs of Venezuelan refugees and migrants. It currently hosts hundreds of thousands Venezuelans who have fled their homeland—and the number is growing. The United States has committed in excess of $15 million in humanitarian assistance to help Ecuador respond to the influx of Venezuelan refugees and migrants. Ecuador has shown tremendous regional leadership on the Venezuelan migration crisis through the Quito Process, and has continued to engage with countries in the region and Europe to advance a peaceful solution to crisis in Venezuela.

Question. Do you think Ecuador would consider joining the Lima Group?

Answer. Though not a member of the Lima Group, Ecuador has participated in Lima Group meetings as an observer. Furthermore, Ecuador has proven to be a helpful interlocutor on the Venezuela crisis through its convening of regional partners in the Quito Process, focused on shared operational challenges to managing the international flow of Venezuelan migrants and refugees.

The Lima Group and Quito Process are complementary regional mechanisms to the Venezuela crisis, and the U.S. government supports both. The practical coordination elements discussed in Quito Process meetings, such as increased information sharing and migration tracking, are important for strengthening border security and protection of refugees and migrants.

NOMINATIONS

WEDNESDAY, MARCH 27, 2019

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

The committee met, pursuant to notice, at 10:09 a.m. in Room SD–419, Dirksen Senate Office Building, Hon. James E. Risch, chairman of the committee, presiding.

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

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

The CHAIRMAN. The committee will come to order.

Today we will hold a nomination hearing for three very important positions. First, we have Mr. Robert Destro to be Assistant Secretary of State for Democracy, Human Rights, and Labor. Second, we have Mr. Keith Krach to be Under Secretary of State for Economic Growth, Energy, and the Environment, as well as the following positions: United States Alternate Governor of the European Bank for Reconstruction and Development; United States Alternate Governor of the International Bank for Reconstruction and Development; and United States Alternate Governor of the Inter-American Development Bank. Our third nominee is General David Stilwell to be Assistant Secretary of State for East Asian and Pacific Affairs.

We also have some very distinguished guests with us who wish to introduce two of our nominees. So we are going to allow them to proceed with those introductions. So I am going to postpone my opening statement until we have the introductions, so they can be excused to pursue other ideas.

And so with that, I would like to introduce Senator Bill Cassidy of Louisiana and ask you to make your introduction please.

STATEMENT OF HON. BILL CASSIDY, U.S. SENATOR FROM LOUISIANA

Senator CASSIDY. Chairman Risch, Ranking Member Menendez, and members of the committee, thank you for allowing me to speak.

And I appreciate the ability or the opportunity to introduce President Trump's nominee to be the Assistant Secretary of State for Democracy, Human Rights, and Labor, Mr. Robert Destro.

Mr. Destro is currently a professor of law at the Catholic University of America here in D.C. where he also serves as Director of the university's Institute for Policy Research and Catholic Studies. He is also the founding Director of the university's Interdisciplinary Program in Law and Religion and is a distinguished fellow in the Religious Freedom Center of the Newseum Institute. He is immensely qualified. His body of work represents the principles and experience necessary to accomplish the mission and promote democracy, labor, and human rights abroad.

Robert is a graduate of the University of Miami Ohio and University of California-Berkley Law School. And he has dedicated his career to protect the rights and well-being of peoples of all faiths, ethnicities, and nationalities.

In 2007, Robert served as the primary administrator for the Interfaith Cooperation Initiative in Israel and Palestine, a USAID-funded effort to bring Christian, Jewish, and Muslim leaders together to work on practical issues important to each community. His ability to work with all parties towards a common goal is obviously an important quality for his nominated position.

In 2011, he co-founded the Iraqi-Kurdistan Religious Freedom and Cultural Mapping Project, which produced the only pre-ISIS survey of the Christian communities in the Kurdistan region.

With him today are his children Gina and Mark, brother-in-law William, and also his wife Brenda. Brenda in her own right is an accomplished and committed public servant. She was pivotal in my office working with Chris Murphy and his office to both write and pass the bipartisan Mental Health Reform Act of 2016, which was signed into law by President Obama.

It was through her that I met Robert, and with his expertise, he then aided my office in developing and passing by unanimous consent a bipartisan resolution in 2016 expressly naming the atrocities perpetrated by the Islamic State of Iraq in the Levant against religious and ethnic minorities in Iraq and Syria as war crimes, crimes against humanity, and genocide. It was through working with him that I witnessed a clear passion for human rights and freedom for all people. He continues to be actively involved with the Christian, Muslim, Yazidi and other religious communities throughout Iraq in an effort to document the ISIS genocide.

To make measured advancements in democracy anywhere on the globe, you need a willingness to understand the relationships between the political culture and social dynamics of groups in the region. Reviewing his past work, it is clear Robert Destro understands what it takes to be successful in this position.

I look forward to the committee and the Senate favorably considering his nomination.

Thank you, Chairman Risch.

The CHAIRMAN. Thank you very much, Senator Cassidy. We appreciate you taking time to come here and give us those remarks from a personal standpoint.

Mr. Destro, welcome to you.

Now we have a couple of our members from the committee that are going to introduce one of our guests today. We will start with Senator Portman, the Honorable Senator Portman from the great State of Ohio. Senator Portman?

STATEMENT OF HON. ROB PORTMAN,
U.S. SENATOR FROM OHIO

Senator PORTMAN. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

The great State of Ohio happens to have two nominees before you today. Mr. Destro is also a native of Ohio, but I am here to take the opportunity to introduce Keith Krach to be the Under Secretary of State for Economic Growth, Energy, and the Environment.

Keith is a native Ohioan, as I said, born in Lakewood, Ohio, raised in Rocky River. That is near Cleveland. His parents, Elda and John Krach, he says were the most important mentors in his life. He says his dad is the best leader that he ever knew. And for those who know Keith—and I have had the opportunity to meet him prior to his stepping up to this post—he takes after his parents, and I think that is the ultimate compliment.

You will see from his biography he is highly qualified for this position. He is a natural leader. He has got a long list of business accomplishments and successes. I think he will be the first to tell you that he would not have been able to do any of it without support of his wife Metta, who is with him today. But he has also got a few kids: Stephen; Carter; 7-year-old twins, JD, Emma. And I see the 7-year-old twins are with you today. Is that correct? Go JD and Emma. I know you are all very proud of your dad, and again, we are proud of him for stepping up to take on this public service responsibility.

The job he has been nominated for is really vital, not just to the State Department but to our country right now. As Under Secretary of State for Economic Growth, Energy, and Environment, he is going to have a really important responsibility, senior economic official at the State Department. He will be Secretary Pompeo's principal advisor on a lot of issues: international economic development, energy, agriculture, science, technology. Chairman Risch talked about some of the responsibilities of that post earlier.

And he could not be taking the post at a more important time for our country. We are strong in our economy right now. We are blessed by that, but frankly, it is a dangerous and volatile world out there, and specifically we face a lot of challenges. China continues to use unfair trade practices to undermine our economy particularly in the area of intellectual property, but beyond that. And I know you will be involved in some of those issues. Russia is trying to leverage the transit of natural gas through Europe with Nord Stream 2, which has enormous potential foreign policy implications. Europe is wrestling with Brexit and the possibilities there. We saw some news this morning about another change and the parliament taking over that issue. This has got ripple effects all over the EU and beyond.

And also, how do we capitalize on the opportunities of emerging markets throughout the world that want and need U.S. leadership? I think that is something we sometimes forget is there are so many developing countries that are looking to us to provide that leadership and perhaps a model of how free markets can work.

So there is no doubt in my mind that Keith is up to this task. He has the academic background with degrees from both Purdue and Harvard to go along with an impressive business resume,

starting out 10 years with General Motors. His current job is CEO and Chairman of the Board of DocuSign.

I am proud to introduce my fellow Ohioan today and I know he will serve the Secretary and his nation with distinction.

I urge my fellow Senators to vote in favor of his nomination here in the committee and on the floor.

Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

The CHAIRMAN. Thank you, Senator Portman.

Senator Young?

STATEMENT OF HON. TODD YOUNG, U.S. SENATOR FROM INDIANA

Senator YOUNG. Well, thank you, Mr. Chairman, Ranking Member Menendez, and members of the committee. It is an honor for me to join Senator Portman in introducing Keith Krach today.

You have heard his impressive bio from Senator Portman, but I want to use my time to talk a bit about the immense value he has added to my State of Indiana and the difference he has made in the lives of countless individuals.

His connection to Indiana is through Purdue University. He graduated from Purdue in 1979 and served on the Board of Trustees from 2007 to 2013. I asked Purdue President Mitch Daniels to describe Mr. Krach's relationship to the university, and one word stood out, "beloved." He continued. He is beloved for his commitment to students and for helping advance the university's mission in learning, discovery, and engagement. And we will be proud to see his influence on an even larger scale. It sounds really heartfelt, and having spent some time with you, Keith, I echo the sentiments.

Mr. Krach's professional achievements are impressive, and they are well documented. You have heard about some of them. He is a visionary with global experience that makes him eminently qualified to serve the President as Under Secretary of State for Economic Growth, Energy, and the Environment.

What he has chosen to do with his success demonstrates his character and devotion to causes that will leave this planet better for future generations.

As Solomon Kahn noted, Mr. Krach has empowered people to accomplish more than they had ever imagined, resulting in a profound impact on GDP per capita, international trade, and the sustainability of our planet.

Take DocuSign as an example. Not only has it been a successful company, it was named one of Glassdoor's best places to work. And DocuSign's disruptive technology has saved more than 20 billion pieces of paper and 608,000 barrels of oil.

Additionally, DocuSign IMPACT Foundation, which Mr. Krach now chairs, is a force multiplier for the charitable causes selected by DocuSign employees.

Beyond DocuSign, Mr. Krach is an advisor for City Year, founder of Children's Autistic Network, and board member for Opportunity International, which issues micro-loans worldwide.

So clearly he has a heart for service, and if that were not enough, he and his family foundation supports education, science, the arts, health care, and people in need.

So there is nothing more humbling than reading through this list of achievements for me. And I am grateful that Mr. Krach has accepted this call to serve his country. He is going to be a true asset to the State Department, to this President, and to our nation. I look forward to supporting his nomination before the committee and on the Senate floor.

Thanks so much.

The CHAIRMAN. Thank you very much, both Senator Young and Senator Portman.

Welcome to our guests.

I am going to make some very brief introductory remarks and then turn it over to the ranking member, Senator Menendez, to make some introductory remarks. And then we will turn to you for your opening statements and we will have some questions.

So with that, welcome to you and your families. Obviously, the families share in these just as much, sometimes more so than the nominees. I have experienced that myself. But we welcome all of you.

First of all, talking about the appointment of Mr. Destro for Assistant Secretary of State for Democracy, Human Rights, and Labor. At a time where democracy and human rights are challenged across the globe, it is important for this position to be filled. In particular, pervasive threats against religious freedom threaten our core values. The United States will and must continue to defend this fundamental human right. Following the United States' withdrawal from the U.N. Human Rights Council last June, I look forward to from you on how the United States plans to continue to lead on human rights issues around the world.

Next, Mr. Krach for the Under Secretary for Economic Growth, Energy, and Environment. This important position oversees a number of bureaus at the State Department, and I look forward to hearing how you plan to promote the important role that these bureaus play in advancing American economic interests overseas.

Finally, I am pleased to welcome General David Stilwell, nominated to be Assistant Secretary of State for East Asian and Pacific Affairs. General Stilwell brings a wealth of expertise in the Indo-Pacific region acquired during his more than 2 decades of service in the United States Air Force. He served in Japan, South Korea, and China, as well as on the Joint Staff and at U.S. Indo-Pacific Command. He is currently the Director of the China Strategic Focus Group at USINDOPAC Command.

And on a personal note, General, thank you for hosting me at the command. That was very instructive, and I appreciate that. Unfortunately, all my colleagues do not have the opportunity to do that, but that was a very enlightening briefing.

The Indo-Pacific region is vital to American prosperity and security, and the United States has a deep interest in supporting a free and open region. I look forward to hearing how you will advance U.S. interests in this region, especially through strengthening and expanding our alliances and partnerships. Our enduring alliances with Japan, South Korea, Australia, and New Zealand are a source of American strength. Strengthening these alliances and expanding other partnerships are key to promoting peace, security, economic development, and freedom across the region.

The challenge of China is global, but most acute in the Indo-Pacific. The Trump administration has already engaged in rebalancing bilateral relationships and pushing back on China's often coercive and intimidating actions in the region. However, more, much more, remains to be done.

We face the continued threat of North Korea's nuclear and missile programs. I remain optimistic that we can get a deal, but it is going to take time and we will need to keep up the pressure.

The Indo-Pacific and China in particular are a top priority for this committee, as we have already discussed in this committee. We look forward to particularly close coordination with you as you work to advance American interests in this important region.

Along these lines, I would like to take note of the Asia Reassurance Initiative Act, an effort led by Senators Gardner and Markey, signed into law by the President last December. This act aligns well with the priorities articulated by the administration and should be implemented.

Thanks to all for being here with us today. Thanks to your families for being here.

And, Senator Menendez, I will turn the floor over to you.

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

Senator MENENDEZ. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Welcome to the nominees and to your families as well, and thank you for your willingness to serve.

Mr. Chairman, however, before I turn to these nominees, I need to correct the record concerning statements reportedly made by President Trump yesterday afternoon in which he claimed Democrats were holding up nominations in the Senate.

Let me be clear. When the Senate Foreign Relations Committee has received qualified nominations, I have worked with efficiency and diligence to vet and advance these nominations. I have devoted my time and staff resources to ensure this because of our strong belief that the State Department and USAID and other foreign affairs agencies must be properly vetted and properly staffed.

In the last Congress, the committee reported 169 nominations. So I reject any assertion that we have not done our part to ensure that the State Department is appropriately staffed.

As the chairman knows, the committee, with my full support, has been extremely diligent in moving forward on General Abizaid's nomination to be the U.S. Ambassador to Saudi Arabia. He appeared on the very first committee nominations hearing of the 116th Congress, and I look forward to voting in favor of his nomination, as soon as the chairman puts him to a vote for the committee in a nomination process, and to a speedy confirmation.

I have also proposed to the chairman moving forward with approximately 20 more nominees based on reaching an agreement regarding other committee business, and I look forward to a response.

But I am concerned that President Trump has an inaccurate view of the nominations situation in the Senate and particularly on the Foreign Relations Committee. We cannot confirm diplomats that we do not have. All too often, the committee has received

nominations late or not at all. It took 23 months before the administration bothered to nominate General Abizaid. It took even longer, over 2 years, before the Trump administration nominated a candidate to be U.S. Ambassador to Turkey. We are now 26 months into the Trump administration, and we still lack ambassadorial nominees to critical countries like Egypt, Pakistan, and our close ally Jordan.

And when we do receive nominations, the substandard vetting at State means I have to devote significant time and resources to ensure that we are not moving nominees who have no business representing the United States of America around the world.

Now, I have been a gentleman about this. I have not gone through these nominees' backgrounds, but in fact I intend to go to the Senate floor and talk about some of the problems that these nominees have. They have problems with Me Too issues. They have legal issues. They have ethical issues. This is pretty significant for a series of these nominees.

And so while we have tried to do this internally to get to a better place, if the administration wants to make charges that are exactly not true, then we will go to the Senate floor and have full vetting about what these nominees are all about.

But to get diplomats in place, they need to be nominated in a timely fashion and vetted properly. That is the real holdup here above all.

Now let me turn to the nominees here today.

General Stilwell, thank you for your lifetime of service to our nation. It is good to see a nominee for a critical position of Assistant Secretary for East Asia and the Pacific. And it has taken a long time, nearly 2 years, but I am glad to see that we will, hopefully, soon fill this important post.

I know you have a deep knowledge and understanding of China, but as you know, the region is much more than just China. I happen to be one who holds the view that to get China right, we have to first get the region right, starting with our allies and partners. So I am also interested in hearing your views on the rest of the region and how the United States should be positioning itself.

I am sure you followed the press about the President's tweet reversing U.S. sanctions on North Korea, followed by what appears to be an effort to deny that the President had done what I thought he plainly did. I do not know what to say about such a process other than to know that dealing with Korea is deadly serious business, and I would expect you to share your views with us this morning on exactly what you believe both happened here and what we will be doing as we move forward against one of the critical national security challenges of the United States.

Mr. Destro, welcome. As you know, the Bureau of Democracy, Human Rights, and Labor leads many of the State Department's most significant efforts to advance American values, including the rule of law, democracy, individual rights, religious freedom and labor rights. So should you be confirmed as Assistant Secretary for DRL, you will lead a bureau that works to promote some of our most basic values.

Last year, I sent a bipartisan letter to the President urging him to nominate a properly qualified candidate for this position. We ad-

vocated for a qualified nominee but, most importantly, one committed to upholding the basic rights of all people, including those targeted for their work such as journalists, labor activists, and human rights defenders.

So, sir, I have to say I have deep reservations about your willingness to carry out those duties.

First, your statements and positions on a wide range of LGBT issues are extremely concerning. In the past, you have opposed the Equality Act, which would ban discrimination against LGBT Americans. You have criticized nondiscrimination protections that allow transgender people to use public accommodations. Perhaps most troubling, you have suggested that faith could be used as a pretext for discriminatory conduct against LGBT people.

Given your history on these issues, it is hard for me to imagine how you could credibly advocate for the rights and equal treatment of LGBT individuals.

When it comes to women's rights, I am not convinced that you would be a leader or the staunch defender of women's rights across the globe. In my view, reproductive rights are human rights, and the reality is that in too many countries around the world, it is still entirely acceptable for women and girls to be denied autonomy over their bodies and control of their lives.

Many others share these concerns. On March 22nd, a coalition of 46 human rights and civil society organizations wrote a joint letter opposing your nomination. And I ask, Mr. Chairman, that this coalition letter be included in the hearing record.

The CHAIRMAN. It will be.

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

Senator MENENDEZ. Last but not least, Mr. Krach, as President Trump's nominee to be the Under Secretary of State for Economic Growth, Energy, and the Environment, I hope you are ready to hit the ground running. I think you will be.

Here again, we are dealing with a position that has been vacant for more than 2 years.

I will be looking forward to hearing in our questioning some of your views on some of the issues in your portfolio, particularly one that I think has a global challenge and that ultimately also has an economic growth and environmental challenge, which is the issues of climate change. And I look forward to hearing your views on that.

Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

The CHAIRMAN. Thank you, Senator.

To respond just briefly to your remarks about the President expressing his frustration on nominees, I share the President's frustration. As you know, you and I have had lengthy discussions on these, and we want to move these as rapidly as possible. We have got about 60 pending in the committee. We had 13 on the business committee, which has been taken down, as you know.

But the criticism that he has not filled some of these—again, I think everybody would like to see them filled, but when we have got a backlog of 60, it is hard to criticize him for not doing his job when we have got 60 in front of us before we get to those.

So in any event, I look forward to working in a cooperative fashion and seeing if we cannot get them there. I appreciate your desire to go to the floor and talk about the flaws you believe in some of these appointments, which is certainly your right as Senator to do. But I think you have got the cart before the donkey. What we ought to do is get them out on the floor and debate them out on the floor, get them out of this committee, move them along, and people can vote yes or no as they see fit based upon their view of the nominee. The President certainly feels that they are qualified. I understand you have the absolute right to think otherwise and to debate otherwise, but what we should do is move the process along, get votes up or down, and let the chips fall where they may, and those that do not make it, the President can back up and refill.

So I look forward to working in a cooperative fashion with you to moving these as rapidly as possible. There is a lot of angst out there, I can tell you, for getting these positions filled.

So with that, Mr. Destro, the floor is yours.

STATEMENT OF ROBERT A. DESTRO, OF VIRGINIA, TO BE ASSISTANT SECRETARY OF STATE FOR DEMOCRACY, HUMAN RIGHTS, AND LABOR

Mr. DESTRO. Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Chairman Risch, Ranking Member Menendez, and members of the committee, thank you for giving me the opportunity today to appear before you as President Trump's nominee to be Assistant Secretary of State for Democracy, Human Rights, and Labor. I am humbled by the nomination and grateful to the President for the confidence he has placed in me. If confirmed, I will be privileged to serve our great nation as a member of Secretary Mike Pompeo's team and as the leader of the dedicated public servants who are together the Bureau of Democracy, Human Rights, and Labor.

Please allow me at the beginning to take a moment to introduce my family. With me today are my wife, Dr. Brenda Destro; my daughter, Gina Destro; my son, Mark Destro; and my brother-in-law, William Cloonan. I am grateful that they have taken time from their busy schedules to be with me here today. I would also like to acknowledge the many family members, friends, colleagues, and students, both present and former, who are watching this hearing online. I am grateful for your support too.

I would also like to acknowledge those who came before me but who are no longer with us. My parents, Anthony and Bette Destro, were first generation Americans. My dad was a policeman in Akron, Ohio for nearly 40 years, and my mom, a homemaker, who kept my sisters and me on the straight and narrow. All four of my grandparents were teenage peasants who arrived in this great country from Sicily in 1910. How amazed and proud they would be of our family. Only in America, Senator.

I can say with confidence "only in America" because the individual success stories of the members of my wonderful and distinguished extended family would not have been possible had my grandparents not settled in a social and political community that respects the basic equality and dignity of every human being. That respect is written into the text and structure of our founding docu-

ments and is reflected in the text of the many human rights conventions, to which the United States is a party.

Our nation's commitment to respect for human dignity shows up in our strong support for the rights of individuals and associations and in the demands of human rights advocates that governments and international organizations live by the command that all persons are entitled to equal protection—and I underscore "protection"—of the laws. Americans support and encourage a myriad of civil society associations both at home and abroad because we strongly believe that, as human beings, it is our God-given nature to communicate freely and to organize associations to achieve our common goals in matters of faith, education, business, politics, the arts, and the welfare of others. This is why Congress and the President have asked DRL to provide support to individuals and organizations around the globe who aspire to enjoy the blessings of liberty, democracy, and the freedom to participate, both individually and collectively in the labor market.

Respect for the inherent dignity of every human being requires no less. So over the course of my career, I have been privileged to serve both here in the United States and abroad as a civil rights lawyer, a public servant, an academic, and a policy advocate. My work on the legal and policy issues that arise at the juncture of law, religion, and culture has given me a unique perspective on nearly every aspect of the critically important responsibilities that Congress has assigned to DRL.

If confirmed as Assistant Secretary, I will use all of this experience and, consistent with the law, will draw upon the experience of the many friends and colleagues with whom I have been privileged to work to advance DRL's ongoing efforts to protect and advance the cause of human rights across the globe. DRL is filled with dedicated public servants who are committed to the cause of human rights. I will work, if confirmed—to work hard to earn not only their support, but yours as well.

Senator, I think I will leave it there. Thank you very much for the opportunity to be here today.

[The prepared statement of Mr. Destro follows:]

PREPARED STATEMENT OF ROBERT A. DESTRO

Chairman Risch, Ranking Member Menendez, and members of the committee, thank you for giving me the opportunity to appear before you today as President Trump's nominee to be Assistant Secretary of State for Democracy, Human Rights & Labor. I am humbled by the nomination, and grateful to the President for the confidence he has placed in me. If confirmed, I will be privileged to serve our great nation as a member of Secretary Mike Pompeo's team and as the leader of the dedicated public servants who, together, are the Bureau of Democracy, Human Rights and Labor (DRL).

Please allow me to take a moment to introduce my family. With me today are my wife, Dr. Brenda C. Destro, my daughter, Gina M. Destro, my son, Mark B. Destro, and my bother-in-law, William Cloonan. I am grateful that they have taken time from their busy schedules to be here with me today. I would also like to acknowledge the many family members, friends, colleagues and students, both present and former, who are watching this hearing online. I am grateful for your support.

I would also like to acknowledge those who came before me, but who are no longer with us. My parents, Anthony and Bette Destro, were "first-generation" Americans. My Dad was a policeman in Akron, Ohio for nearly forty years and my Mom, a homemaker who kept my sisters and me on the straight and narrow. All four of my grandparents were teenage peasants who arrived in this great country from Sicily around 1910. How amazed and proud they would be of our family.

Only in America!

I can say with confidence "only in America" because the individual success stories of the members of my wonderful and distinguished extended family would not have been possible without my grandparents having settled in a social and political community that respects the basic equality and dignity of each and every human being. That respect is written into the text and structure of our founding documents and is reflected in the text of the many human rights conventions to which the United States is a party.

Our Nation's commitment to respect for human dignity shows up in our strong support for the rights of individuals and associations, and in the demands of human rights advocates that governments and international organizations live by the command that all persons are entitled to equal protection of the laws. Americans support and encourage a myriad of "civil society" associations both at home and abroad because we strongly believe that, as human beings, it is our God-given nature to communicate freely and to organize associations to achieve our common goals in matters of faith, education, business, politics, the arts, and the welfare of others. This is why Congress and the President have asked DRL to provide support to individuals and organizations around the globe who aspire to enjoy the blessings of liberty, democracy, and the freedom to participate, both individually and collectively, in the labor market.

Respect for the inherent dignity of every human being requires no less. Respect for the rights and freedoms of others is the foundation of effective diplomacy and a stable foreign policy. It is the key to helping others to strengthen the institutions of their own civil society, and respect for difference and the interests of others is absolutely necessary for the protection of America's vital national security and economic interests.

Over the course of my career, I have been privileged to serve, both here in the United States and abroad, as a civil rights lawyer, a public servant, an academic and a policy advocate. My work on the legal and policy issues that arise at the juncture of law, religion and culture has given me a unique perspective on nearly every aspect of the critically important responsibilities that Congress has assigned to DRL.

If confirmed as Assistant Secretary, I will use all of this experience—and, consistent with the law, will draw upon the experience of the many friends and colleagues with whom I have been privileged to work—to advance DRL's ongoing efforts to protect and advance the cause of human rights across the globe. DRL is filled with dedicated public servants who are committed to the cause of human rights. If confirmed, I will work hard to earn not only their support and respect, but yours as well.

If confirmed as Assistant Secretary, I promise that I will provide my best advice and analysis to the Secretary and his leadership team. I will also work closely with this and other committees of the Congress to develop mutually agreeable outcome measures that will provide some assurance to you, and to America's taxpayers, that the money you entrust to DRL is being used wisely and effectively to advance our values and strategic foreign policy interests.

Thank you, Mr. Chairman, for your time and attention.

The CHAIRMAN. Thank you.

Mr. Krach?

STATEMENT OF KEITH KRACH, OF CALIFORNIA, TO BE UNDER SECRETARY OF STATE FOR ECONOMIC GROWTH, ENERGY, AND THE ENVIRONMENT; UNITED STATES ALTERNATE GOVERNOR OF THE EUROPEAN BANK FOR RECONSTRUCTION AND DEVELOPMENT; UNITED STATES ALTERNATE GOVERNOR OF THE INTERNATIONAL BANK FOR RECONSTRUCTION AND DEVELOPMENT; AND UNITED STATES ALTERNATE GOVERNOR OF THE INTER–AMERICAN DEVELOPMENT BANK

Mr. KRACH. Thank you, Chairman Risch and Ranking Member Menendez, and members of the committee. It is a true privilege to appear before you today.

I am especially grateful to Senators Portman and Young for their overly generous introduction.

I am also honored and humbled that President Trump, at the recommendation of Secretary Pompeo, has nominated me to serve as Under Secretary for Economic Growth, Energy, and the Environment, affectionately referred to as the "E."

I would like to thank all seven of the former E's and the incredible State Department team who spent their valuable time with me sharing their insights on this important role. As a global businessman, I can tell you it is a strategic asset to have the finest diplomatic corps in the world in your corner, whether it is here or abroad.

I also want to thank my family for being here today: my dear wife Metta, who is a Georgetown lawyer and serves on their board; and our five children, Monika, a marine biologist; Steve, a spacecraft design engineer at NASA; Carter, a Silicon Valley tech entrepreneur; and our 7-year-old twins, JD and Emma, whose courage, kindness, and sense of justice inspires me every day.

My story starts like that of many Americans. I grew up in small-town Ohio where my father ran a machine shop and my mother was a teacher. My dad's customers were suppliers to the big three car companies in Detroit, and his fortunes were tied to theirs.

At age 12, I became a welder in his shop and soon learned how to work all the machines. In good times, he employed as many as five workers, whom he treated as family. In bad times, I was his only employee and saw him go through the agonizing process of having to lay off his trusted team. His pain was not lost on me.

My father dreamed that I would get some college knowledge and return as an engineer to help him grow the machine shop into a big company of 10 employees. While I did become an engineer, I never went back to work with my dad, but I believe he was proud that I joined the biggest company in the world, General Motors, which he had taken to calling "Generous Motors" after they gave me a full ride to Purdue and to Harvard Business School.

10 years at GM gave me the chance of a lifetime to work at the Cadillac plant, Tech Center, New York Treasurer's Office, and pioneer the emerging field of robotics by starting a joint venture that is the largest industrial robotics manufacturer in the world today.

That taste of high-tech innovation inspired me to risk it all and move out west to become an entrepreneur. In my eyes, Silicon Valley is the West Point of capitalism, a corporate United Nations, a total meritocracy, and a place where failure is recognized as the best teacher.

My Silicon Valley journey began at Rasna where we invented mechanical design synthesis that enables engineers around the world, like my rocket scientist son, to optimize designs in real time.

I then went on to start another company called Ariba, taking it public as the world's first business-to-business e-commerce company. My ultimate aim was to create a values-based driven company that was built to last. Now, $1.7 trillion in transactions go through the Ariba network each year, more than Amazon, eBay, and Alibaba combined.

My mother taught me that a truly meaningful career is about giving back and paying it forward. So after some initial success, I worked with the biggest global insurer of micro-loans, and I would take my family along on journeys to some of the most poverty-

stricken places in the world to hand out micro-loans. I will never forget being in the slums of Mumbai after 12-year-old Carter handed an 18-year-old single mother of a crippled child a $50 loan to purchase a sewing machine. And he said, I get it now, Dad. We are not giving them fish. We are teaching them how to fish.

My children saw firsthand that economic empowerment and entrepreneurship can truly have a transformative impact on families and communities. That same concept is what makes the E mission so meaningful to me.

I also had a chance to give back to my alma mater Purdue where I had the honor of serving as chairman of the board of trustees and recruiting Governor Mitch Daniels to be our president. I am particularly proud that Mitch is now recognized by the "Wall Street Journal" as America's most innovative university president, but even more so that we have frozen tuition for the last 7 years, working to address the $1.5 trillion student debt crisis.

I eventually went back to building another company called DocuSign, and after recently completing 10 years, it is now a public company with more than 400 million users in 188 countries and, as Senator Young pointed out, along the way we saved 20 billion pieces of paper.

This Ohio boy, who began his journey welding parts and later had the good fortune of welding together billion-dollar companies, has had the blessing of a true all-American dream. But even this dreamer could have never imagined that one day he might be presented with an opportunity to give back to this great nation which has given him so much.

If confirmed, it would be the privilege of my life to serve the country and pay it forward to this next generation of Americans.

I fully appreciate the enormity and gravity of this role, especially in a time where the reality we face as a nation is of ever-increasing cyber warfare and seemingly ceaseless variations of intense, perhaps even weaponized, economic competition.

As you know, our rivals are playing the long game and they are playing for keeps, a four-dimensional game of economic, military, diplomatic, and cultural chess with little respect for human rights, intellectual property, international law, transparency, the environment, or sovereignty of nations.

In order to prevail, we must play the game better and take economic statecraft to the next level. There is no substitute for American diplomacy. I believe the team with the best people wins and that diversity of thought is the catalyst for genius.

With that aim in mind, if confirmed, I will work side by side at all levels with our preeminent diplomatic corps and with each of you in a meaningful way benefiting from your experience, your insights, and your wisdom. If confirmed, I will work tirelessly and strategically here and around the world to optimize economic growth, energy security, and the health of our planet for the sake of advancing the interests of our citizens and maximizing our national security.

Thank you so very much for your kind attention.

[The prepared statement of Mr. Krach follows:]

PREPARED STATEMENT OF KEITH J. KRACH

Good morning, Chairman Risch, Ranking Member Menendez, and distinguished Members of the committee. It is a privilege to appear before you today and I thank you all for your time and consideration, especially those of you who took time from your busy schedules to meet with me.

I am profoundly honored that President Trump, at the recommendation of Secretary Pompeo, has nominated me to serve as the Under Secretary of State for Economic Growth, Energy and the Environment, affectionately referred to simply as "E."

I am also grateful to all 7 of the former E Under Secretaries who spent their valuable time with me and shared their insights about this important role. Thank you, Joan Spero, Stu Eizenstat, Al Larson, Josette Sheeran, Reuben Jeffery, Bob Hormats and Cathy Novelli.

I would also like to thank the incredibly professional group of Civil and Foreign Service officers from the Department who helped bring me up to speed on the amazingly diverse work they do to support American interests here and abroad. I can honestly say I have never worked with a more welcoming, dedicated, intelligent, hard-working and patriotic group of individuals, and, if confirmed, it will be my great privilege to lead them.

I particularly wish to thank Manisha Singh, the Acting Under Secretary, who has been most generous with her time from the Economic and Business Affairs Bureau. Frank Fannon, our Assistant Secretary for the Energy Bureau and Marcia Bernicat, the Principal Deputy Assistant Secretary for the Bureau of Oceans and International Environmental and Scientific Affairs, were equally generous with their time.

Finally, I want to thank the E Team, in the Office of the Under Secretary who guided me throughout this complex process.

I would not have been here today without their incredible dedication, preparation and good humor. As a global business man, I can tell you, it is a strategic asset having the finest diplomatic corps in the world on our side.

I also want to thank my beloved family: My dear wife, Metta, who is a Georgetown lawyer and serves on their Board; and our five children: Monika, a marine biologist serving in the nonprofit sector; Stephen, a spacecraft design engineer at NASA's Jet Propulsion Laboratory; Carter, a Silicon Valley technology entrepreneur; and our seven-year-old twins, JD and Emma, whose courage, sense of justice and kindness inspires me every day.

My story starts like that of many Americans. I grew up in small-town Ohio, where my father ran a machine shop and my mother was a teacher. My dad's customers were suppliers to the big three car companies in Detroit, and his fortunes were tied to theirs.

In good times, he employed as many as five workers, whom he considered family. When things slowed down, I saw him go through the agonizing process of having to lay off trusted employees. His pain was not lost on me.

At the age of 12, I became a welder in his shop and soon learned how to work the machines. I cherish the memory of working at his side. In boom times, we scrambled to fill big orders. In bad times, I was his only employee.

When orders dried up, my mom courageously assured us that "everything would be okay and to buckle our chinstraps." To help make ends meet, she worked second and third jobs, including coaching the 9th grade boys wrestling team. She was and is our rock and inspiration.

My father dreamed that I would get some "college knowledge" and return as an engineer to help him grow the machine shop into a big company of 10 employees. While I did become an engineer, I never did go back to work with my dad in Ohio. But I think he was proud that I went to work for General Motors, the biggest company in the world at that time, which my dad had taken to calling "Generous Motors" after they awarded me a full scholarship to attend both Purdue University and Harvard Business School.

I will be forever grateful for my 10 years working at GM where I learned manufacturing at the Cadillac plant in Detroit, engineering at the GM Tech Center, finance at the New York Treasurer's Office and was given the opportunity to lead a pioneering robotics joint venture, which I am proud to say has grown into the largest industrial robot manufacturer in the world.

That taste of hi-tech innovation inspired me to take the risk to move out West and become an entrepreneur. In my eyes, Silicon Valley is "the West Point of Capitalism," a corporate United Nations, a total meritocracy and a place where failure is recognized as the best teacher. The objective is to reinvent everything, innovate at scale, with speed being the ultimate currency.

My Silicon Valley journey essentially began at Rasna Corporation, a software company where we invented Mechanical Design Synthesis that enables engineers around the world—like my rocket-scientist son at NASA—to optimize their designs in real time. I went on to start another company called Ariba, taking it public as the world's first business-to-business internet e-commerce company. My goal was to create a values-driven company that was "built-to-last." Last year, $1.7 trillion in transactions were processed through the Ariba network, more than Amazon, eBay and Alibaba combined.

My mother taught me that a meaningful career is truly about "giving back and paying it forward," so after some initial success I set out to give back to the organizations that helped me along the way, as well as, pay it forward to people who are less fortunate than me.

I served on the Board of the largest private issuer of micro loans in the world, Opportunity International. I saw firsthand the way that transformational leadership and the private social sector can truly change communities and help families, many living on less than a dollar a day, by spreading kindness, empowerment and hope. I would bring my three teenage children along on these journeys as we traveled to the poorest of neighborhoods, schools and orphanages in countries like Kenya, the Philippines, India, Honduras, Indonesia, Peru, Viet Nam, and Nicaragua.

They made hundreds of close connections by giving a warm hug and personally handing out numerous $50 loans. They witnessed in person the impact of what I refer to as "the 3 big E's"—the power of entrepreneurship, economic empowerment of women and education. I will never forget what my 12-year-old son said, while in the slums of Mumbai, after handing a $50 loan to an 18-year-old single mother of a crippled child so that she could purchase a sewing machine instead of a dreadful alternative. "I get it now, dad. Just like it says—we are not giving them fish, we are teaching them to fish." I knew then that by helping to transform the lives of those less fortunate, my children's as well as my life would be forever transformed.

Always near and dear to my heart is my alma mater, Purdue University, where I had the honor of serving as the chairman of the Board of Trustees and recruiting the former head of OMB and Governor of Indiana, Mitch Daniels, to be our president. At Purdue, we worked to create a model in higher education, innovating new solutions in student affordability, online learning, global reach and retraining the workforce, which I believe will have a lasting impact in reforming higher education.

I am particularly proud that Mitch is now recognized by WSJ as America's most innovative university president and equally proud that we have frozen tuition for the last 7 years, working to address the $1.5 trillion student debt crisis.

I eventually went back to be a CEO and Chairman again at a small 50-person company called DocuSign that had a simple dream of automating the signature process. After recently completing 10 years there, it is now a public company with more than 400 million users in 188 countries and recognized worldwide for its transformative impact on the way business is done. It is an example of how private industry and technological innovation can accelerate commerce securely by replacing slow, wasteful paper transactions—and along the way, we saved the planet 20 billion pieces of paper.

This Ohio boy, who began his journey welding parts and later had the good fortune of welding together billion-dollar companies, has had the blessing of a true All-American dream. But not even this dreamer could have ever imagined, that one day, he might be presented with an opportunity to give back to this great nation, which has given him so much.

If confirmed, it would be the privilege of my life to serve this country and pay it forward to the next generation of Americans.

I fully appreciate the enormity and gravity of this role, especially in a time where the reality we face as a nation is one of ever-increasing cyber warfare and seemingly ceaseless variations of intense, perhaps even weaponized, economic competition.

As you know, our rivals are playing the long game and they are playing for keeps a four-dimensional game of economic, military, diplomatic and cultural chess with little respect for human rights, intellectual property, international law, transparency, the environment, or the sovereignty of other nations.

At the end of the day, there is no substitute for American leadership. In order to prevail, we must play this game better and take economic statecraft to the next level.

My life's work has been focused on creating innovative companies and transformative social causes by building high-performance teams that challenge the status quo. I believe the team with the best people wins and that diversity of thought on any team is the catalyst for genius.

With that aim in mind, if confirmed, I will be honored to work side-by-side at all levels with our accomplished and committed diplomatic corp and with each of you in a meaningful way, benefiting from your experience, insights and wisdom.

Economic diplomacy is at an inflection point and technological advances have changed everything. Change is inevitable, and I believe it is also the most powerful and exciting word in any language. Change need not favor our adversaries.

If confirmed, my focus will be on embracing this opportunity and harnessing 3 powerful areas of competitive advantage: strengthening our partnerships with friends and allies, leveraging the innovation and resources of the private sector, and amplifying the moral high ground of our American values and enduring optimism to advance peace and prosperity for our country and for the world.

If confirmed, I will work tirelessly and strategically here and around the world to optimize economic growth, energy security and the health of our planet for the sake of advancing the interests of our citizens and maximizing our national security.

Chairman Risch, Ranking Member Menendez, and distinguished members of the committee, I thank you for the opportunity to appear before you today. I am honored and humbled that you are considering me for this important position. I welcome your comments and questions. Thankyou.

The CHAIRMAN. Thank you, Mr. Krach.

General Stilwell?

STATEMENT OF BRIGADIER GENERAL DAVID STILWELL, USAF, RETIRED, OF HAWAII, TO BE ASSISTANT SECRETARY OF STATE FOR EAST ASIAN AND PACIFIC AFFAIRS

Mr. STILWELL. Chairman Risch, Ranking Member Menendez, members of the committee, thank you for this opportunity.

I would also like to thank President Trump and Secretary Pompeo for their confidence and support.

Peaceful and mutually beneficial relations with East Asian and Pacific nations have been a U.S. strategic priority for generations. Recognizing this, as well as the region's more competitive environment, this administration has identified maintaining a free and open Indo-Pacific as a top priority. If confirmed, I am committed to realizing a vision for the region that more actively advances longstanding U.S. interests, bolsters the freedom of East Asian and Pacific nations to choose their own path, and brings them together to form a strong and prosperous region.

America's vision is built on enduring principles: freedom of the seas and skies; preserving sovereignty; resisting coercion; promoting market-based economics and free, fair, and reciprocal trade; and supporting good governance and respect for human rights. If confirmed, I will work tirelessly to advance these principles.

A network of likeminded allies and partners is key. Our strong alliance relationships with Japan, Korea, Australia, and the Philippines continue to flourish, and the recent elections in Thailand are a very positive development.

Growing relationships with strategic partners like Vietnam and Singapore will continue to benefit both sides, and the Vice President's trip to the region last fall demonstrated the importance of Pacific island countries to maintaining a free and open Indo-Pacific.

In this effort, New Zealand increasingly contributes across the broader region, while ASEAN remains the core of our regional engagement.

If confirmed, I will foster these relationships based on our shared interests and values.

On the other hand, critical security challenges remain. The most urgent is North Korea's nuclear and missile programs.

Longer-term, strategic competition with China presents a comprehensive generational challenge. We will cooperate with China where it advances our interests as in North Korean denuclearization, but we must compete vigorously where our interests diverge.

As the President's National Security Strategy makes clear, we are concerned by Beijing's use of covert, corrupt, and coercive means to interfere in the internal affairs of others. China has used various levers to undermine others' sovereignty whether through the One Belt One Road project or a militarization of the South China Sea. I appreciate this committee's work on ARIA and the BUILD Act to enable regional partners to resist these trends.

As well, Beijing must abide by its commitments related to Taiwan in accordance with the Three Communiques. If confirmed, I commit to working to show China a better way that includes respect for human rights, freedom of religion, and building trust by honoring its commitments, while insisting on reciprocity and true mutual benefit in our bilateral relationship.

In the region, there is concern about backsliding on human rights and democracy, for example, the plight of Burma's Rohingya people, Chinese government repression of Muslim minorities in Xinjiang, and the banning of political opposition in Cambodia. If confirmed, I will continue to promote openness, rule of law, and the protection of human rights and fundamental freedoms.

Despite these challenges, the region is bright with opportunity with several of the United States' largest export markets and investment destinations in some of the world's fastest growing economies. As Vice President Pence noted in Singapore in November, our trade grows with the region's middle class, topping $1.83 trillion in 2017. This helps U.S. businesses, workers, farmers who can offer valuable goods, services, and American know-how.

Mr. Chairman and members of the committee, this administration is working to ensure that East Asia and the Pacific continues to be a free, open, secure, and prosperous region. If confirmed, I am committed to working with you to ensure this trend continues.

And now for the best part, I am joined today by my wife Jan, who flew out here with me from Honolulu; our son Dane, who is here from Los Angeles; and our daughter Janae could not make it. She is in Tokyo studying accounting as an exchange student. We are celebrating our 30th anniversary today. So thanks for making this milestone the most memorable.

[Laughter.]

Mr. STILWELL. And with that, I look forward to your questions.

[The prepared statement of Mr. Stilwell follows:]

PREPARED STATEMENT OF DAVID STILWELL

Chairman Risch, Ranking Member Menendez, and members of the committee: Thank you for the opportunity to appear before you. I would also like to thank President Trump and Secretary Pompeo for their confidence and support.

Peaceful and mutually beneficial relations with East Asian and Pacific nations have been a U.S. strategic priority for generations. Recognizing this, as well as the region's more competitive environment, this administration has identified maintaining a Free and Open Indo Pacific as a top priority. If confirmed, I am committed to realizing a vision for the region that more actively advances longstanding U.S. interests, bolsters the freedom of East Asian and Pacific nations to choose their own

path, and brings them together to form a strong and prosperous core of a vibrant region.

America's vision is built on enduring principles: ensuring the freedom of the seas and skies; insulating sovereign nations from external threat or unlawful use of force or coercion; promoting market-based economics, open investment environments, and free, fair, and reciprocal trade; and supporting good governance and respect for human rights. If confirmed, I will work tirelessly to promote these principles.

Our network of like-minded allies and partners is key. Our strong alliance relationship with Japan continues to flourish as we cooperate economically, confront shared challenges, and strengthen bilateral trade ties. Our iron-clad and decades-long alliance with South Korea is now global in reach, and has only strengthened as we coordinate more closely to achieve the final, fully verified denuclearization of North Korea and welcome it into the family of nations. And Australia continues its tradition of mateship by addressing new challenges in innovative ways Australia is reaching beyond its historical areas of interest, linking up with traditional and non-traditional partners to attack common threats.

In Southeast Asia, there is great potential to further expand cooperation with treaty allies Thailand and the Philippines, as well as other partners like Vietnam and Singapore. As the Vice President's trip to the region last fall showed, we recognize the importance of Pacific Island Countries to achieving a free and open Indo-Pacific, and are committed to working with them to tackle global and regional challenges. We work closely with New Zealand on the Pacific and across the region more broadly.

The Trump administration is committed to maintaining ASEAN centrality at the core of our engagement with broader regional institutions such as the East Asia Summit, the ASEAN Regional Forum, and the Asia Pacific Economic Cooperation forum. If confirmed, I will prioritize longstanding relationships based on our shared interests and values.

While East Asian and Pacific nations have generally enjoyed peace for decades, critical security challenges remain. The most urgent is North Korea's nuclear and missile programs. If confirmed, I will work with Special Representative Biegun and others to maintain international pressure on North Korea.

As a strategic competitor, China presents a longer-term challenge. We will cooperate with China where it advances our interests, as in a denuclearized North Korea and counter-narcotics, but we must compete vigorously where our interests diverge. As the President's National Security Strategy makes clear, we are concerned by China's use of covert, corrupt, and coercive means to interfere in affairs outside its borders, as well as its use of military threats to compel other states to heed its agenda. China's actions often undermine national autonomy, whether through commercially unviable projects that indebt other countries, or militarization of the South China Sea.

China also should stop its pressure and coercion and resume dialogue with the democratically elected authorities on Taiwan. If confirmed, I commit to working to show China a better way to achieve its goal of national rejuvenation that includes respect for human rights, freedom of religion, and other nations' sovereignty, while insisting on fairness and reciprocity in our bilateral relationship. I also will make clear that the United States expects that any resolution of cross-Strait differences must be peaceful and based on the will of the people on both sides, in accordance with the Taiwan Relations Act and the Three Communiques.

Despite these significant challenges, the region is also bright with opportunity, with a quarter of the global economy, some of the world's fastest growing economies, and several of the United States' largest export markets and investment destinations. As Vice President Pence noted in Singapore in November, our trade grows with the region's middle class, topping $1.83 trillion in 2017. This helps U.S. businesses, workers, and farmers who can offer valuable goods and services to the region's growing markets.

The United States will work with East Asian and Pacific nations, as part of our broader Indo- Pacific approach, to create the conditions needed to attract greater private investment. This engagement allows us and our partners to advance an economic and trade architecture that opens markets; promotes high standards; and achieves free, fair, and reciprocal trade.

If confirmed, I will work with my colleagues in the interagency to foster private sector-led development over state-dominated approaches that impinge on national sovereignty and local autonomy. In particular, I will work to implement the numerous economic initiatives the President, the Vice President, and Secretary Pompeo have announced. These promote fair and reciprocal trade, and expand sustainable investment in infrastructure, energy, and the digital economy.

Continued prosperity and autonomy are rooted in good governance and transparency. The United States supports strong civil society, efforts to counter corruption, judicial sector and legal reform, responsible borrowing, and honest procurement and contracting practices, among other aims.

We are also concerned about backsliding on human rights and democracy, including the plight of Rohingya from Burma's Rakhine State, China's repression of Muslim minorities in Xinjiang, and banning of the political opposition in Cambodia. If confirmed, I will continue to promote openness, rule of law, and the protection of human rights and fundamental freedoms.

Finally, the United States is working with East Asian and Pacific partners to strengthen maritime security and domain awareness, humanitarian assistance and disaster response, and peacekeeping capabilities, as well as to counter transnational crime. If confirmed, I will continue to deepen these important partnerships.

Ensuring success for U.S. objectives in this region will require the full spectrum of our capabilities, including diplomatic initiatives, public diplomacy, capacity building, economic cooperation and commercial advocacy, and military cooperation. If confirmed, I am committed to using all of our tools to advance our strategic priorities and increase engagement with allies and partners.

Mr. Chairman and members of the committee, this administration is working to ensure that East Asia and the Pacific continues to be a free, open, secure, and prosperous region. If confirmed, I am committed to working together with the dedicated professionals at the Department of State and our missions in the region to ensure this continues under my tenure as Assistant Secretary of State for East Asian and Pacific Affairs.

Thank you for inviting me to testify today and I look forward to your questions.

The CHAIRMAN. Thank you, General. My wife and I have celebrated some anniversaries like that too.

[Laughter.]

The CHAIRMAN. Believe me, it will be a memorable experience over the remainder of your marriage. I promise you that.

Well, we are going to do a round of questions. But I promised Senator Isakson, who has another commitment, that he could have a minute to start with. So, Senator Isakson, I am going to yield to you.

Senator ISAKSON. Thank you very much, Mr. Chairman. I apologize to the committee in advance.

But two things. One is from a past Member that all of you know. Saxby Chambliss told me on Sunday if I did anything this week, I had to come and make sure that I said good things about Mr. Krach. So I want to say good things about Mr. Krach. I am sure his testimony is going to be as good as his introduction of himself. We are proud to have you and your family here today.

The second thing I want to do is bring up an important issue for our country, particularly for aviation and something that Mr. Krach will have to deal with and I hope deal with it successfully. But we have open skies agreements with a number of the Middle Eastern country-owned airlines who are subsidized by the sovereign wealth funds and compete with the United States by getting into our marketplace through circuitous routes and then compete for personnel and other things at an advantage to our people, which we cannot compete with. I want to make sure Mr. Krach will promise us he will do everything he can to enforce U.S. agreements with foreign airlines coming into the country with regard to open skies and be sure we have fair and equitable play for our airlines and aviation industry in America with the open skies agreements. And I hope he will take that position.

I congratulate you and you have a beautiful family.

Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

The CHAIRMAN. Thank you, Senator Isakson. I am not speaking for everyone on the committee, but I think most people on the committee share your view on the open skies agreement and some of the backward way they are going about that, which has been detrimental to airline industries in the United States. So thank you very much for your comments.

I also got the same call from Saxby.

Well, first of all, I am going to be brief and then yield to the ranking member.

I have a question, Mr. Stilwell, regarding North Korea. We all agree that it is important we maintain maximum pressure on North Korea especially after the second summit. He has indicated that it is not going to go as quickly as a lot of us would like to see although I think most of us understood we were going to have to have some patience in this regard.

Last week, the Treasury designated two Chinese shipping companies for attempted evasion of North Korea sanctions. The next day, the President tweeted saying he had ordered the withdrawal of those additional sanctions, which has created some confusion. And I wonder if you could tell us your understanding of what happened, please, and in your view what the implications are for sanctions going forward. And I am sure we are going to explore that more as questions go on. So, General Stilwell.

Mr. STILWELL. Senator, thank you for that question, for the time we got to spend in your office.

The North Korea question to me is very optimistic. Things are looking much better than they have over the last 20 years since I was first involved in 1994 in Kunsan, Korea when we discovered the Yongbyon reactor issue.

If you look at the last 2 years under the pressure campaign, we have seen no nuclear tests. We have seen no missile launches. We have seen no provocations. The slow and patient diplomacy seems to be working. There is going to be ebb and flow with that, but staying the course and letting the North Koreans know that we are not going to pull back just on their word—we have been fooled enough times. And so the steady pressure will continue to have an effect.

As for the sanctions, I am going to defer to Treasury on that one but look forward to working with you on that question.

The CHAIRMAN. Thank you, General.

Senator Menendez?

Senator MENENDEZ. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

General, to you and your wife, happy anniversary. We will try to make it as happy as possible in this process.

Let me turn to Mr. Destro. Mr. Destro, do you believe that the annual country reports on human rights are valuable?

Mr. DESTRO. I am sorry?

Senator MENENDEZ. Do you believe that the annual country reports on human rights are valuable? And would you put your microphone on, please?

Mr. DESTRO. Yes, Senator, I do. In fact—you go ahead. I am sorry.

Senator MENENDEZ. And in your view, do they contribute to advancing fundamental and universal human rights?

Mr. DESTRO. I think they do, absolutely.

Senator MENENDEZ. So in 2018, while speaking on a panel by the Family Research Council, you said that the United States have these reports and we kind of cram the way we do things here down other people's throats and they are not ready for it. What did you mean by that?

Mr. DESTRO. Well, Senator, thank you for the question and it is an important one.

I look at the human rights reports as the foundation of much of our foreign policy in human rights. I know they are relied upon.

But what I was reacting to is comments that I have had from people in other countries. So the essence of diplomacy is being engaged with everyone from good actors to bad actors, and there is frustration out there in some cases.

Senator MENENDEZ. But certainly the Universal Declaration of Human Rights of the United Nations and virtually most countries in the world have adopted—that promoting that is not, quote, cramming down people's throats.

Mr. DESTRO. No, Senator, it is not. Like I said, the human rights reports are the foundation of much of the work that—certainly what DRL does. And it is also very foundational to what most of the human rights groups do. So I am very supportive of the reports and actually would like to take them to the next step.

Senator MENENDEZ. Well, what would that mean?

Mr. DESTRO. Pardon?

Senator MENENDEZ. What would that mean?

Mr. DESTRO. I would like to see them be more interactive. I think what we are looking at now is a very good, solid report. One of the things that the wonderful staff at DRL has done with me over the past month or so is they have given me access to what the instructions are, and I think Ambassador Kozak did a wonderful job when he explained what it is that DRL is trying to do with the reports. But there are many other pieces of information that are not in the reports that I think DRL could make available to you and to the public, working across these agencies in the State Department. And that is a conversation I look forward to having, if confirmed.

Senator MENENDEZ. In March 2017 at Catholic University School of Law, there was an event titled "Trump's Refugee Order: Getting Down to Reality in the Age of Misinformation." You were a panelist at that event. Is that correct?

Mr. DESTRO. Yes, sir.

Senator MENENDEZ. In your remarks, you spoke to the U.S. refugee vetting system, and you said, quote, I would venture to say that it is probably unlikely that most of the consular officers really would know how to figure out who an ISIS person anyway because asking those kinds of questions require levels of sophistication that I have yet to see of the State Department. Close quote.

I assume that before you spoke on the panel on refugees, should you not have known that all refugees admitted in United States are also vetted by the Department of Homeland Security, the FBI, and other national security agencies?

Mr. DESTRO. Yes, Senator, I know that.

Senator MENENDEZ. So are you suggesting that the State Department employees have insufficient sophistication to perform their critical national security duties?

Mr. DESTRO. No, Senator, I am not. What I am suggesting is that in the many years that I have been dealing with the State Department—and it goes back many years now—one of the things that I have learned over time is that the State Department—many of the people in the State Department—I should not say everyone—have had a hard time dealing with the issue of religion. And that is one of the issues I would like to bring to their attention. And this question of who is a terrorist and who is not requires a lot of sophistication.

Senator MENENDEZ. There is a lot of sophistication at DHS, FBI, and other national security agencies.

But since you brought up the question of religion, as part of the Republican National Lawyers Association conference in May of 2017, you participated in a panel where you discussed the merits of the President's executive order granting broader religious freedom to individual organizations. And during the discussion, you said the following. Quote: What we need the President to do is get these agencies staffed up with people who really understand what religious liberty is all about so that we can get some training done and we do not have to deal with all the holdovers who make our lives miserable when we go deal with these executive agencies.

Now, that statement is concerning to me. I can assure you that if you are confirmed, the committee will be watching closely on how you handle personnel issues at DRL. Can you assure, because we have already had instances of political retribution at the State Department—can you assure me that you will not engage in any of these prohibited practices?

Mr. DESTRO. Senator, I am glad you asked me that question.

Of course, I will assure you of that. I mean, I have been a labor lawyer all of my career. I believe that you address people according to their abilities. And my job as the leader of the wonderful people I have met at DRL is to actually find out what they want to do in their careers and for me to help them do that. So I do not have a problem with making that assurance to you, and I will be happy to report back to you whenever you would like.

Senator MENENDEZ. I have another question, Mr. Chairman, but I will wait for the second round.

The CHAIRMAN. Senator Gardner?

Senator GARDNER. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

And, General Stilwell, happy anniversary to you. And I think Chairman Risch probably scheduled hearings on his anniversary so he could get out of paying for dinner. I do not know. Is that what you did, Mr. Chairman?

[Laughter.]

Senator GARDNER. Thank you all for your time and testimony today and welcome to your families and your commitment to public service.

General Stilwell, I am going to spend most of my time with you. Do you commit to the full implementation of the Asia Reassurance Initiative Act, or ARIA?

Mr. STILWELL. Senator, absolutely.

Senator GARDNER. Thank you. Your testimony is very much in line with what ARIA does. In fact, ARIA is basically the flesh and bones of your testimony. How would you interpret that, your testimony today, and how it fits with ARIA?

Mr. STILWELL. Senator, I see it as a proactive approach to a challenge in the Asia-Pacific that we really have not had to deal with in the past. And so the legislation is very timely. It counters a state-run and directed attempt to, in many ways, undermine state sovereignty, individual nation sovereignty, through what looks like infrastructure funding but does not. Whereas, ARIA leverages the open market private sector funding that develops and delivers all sorts of great things in the world of infrastructure, high quality infrastructure at reasonable prices.

Senator GARDNER. And I think you may be talking about the BUILD Act. So I want to make sure on the Asia Reassurance Initiative Act, though, that you are fully committed to the implementation of the Asia Reassurance Initiative Act.

Mr. STILWELL. Yes. Apologies for conflating.

Senator GARDNER. No, no. That is okay. The Obama pivot and rebalance was a good idea, but the difference between that success and failure is ARIA. ARIA means all the difference between taking the pivot and rebalance and actually turning it into something that does provide U.S. presence and leadership in the region. So thank you for your commitment.

And will you agree to appear before this committee in the future to talk about the implementation of ARIA?

Mr. STILWELL. Yes, Senator, absolutely.

Senator GARDNER. Thank you.

This is an important generational opportunity for the United States to provide leadership with all of the elements that the Asia Reassurance Initiative Act contains. Yesterday, I met with leaders from Vietnam, leaders from Thailand as well. And all of them—the first discussion we had was on ARIA and how they can partner with the United States to implement ARIA. If we miss this opportunity, the U.S. will once again have failed on leadership in Asia. We cannot afford to fail. ARIA is critical to that success.

So thank you, General Stilwell, for your commitment and your leadership.

Do you commit to the full enforcement of existing sanctions against the North Korean regime under U.S. law, including those mandated by the North Korea Sanctions and Policy Enhancement Act and ARIA as well?

Mr. STILWELL. Affirmative. I do.

Senator GARDNER. Thank you.

Do you agree that no sanctions against North Korea should be lifted?

Mr. STILWELL. Senator, I believe—yes. I believe UNSCR-approved sanctions should be enforced by all parties that signed up to that, U.S. and countries, as part of it.

Now, as far as the bilateral U.S.-North Korea sanctions, yes, we should. I believe that———

Senator GARDNER. I want to clarify the question a little bit, that no sanctions will be lifted until North Korea demonstrates a commitment to complete, verifiable, irreversible denuclearization.

Mr. STILWELL. Exactly. And so, again, we bought this horse before and appreciate the fact that long-term, patient pressure has had a very positive effect, as I mentioned earlier, and releasing that pressure too soon will get us right back where we started.

Senator GARDNER. My concern, of course, is that we are now slow boiling back to strategic patience, which failed to do anything to deter North Korea. I am concerned about sanctions that are being imposed under U.S. law, rightfully so by Treasury, and then waived by the administration for no apparent concrete step toward denuclearization. That is a very big concern. And I think if we are going to relieve maximum pressure, we are going to end up back in the failed strategic patience doctrine.

I would just point out that on March 31st, in just a few days, a report is due from the Department of State. This is a report on a strategy to address the threats posed by and the capabilities of North Korea. This report requires identifying strategies and policies to achieve peaceful denuclearization, to eliminate the threat posed by ballistic missiles, includes an assessment of potential road maps towards peaceful denuclearization. This report is due in just a few days. We had a hearing yesterday with Dr. Victor Cha, Ms. Kelly Magsamen, and both of them agreed that we are nowhere near getting this report to Congress, as required by law, signed on December 31st by the President.

So this is going to be a top priority of mine, should you be confirmed under this. So I would like to make sure that we get that.

And then also I would just submit for the record a letter that Senator Markey and I sent to Secretary Pompeo and Secretary Mnuchin that talks about the slow-down in sanctions against North Korea. Since March of 2017, there were 182 persons and entities sanctioned by—and I know this is a Treasury call, but you work very closely hand-in-glove with Treasury and we need your pressure to make sure maximum pressure is working.

But since February 23rd, only 26 new designations have occurred despite ample evidence of illicit behavior from Pyongyang and its enablers.

So, Mr. Chairman, I would ask unanimous consent that this be submitted for the record.

The CHAIRMAN. It will be.

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

Senator GARDNER. Thank you.

And just finally, the contours of the U.S. approach towards China—I will follow up on this with a question for the record. But do you commit to working with the subcommittee and the full committee on a comprehensive effort to shape a new China policy that is consistent with the National Security Strategy and the National Defense Strategy?

Mr. STILWELL. Yes, Senator. I look forward to it.

Senator GARDNER. Thank you.

And will you commit to appearing before my subcommittee or the full committee to discuss these efforts in the near future, including to provide constructive feedback on legislative efforts?

Mr. STILWELL. Affirmative.

Senator GARDNER. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

And, again, happy anniversary, General Stilwell. Thank you.

Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

The CHAIRMAN. Thank you, Senator Gardner.

Senator Kaine?

Senator KAINE. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

And congratulations to the witnesses for your nominations, for your anniversary.

I grew up working in my dad's welding shop, Mr. Krach. So I appreciate that aspect of your story as well.

Professor Destro, thank you for the opportunity to meet in the office, and I have a couple of questions for you, one that you and I talked about yesterday.

I asked this question in a confirmation hearing when Governor Brownback was nominated to be Religious Freedom Ambassador, and I was disappointed that I did not get an unequivocal answer. So I want to ask you the same question because it is so directly related to your human rights portfolio, should you be confirmed.

Some governments use religious justifications to imprison and execute LGBTQ people. Do you believe there is any circumstance under which religious freedom can justify criminalizing, imprisoning, or executing people based on their LGBTQ status?

Mr. DESTRO. No, Senator, I do not.

Senator KAINE. Professor Destro, you engaged in a lot of writing prior to the marriage equality decision of the Supreme Court, and my understanding of your position at that time was you did not believe that the Fourteenth Amendment equal protection guarantee extended to guarantee same sex individuals the right to choose their own partners and marry. There was a phrase that you used in one of the articles that you wrote in 2012 that I just want to ask you about, and it goes like this. If the structure of heteronormativity is to be dismantled, there is only one place to do it. At the ballot box.

Throughout our history on fundamental issues of human rights, people have not been able to rely purely on the ballot box to do that. Slavery did not end and may not have ended because of the ballot box. Women would not have gotten the right to vote just because of the ballot box. We would not have desegregated schools just because of the ballot box. If you ask oppressed minorities or disenfranchised people to wait for the ballot box, their human rights are often at risk because majorities view them with suspicion or do not want them to have equal treatment.

So I was curious about that formulation. You are being nominated for a position. One of the key aspects of the portfolio is the promotion of human rights and that will often be human rights for people who might be of minority religions, minority ethnicities, minority political views, people who the ballot box does not offer them a lot of comfort. One of the great aspects of our liberal democracy is we have a democracy, but we also protect the liberties of minority populations so that they are not subject to oppression by a majority.

So I was kind of curious about your suggestion in that article that dismantling heteronormativity, if people were LGBTQ and wanted to marry or wanted to be treated equally in the workplace,

they would have to wait for the ballot box to do it. And I was just wondering if you could walk me through that.

Mr. DESTRO. Sure, Senator. Thanks for the question, and thanks for taking the time with me yesterday morning to discuss these issues in some depth.

The question—DRL deals with democracy, human rights, and labor. And so sometimes the tendency is to prioritize one over the other, and people in individual countries have the right to band together to govern themselves. And so there is a constant tension between kind of the question of how you prioritize human rights. And as we know from our experience here in the United States, that once the courts take a good, solid stand, then the people follow.

So it seems to me that we have to give a good example of what we are doing, and we not only have to be fair, we have to act fair. And I certainly intend to bring that point of view not only to address Senator Menendez's concerns about the people within DRL—we are all going to be walking the walk there. And basically that is what we will be doing across the world as well.

Senator KAINE. And can you tell me that you will be an advocate for the right of LGBTQ people to be treated as equals using the U.S. as an example of a country that has moved toward that and that should be one that we would want to impress the virtues of the example on others?

Mr. DESTRO. Well, Senator, Brunei just took a slide down that road just the other day. And of course, we cannot tolerate lack of equal protection. That is why in my opening comments I underscored the word "protection." That is an active verb, "to protect." And I think we have an obligation to help people do that.

Senator KAINE. One more question quickly. Within the State Department and the division, there were instructions given to embassies and others out in the field to provide information about the status of women's access to reproductive health care in countries as part of the annual human rights report. And that was the case from 2011 I believe to 2017. The instructions that are now being given to the field do not ask them to put in information about reproductive rights. You have the ability to change that, should you be confirmed.

Would you instruct folks in the field to provide you information so that the human rights report would include information about the capacity of women around the world to access reproductive health care?

Mr. DESTRO. Senator, my understanding is that the Secretary's instructions are to follow the statutes. The statutes require that we look at questions of access to health care, access to———

Senator KAINE. I do not think you are quite answering my question. Instructions for a number of years did instruct to put in information about women's access to reproductive health care. Those instructions have now been changed to deemphasize that. If you are confirmed, you would have the ability to do this. Would you ask for that information to be reported to you from our FSOs in the field so that you can include it in the human rights report?

Mr. DESTRO. Well, like I said, Senator, not being involved in the discussion beforehand—I have seen the instructions. They are try-

ing to keep them uniform. I will do what I can within the statutes, but that is all I can commit to at this point.

Senator KAINE. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

The CHAIRMAN. Thank you.

Senator Cardin is next. I know he has got some questions. So we will be at ease for a minute while we try to get Senator Cardin in here.

Senator MENENDEZ. Mr. Chairman, while we are waiting for Senator Cardin, since we would be going to a second round after Senator Cardin, in the interest of time—Senator Cardin has arrived.

The CHAIRMAN. I was going to deny that request, Senator Menendez.

[Laughter.]

The CHAIRMAN. No offense. I wanted to make sure Senator Cardin———

Senator MENENDEZ. If I can, Mr. Chairman, to my distinguished colleague, we had it bad on our side in terms of the ordering. So we apologize.

Senator CARDIN. First, let me thank all of our nominees for their willingness to serve our country. These are challenging times. I also want to thank your families for your willingness to serve. These are challenging times for our country, and we thank you for your willingness to serve in these public positions.

General Stilwell, happy anniversary. We have all been wishing you that. We hope that you celebrate many more, and we hope that this service to your country will only encourage that relationship.

My main concern for this round of questioning is to deal with human rights issues. The East Asia and Pacific region is one that is very much of concern about what is happening on good governance and human rights. And I just really want to encourage you to make sure that these issues are front and center in the State Department because sometimes they get lost. There are so many other issues. We are dealing with nuclear proliferation. We are dealing with security issues, dealing with trade issues. But human rights are the strength of this country, and it is critical that these issues be included in all of these discussions. And you hold a key position on this.

So you mentioned China and Burma. You mentioned Cambodia. You could have mentioned also the Philippines having real challenges. And I hope that you will make America's values a principal part of your responsibility in overseeing our missions in East Asia and Pacific.

Mr. Krach, I must tell you I have listened to many statements before our committee, and yours was one of the most impressive I have heard about your history. Certainly on entrepreneurship, you bring incredible talent to this position. It just shows that learning welding skills can do you well in life. So I might go back and try to figure out how to become a welder. But congratulations on your success.

But understand that your portfolio includes energy and the environment also. And I think we all are going to be anxious to understand your commitment to U.S. leadership in dealing with the global issues, particularly on the environment. And if we do not have

time to ask today, we will get to those questions. Senator Menendez raised that in his opening statement.

But to Mr. Destro, I want to concentrate a little bit on your role because you have a principal role in human rights and good governance, on anti-corruption, the values of this country. As I pointed out to General Stilwell, a lot of times it is difficult to get these issues front and center in this country because there are so many other issues that our missions depend on and work on that they do not want to be bothered by human rights. But human rights is our strength. Good governance is our strength.

So I want to just follow up on some of the comments that you made. I did not quite understand what you meant about the State Department having a hard time dealing with religion. What did you mean by that in the response?

Mr. DESTRO. Thank you, Senator. Thanks for that question.

The Frank Wolf Religious Freedom Act requires that Foreign Service officers be trained when they go out into the field. And I have made the comment that not only do the Foreign Service officers need to be trained, but so do the lawyers at the State Department and at USAID. In the experience that I have had, especially it really came kind of full force to me when we were working on the inter-faith initiative in the Holy Land where we were trying to bring the groups together. And I have to tell you, Senator, I still have scars from people kind of———

Senator CARDIN. Do you believe that a practicing Muslim or a practicing Jew or a practicing Christian raises particular concerns?

Mr. DESTRO. No, sir. Quite the opposite. I think that we need to bring people together, and I have devoted most of my career for at least the last 16 years to doing just that.

Senator CARDIN. So one of our concerns is that faith can be used as justification for discrimination certainly against the LGBT community. We all have our religious beliefs, and I respect that. But are you committed to making sure that all people globally are protected against persecutions, whether it is under the guise of faith or under the guise that we should not be interfering in the domestic relations of other countries?

Mr. DESTRO. Absolutely, Senator.

Senator CARDIN. Can you be a little bit more definitive? Are you prepared—look, I have been on the Helsinki Commission for a long time, and we have specific provisions under the Helsinki Final Act where we can question activities in other countries. But we always get the rebuttal, why are you interfering in the domestic relations of another country? And Senator Menendez says these are basic human rights tenets that the global community has aspired to. Are you prepared to take on this battle with other countries to say, look, even though it may differ from my own personal religious beliefs, you are going to stand up to protect the rights of the LGBT community, to protect the rights against government laws and policies that persecute people because of who they are?

Mr. DESTRO. Absolutely, Senator. It is a pervasive problem all over the place. I have spent probably the last 12 years working on getting prisoners out of jail thankfully, with the help of a lot of other people. That is getting in the face of other governments, and I would not hesitate to do that for one minute.

The point I have been trying to make all along is that equal protection means protection. Every member of a community is entitled to the equal protection of the laws.

Senator CARDIN. Just one last question. So if a country has a law that would imprison someone because of being part of the LGBT community, would that be a priority for you to fight to have that law repealed?

Mr. DESTRO. Yes, Senator, as much as a priority of a country that would imprison a woman for not being with her minder or who would imprison a Christian or a Buddhist or whomever. Equal protection means exactly that.

Senator CARDIN. Thank you.

The CHAIRMAN. Senator Shaheen?

Senator SHAHEEN. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

And thank you to each of you for being willing to consider being nominated to these positions that are very critical to the country at a very important time in the world.

Mr. Destro, I am going to follow up with some questions, and if you have responded to these, I apologize for asking them again.

But if confirmed, you would be responsible for overseeing global U.S. policies for women's reproductive rights. Congress appropriated $607.5 million in fiscal year 2019 for family planning and reproductive health programs that expand access to family planning services and activities for women and girls. So if confirmed, will you implement these programs and follow congressional will in spending appropriated dollars on family planning and reproductive health?

Mr. DESTRO. Senator, yes. I mean, I will follow the government's policies. Secretary Pompeo made a very eloquent statement yesterday or the day before about the Mexico City policy. I am bound by what the Secretary and the administration does.

But the United States government is a leader in advocacy for women around the world. The human rights reports do report on violence against women. They do on coercion and all of that.

Senator SHAHEEN. I do not want to interrupt, but unfortunately, the United States has not been a leader on family planning and giving women around the world access to those services. In fact, what we have seen from some agencies over the last couple of years is a reluctance to spend the dollars that Congress has directly appropriated and directed them to spend. So it is not a surprising question.

Do you believe in the freedom of speech, and will you commit to advocating for this right in countries that impose restrictions on speech?

Mr. DESTRO. Absolutely, Senator, I will. I have been working on freedom of speech issues for my whole career.

Senator SHAHEEN. Which I appreciate. Thank you for that.

And given that answer, I would be interested in your personal take on Secretary Pompeo's announcement to expand the global gag rule even further to invoke the Siljander Amendment for the first time which, as you may know, would effectively restrain the operations of NGOs and other groups that have nothing to do with abortion services. Instead, it goes after groups that express their views on choice. Do you think it is appropriate for the United

States to restrain the speech of pro choice organizations in this way? And how can you effectively advocate for free speech if you take that position?

Mr. DESTRO. Senator, I must question the premise of your question. I mean, I do not think the United States government is inhibiting freedom of speech at all. I do believe that the Secretary spoke about this the other day, yesterday, and I will abide by his will on this issue.

Senator SHAHEEN. Well, again, just to reiterate. The Siljander Amendment would effectively restrain the operations of NGOs and other groups that have nothing to do with abortion services. And what Secretary Pompeo said, as I understand, was that he was planning to expand the global gag rule to include the Siljander Amendment which would restrain the ability of other organizations that are not providing reproductive abortion services, but that may advocate on that behalf, that it would restrain our ability—any funding from the United States to go to those organizations based on taking that advocacy position.

So I would hope that you would go back to the Department of State and that you would, if confirmed, get a clarification on what this actually means because I think it is in violation of our commitment to free speech around the world.

Mr. DESTRO. Senator, you certainly have my commitment to go back and to talk to people about how that is understood.

Senator SHAHEEN. Also, I was disappointed to see that the administration does not consider reproductive rights to be worthy of inclusion on the congressionally mandated country reports on human rights practices. And it has also significantly scaled back reports on gender-based violence.

So if confirmed, you would oversee these reports. Do you consider gender-based violence to be a human rights violation?

Mr. DESTRO. I do, Senator.

Senator SHAHEEN. And so will you commit to reporting on the prevalence of gender-based violence in these country reports?

Mr. DESTRO. Senator, again, I have not been involved in the discussions about how the reports are put together. I have seen the instructions. I do know that there has been a movement lately to try and keep the reports more compact. But my comment to Senator Menendez a little earlier about adding on top of the report, to the extent that we can do that, I would like to see us report a little bit more about current events.

Senator SHAHEEN. Well, I would certainly hope that reporting on gender-based violence would be done. Rather than an attempt to keep the report compact, it would be a recognition of a real effort to report on human rights violations that are happening across the world. That, as I understand, is the goal of this reporting. It is not to keep it short so that it is an easy read for people.

Mr. DESTRO. That is true, Senator. Thank you.

Senator SHAHEEN. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

The CHAIRMAN. Thank you.

Senator Murphy?

Senator MURPHY. I would concur with the Senator's analysis of the reason that we do these reports.

Mr. Krach, the House just passed a bill called the European Energy Security and Diversification Act by a big bipartisan majority, 391 to 24. This is a piece of legislation originally introduced here in the Senate by myself and Senator Cardin and Senator Johnson, Senator Rubio, Senator Gardner. A bunch of us on both sides of the aisle think it is really important to set up a financing vehicle that we could partner with diplomatic efforts in order to help countries, especially those on the Russian periphery, become energy independent of Russia, a way, at no cost to the American taxpayer, to find some ways to try to push back on one of the prime means of Russian leverage, which is their energy that continues to flow largely unimpeded into countries that then become reliant on not only Russia's energy source but become very intertwined with their foreign policy objectives and priorities as well.

Can you talk about the importance of the United States standing up new capacities to try to help countries around the Russian periphery become energy independent of Russia? And I would love to get your commitment to work with us on both sides of the aisle on this legislation.

Mr. KRACH. Yes, Senator. And thank you for that piece of legislation—all of Congress—because I really believe that energy security is such a vital component to national security. And a key to energy security is obviously to diversify all sources of energy. So, Senator, you have my commitment. If confirmed, I will do everything possible to utilize our Foreign Service experts and bring all forces to bear.

Senator MURPHY. And I assume you believe that the United States can do more to try to promote energy independence in and around Russia's periphery.

Mr. KRACH. Absolutely, Senator. And my goal is to improve.

Senator MURPHY. Mr. Destro, you have a difficult job ahead of you. I am sure Senator Menendez and others have framed this for you. This administration's constant embrace of brutal oppressive regimes all around the world has set back the international human rights cause by decades in my opinion.

But this position, when I think done right, is one that makes the argument that despite all of the competing priorities we have in bilateral relationships, when our President and our Secretary of State is sitting across from another world leader, that they should raise and must raise issues of human rights no matter the competing equities. There are always competing equities. And this job has been placed in the State Department in order to make sure that the human rights and democracy promotion equities are part of that equation.

The President's first trip, when he became the commander in chief, was to Saudi Arabia, a country that occupies a position of primacy with respect to those brutal and oppressive regimes around the world. We have always known of it and its practices, but we know a little bit more now given the fact that they targeted an American resident for murder and have another today that they have reportedly electrocuted.

Can you share with us what advice you are going to give this administration with respect to how we right-size our relationship with Saudi Arabia? Thus far, there have been absolutely no con-

sequences to the government of Saudi Arabia from this administration. And I imagine if there was someone strongly advocating for human rights and democracy promotion as a cornerstone of our foreign policy in the State Department, we might have had a different outcome in this administration's policy. Give us your recommendations that you will make or how you view the need to raise these issues with a Saudi regime that seems to be targeting U.S. residents for repression.

Mr. DESTRO. Senator, thank you. The behavior of the Saudi regime with respect to women and other minorities, religious minorities, leaves a lot to be desired. I will certainly be a strong advocate. My job, if confirmed as Assistant Secretary, is to do the homework for the Secretary and the President on these human rights issues.

I do know that the President has been four square and so has Secretary Pompeo with respect to holding the people responsible for the murder of Khashoggi and others to account. There have been sanctions issued against people in the Saudi regime, and I understand that the process of looking at the evidence is still ongoing. Not having my security clearance, unless and until I am confirmed, I cannot comment on where they are in that process at this point.

Senator MURPHY. We will look forward to having you back here. I think everyone, with the exception of the President, who has taken a look at the evidence available to us, has come to the conclusion that we have not sanctioned and targeted the people who were responsible for this killing, thus the need to have somebody in your position who is speaking truth to power on who was actually responsible for these crimes and who actually needs to be held accountable.

But thank you very much for your participation today.

Mr. DESTRO. Thank you, Senator.

The CHAIRMAN. Thank you.

Senator Coons?

Senator COONS. Thank you, Chairman Risch, Ranking Member Menendez, and thank you to the panel for your willingness to step forward and serve and represent our nation in important places around the world.

Mr. Krach, if I might first to you. In your testimony, you mentioned the importance of leveraging the innovation and resources of our private sector. If confirmed as Under Secretary for Economic Growth, Energy, and the Environment, you will need to advise Secretary Pompeo on his role as the chairman of the new International Development Finance Corporation created by the passage of the BUILD Act last year which could deploy up to $60 billion a year of American private capital in the developing world in a way that would allow us to compete with peer competitors like China and others who are much more active now in financing projects in the developing world that we are.

What sorts of recommendations might you make to the Secretary about the use of this new tool, about the role of the IFDC to make sure that it is not just an appealing thing to talk about but it actually has impact on the ground, makes a difference in the developing world, and reengages particularly on the continent of Africa but in other places where we, frankly, have been sadly absent in recent years as China has significantly stepped up its investments?

Mr. KRACH. Thank you, Senator. And I think that is a strategic asset for our foreign policy.

I would make a recommendation that really has three prongs to the strategy, Senator.

The first one is in terms of deploying those funds, to focus those on strategic countries where we could make the most difference.

The second would be to leverage the innovation and resources of the private sector. And when I mean private sector, I mean not just the business sector but also the educational sector and the social sector as well.

The third one would be to amplify American values. The question is how do you make American values come alive. I would start off with focusing on the power of entrepreneurship, economic empowerment of women, and also education. If confirmed, I will do everything I can, Senator.

Senator COONS. I could not agree with you more that this is a tool that allows both the deployment of capital and the financing of projects in a process that teaches about our values, more transparency, more connectivity to the legitimate development goals of our partner countries, and in ways that should help advance human rights, democracy, governance improvements.

General, if I might, happy anniversary to you and your wife. Thank you for what I suspect has been a long career of service that has not often allowed you to be together on your anniversary.

China today is attempting to rewrite the rules of international trade and is flexing its muscles broadly, economically, politically, militarily, as they continue to rise and as their economy and country continues to become more significant. And I am greatly concerned about their actions in ways that may redefine the international order for generations to come.

While there are certainly areas where we are competing and must compete with China, there are areas where we may well end up in some confrontation with China.

I am interested in your advice about specific areas where we could cooperate and where expanded cooperation with China may balance out the voices that say we are inevitably on a path towards confrontation. What are areas of cooperation you will be exploring with China in the years to come, should you be confirmed?

Mr. STILWELL. Senator, thank you for that question. That is really a good point.

Oftentimes we use the word "China" and we blanket the entire not just the government but the people and all that. I really, if confirmed, will caution people on that and maybe more specific in our language and what are the objectionable actors and activities rather than splashing because Xi Jinping is using our language to fan nationalist flames and say that the world and the U.S. is holding China—trying to keep all Chinese people down. And that is not the point.

So as far as cooperation, while I was there, I had some good interaction with Chinese veterans associations from World War II. Mr. Destro's family member spoke about Joe Stilwell in World War II and the interaction there. I had the opportunity while I was there, to meet some 95-year-old folks who fought alongside Americans. We put up a display in the Pentagon of positive cooperation

between the U.S. and China, not necessarily the communists and the nationalists, and that seemed to resonate.

So one area—and this is only because of my past experience—is to look at developing a positive interaction, not with the PLA but with the veterans especially from our cooperative period as allies in World War II.

Senator COONS. Thank you.

I have got one more question for Mr. Destro, but if I might suggest, General, I think there are ways in counterterrorism, in nonproliferation, in combating human trafficking, and combating wildlife trafficking. There are a range of areas. Peacekeeping. You know, I met my first Chinese flag rank officer in visiting a U.N. peacekeeping force in South Sudan. So I do think there are areas of potential cooperation, and I do think our narrative of the U.S. China relationship needs to include that. And I am encouraged to hear about your work with Chinese veterans. That was an aspect of it that had not occurred to me.

Mr. Destro, last, if I might. In your testimony, you noted that—and I quote—respect for the rights and freedoms of others is the foundation of effective diplomacy and a stable foreign policy. As the co-chair of the Senate Human Rights Caucus, I could not agree more. And if confirmed, I will be looking to ensure that you stay true to that belief even when difficult or uncomfortable. I know my colleagues have questioned you at length about your positions and some public statements on LGBT rights and on other issues. And I join them in concern about making sure that we step forward and continue to be a voice for human rights broadly understood.

But I want to focus on one last thing, if I might. Secretary Pompeo recently said China is in a league of its own when it comes to human rights violations. I think he was referring to the Uighur Muslims in the western most province of Xinjiang. How would you engage the international community on this issue, if confirmed to the position for which you have been nominated?

Mr. DESTRO. Well, Senator, dealing with China and the human rights issues in China, particularly in Xinjiang, is going to take every ounce of creativity that we have. The Chinese have effectively shut down the NGOs that DRL certainly has worked with. It has become fashionable in many countries to shut down the NGO sector as effectively being spies. So we are going to have to find, as General Stilwell has just point out, ways in which we can cooperate and get that human rights message to the right people. Unfortunately, in the case of China, the right person is the party chairman, and we are going to have to figure out how to get that message to him.

Senator COONS. One of the challenges you will face—and I know and admire the work of several of your predecessors, now Congressman Malinowski, Yale Law Professor Harold Koh under whom I studied at school. The work of the Bureau of Democracy, Human Rights, and Labor is to be a strong and persistent and effective and engaged voice for human rights not as one among many interests but as a principal interest of the United States. There are always security interests at the table. I think we need to work together to make sure that human rights interests, promoting a free press, promoting a free and open Internet, promoting respect for LGBT

rights, promoting respect for religious liberty. You have a very broad portfolio and one I look forward to working with you closely on to make sure we continue to advocate for human rights in all the ways it has helped advance American interests in the past.

Thank you all.

Thank you, Mr. Chairman, for your forbearance.

The CHAIRMAN. Thank you, Senator Coons.

Senator Menendez for a second round.

Senator MENENDEZ. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Mr. Destro, let me return to you. You can hear from my colleagues that we all have concerns.

Do you recognize the constitutional right to marriage for LGBT Americans, including Department of State employees———

Mr. DESTRO. Yes, Senator.

Senator MENENDEZ. Let me finish my question. And the nondiscrimination rights of LGBT citizens in other countries?

Mr. DESTRO. I do, Senator.

Senator MENENDEZ. So here is our problem. You have talked very often in response to questions about your decades of working for certain things. How do you reconcile your prior statements and long-held views on LGBT rights and women's rights with the responsibilities of the position you are seeking today? How are we to assume that you are ready and willing to fight for some of the very rights you have fought against for decades?

Mr. DESTRO. Well, Senator, thanks for the question.

Let me take you back to 1987 when a good friend, the first person I ever knew who died of AIDS—I went to see him in the hospital. I saw how he was treated. And as a result of that treatment, I brought to the United States Civil Rights Commission, of which I was a member at the time, the issue of health care discrimination against people with HIV. That was not a popular position to take at the time.

And throughout my career, I have tried to deal with everybody I have dealt with equally and to encourage their development as students, their development as employees, and to be honest, Senator, that is what I will do.

Senator MENENDEZ. Truly you must understand the hesitancy of some of us who believe this may be a nomination conversion because your statements are totally in contrast to the very mission that you are called upon, if confirmed, to lead. So I am not sure that—maybe after the hearing, I would love to have a conversation because I just do not see it. So I would like you to convince me because the history does not match up with what I hear here today.

Mr. DESTRO. Well, Senator, again, I would be more than willing to sit down with you and talk, but I think that if you actually talk to the people who I have worked with, for whom I have advocated, you will find that at least most of them would say that the charge that I am anti-LGBT is laughable.

Senator MENENDEZ. General, let me ask you. This year we celebrate the 40th anniversary of the Taiwan Relations Act. U.S. support for Taiwan's flourishing democracy, for its ability to maintain the cross-strait status quo, for its ability to have a space for autonomy have been important to us in our relationship with Taiwan.

What is your assessment of the current cross-strait situation, the pressure Beijing seems to be bringing on Taipei, seems to be doing it to various countries in the world, trying to disassociate themselves with Taiwan? What do you believe we need to do in this regard?

Mr. STILWELL. Senator, thank you for that question.

It is obvious that Beijing is trying to conclude their reunification in a way that is contrary to the agreements we made between 1972 and 1979, primarily the Three Communiques, and then subsequent.

I am not sure why the rush. I am not sure why the leadership believes that now is the time to do this. The relationship across straits was actually fairly positive in terms of trade and other things. So I cannot understand why they are doing it, but I do believe that it is our role and our responsibility to communicate very clearly to them that it is not acceptable. We are going to ask them to live up to their commitments and reinforce our position as to the peaceful settlement of this dispute through dialogue and not through force or coercion.

Senator MENENDEZ. Well, there is a strong bipartisan support here for the U.S.-Taiwan relationship based upon the Taiwan Relations Act, and I hope you will be an advocate of that in your role, if confirmed.

Mr. STILWELL. Absolutely.

Senator MENENDEZ. The administration has announced with some fanfare a new Indo-Pacific strategy. I have to admit listening to different administration officials, I am not sure exactly what it is and how it has been resourced. So could you explain, as you understand it, that strategy, and where do you think additional resources are needed and warranted?

Mr. STILWELL. Thank you, Senator, for that question.

I guess I will start off with my current boss makes a great point that most great strategies are backed into. You know what your objective is and you state very clearly what it is you are trying to accomplish, and then over time and given time, you work out the ways and the means on how you are going to get that done.

We have talked a lot about investment, economics. We have talked about ARIA, the BUILD Act. With the help of the Congress, this is one of those areas where I believe that there is no dispute. This is an area where the administration and the Congress can work together and has worked together very well over time.

If I can just focus on one thing on the strategy, we need to focus on the idea of governance. If you look at what is coming out of Beijing in the last 8 years, you know, a couple books called the "Governance of China," volumes 1 and 2, they are trying to push that governance model out, this authoritarian governance model I guess in an effort to develop likeminded allies, but having little success, which is good. But I think our job is to focus on something that we take for granted, we have taken for granted since the fall of the Soviet Union in 1991, and focus on the importance of democracies. Francis Fukuyama said in "The End of History," democracy won. We have kind of become complacent. And that is one thing, if confirmed, I would like to focus on is why democracy is important, why

free, open markets are important, and why top-down directed authoritarian rule just does not work.

Senator MENENDEZ. I appreciate that.

Lastly, Mr. Krach, let me ask you. 2019 is a significant year for the U.S. participation in the Paris Agreement because November 4th is the day when President Trump can officially initiate the formal withdrawal process. And November 4th happens to be 7 days before the start of COP25 in Santiago, Chile, which by all indications what was intended to be pursued at COP25 is very beneficial to the United States and to its industries.

Do you believe that the United States should withdraw from the Paris Agreement?

Mr. KRACH. Senator, let me put it this way. I think the climate issue is a very serious issue. I think we all want to leave and preserve the health of our planet for our children and our grandchildren.

President Trump has made the decision to withdraw.

I do believe that the health of the planet is critical for economic security and also national security. And I believe innovating in the clean tech area holds the key. And if confirmed, I will leverage my background in the area of innovation and high-tech to make sure that we mitigate greenhouse gases while protecting our national security.

Senator MENENDEZ. Well, you know, when the President announced, he said possibly we could stay in the Paris Agreement if a better deal could be reached. I have not seen efforts to achieve that. But if a better deal could be reached.

Senator Collins and I wrote Secretary Pompeo a letter several weeks ago, for which we have not received a response yet, requesting that the Secretary explain how we intend as a nation to maintain our power and influence in a process that we are walking away from. How do you think that that can be achieved?

Mr. KRACH. Senator, I think to focus on results. For example, since 2005, our GDP has grown 19 percent. Our greenhouse emissions has gone down 14 percent. So I am a businessman. I think it is to clearly focus on results. And as I mentioned in my opening statement, I really want to focus on optimizing energy security, economic growth, and the health of the planet. And I really believe that innovation holds such a great key there. So, if confirmed I know this is a passionate issue for you, Senator—I would love to constructively engage and continue this dialogue.

Senator MENENDEZ. Well, I appreciate that. And let me just say it is difficult to understand how we leverage U.S. interests, for example, in the COP25—the COP24 hearings are going to take place in Chile. The reality is business, not me. Business is widely regarded as successful and favorable towards U.S. interests. But you have to be there to be able to make the case. You have to be there in international organizations to lead the way. When we have as a nation participated, we largely get to set the standards, and when we set the standards, we get to promote American interests at the end of the day.

I hope that particularly in your unique role that has three significant buckets to it that you will be an advocate of that.

Thank you, Mr. Chairman, for the time.

The CHAIRMAN. Thank you.

Thanks to all of our nominees and your families. Again, we appreciate your willingness to stand up and do this work for your country. It will be greatly appreciated.

For the information of members, the record will remain open until the close of business on Thursday, including for members to submit questions for the record.

With that, the committee is adjourned.

[Whereupon, at 11:50 a.m., the hearing was adjourned.]

Additional Material Submitted for the Record

RESPONSES TO ADDITIONAL QUESTIONS FOR THE RECORD
SUBMITTED TO ROBERT DESTRO BY SENATOR MARCO RUBIO

Question. Do you commit to ensuring that the promotion of human rights and democracy is a central part of U.S. foreign policy?

Answer. Yes. The President's National Security Strategy is clear on the point and the Bureau of Democracy, Human Rights and Labor has a very important role in the promotion of human rights, which is in the best interest of the United States.

Question. Do you believe advocating for human rights and democracy is a U.S. national security imperative?

Answer. Yes, absolutely. President Trump has made clear that human rights are in the national interest, and his National Security Strategy (NSS) reflects a strong commitment to human rights. It states that, "Liberty, free enterprise, equal justice under the law, and the dignity of every human life are central to who we are as a people." It also makes clear that a commitment to human rights is essential to advance U.S. influence abroad, and that respect for human rights produces peace, stability and prosperity—making it integral to U.S. national security.

Question. Do you believe that the U.S. government's efforts to support emerging democracies can be more effective? If confirmed, where would you focus your efforts?

Answer. Supporting emerging democracies is essential. I would hope to work closely with the committee on that important goal.

For example, as Secretary Pompeo said: "As a friend of the Venezuelan people, we stand ready to help them even more, to help them begin the process of rebuilding their country and their economy from the destruction wrought by the criminally incompetent and illegitimate Maduro regime."

Question. If confirmed, do you commit to meeting with dissidents and their families here in the U.S. and abroad to advocate for specific human rights cases?

Answer. Yes. It is important that the U.S. stand with those who, sometimes at great risk to themselves, press their governments to protect human rights.

Question. If confirmed, do you commit to pushing for freedom of the press and placing greater emphasis on an independent media that is free of fear and intimidation from their government?

Answer. Absolutely. I will promote press freedom by engaging directly with governments to encourage reform of laws that unduly restrict freedom of expression or press freedoms, as well as raise specific cases and provide diplomatic and program support to independent media.

Question. Do you believe it is a wise investment of U.S. taxpayer dollars to support emerging democracies? Will you support critical funding to democracy promotion globally?

Answer. Yes. If confirmed, I will work for strategic investments that enable America to advance democracy worldwide.

RESPONSES TO ADDITIONAL QUESTIONS FOR THE RECORD
SUBMITTED TO ROBERT DESTRO BY SENATOR ROBERT MENENDEZ

Question. What are the most important actions you have taken in your career to date to support democracy and human rights? What has been the impact of your actions?

Answer. I have been working on civil and human rights issues for most of my career, both here in the United States and abroad. In addition to the examples I gave during my testimony, such as the pioneering work I did in the mid-1980s on discrimination against persons with HIV/AIDS, here are three (3) additional examples:

- *Release of prisoners, journalists and prisoners of conscience.* Since the early 2000s, I have been actively involved in efforts to seek the release of prisoners of conscience and journalists. Because of my work in the Middle East, I have had the privilege to work with American families whose loved ones are imprisoned, and to press the case for the release of their family members at every available opportunity. In several cases, we succeeded. Where individuals remain imprisoned or missing, I am committed to the effort to get them out for as long as it takes, and will, if confirmed, use whatever authorities I have to multiply the force of ongoing efforts. I am, as I make this report, working on four (4) such cases.
- *Human Rights.* From a policy perspective, the most important accomplishment was the drafting, field work and advocacy for the ISIS genocide resolutions: House Concurrent Resolution 75, co-sponsored by Reps. Jeff Fortenberry and Anna Eshoo (adopted 393-0); Senate Res. 340, co-sponsored by Senators Bill Cassidy and Joe Manchin (adopted by unanimous consent). Then-Secretary of State, John Kerry, responded by making a formal genocide declaration on March 17, 2016. I have remained involved in the anti-genocide effort since that time, and have used the experience to inform my ongoing efforts to prevent and document the atrocities that are continuing in many parts of the world. If confirmed, I will bring that experience, and the many committed people with whom I have worked, into a broadly-based, international effort to implement the Elie Wiesel Atrocities Prevention Act.
- *Democracy.* My experience as a Commissioner on the U.S. Commission on Civil Rights from 1983-1989, and as voting rights counsel for the Ohio Secretary of State from 2004-2006, has given me a "ground-based" understanding of the entire range of voting rights issues—from registration to the security of voting technology. My work with Christians, Muslims, Jews and other minorities in the Middle East and North Africa has given me unparalleled opportunities to discuss how to make the case for democracy and human rights in countries that do not have a democratic tradition.

Question. What issues are the most pressing challenges to democracy or democratic development around the world? These challenges might include obstacles to participatory and accountable governance and institutions, rule of law, authentic political competition, civil society, human rights and press freedom. Please be as specific as possible.

Answer. The promotion of democracy and human rights is central to our national interests and an essential element of our foreign policy. Societies that respect and defend human rights, fundamental freedoms, and the rule of law are more stable, secure, and prosperous and make stronger allies. Yet we face the challenge of anti-democratic governments working to undermine public faith in the democratic process and weaken democratic institutions, both at home and abroad. They seek to restrict the freedoms of expression, association, and assembly—essential to any functioning democracy. Political opposition, civil society activists, human rights defenders, independent media, and others face threats, harassment, intimidation, and violence from both state and non-state actors. Too often, these acts go unpunished, giving rise to a culture of impunity, which further stifles efforts by civil society to preserve and promote human rights and the rule of law.

If confirmed, I will make it clear that the United States stands firmly with like-minded governments, civil society, and other stakeholders in our shared commitment to promote, protect, and advance democratic values.

Question. What steps will you take—if confirmed—to support democracy around the world? What do you hope to accomplish through these actions? What are the potential impediments to addressing the specific obstacles you have identified?

Answer. If confirmed, you have my commitment to use a range of diplomatic tools and programming to support democracy around the world. The most powerful thing we can do to support democracy is to support democrats—those people who exist in

every society who are striving peacefully for democratic reforms. For example, I will use tools like the Magnitsky Act and the Global Magnitsky Act to deter attacks on democratic institutions or democratic activists. I will use democracy programs to help civil society. These are powerful tools, and it is important that the bureau be effective using them against forces that seek to restrict democratic institutions and activities. I hope to work closely with the committee to protect victims of abuses while increasing the space for civil society to operate.

Question. How will you utilize U.S. government assistance resources at your disposal, including the Democracy Commission Small Grants program and other sources of State Department and USAID funding, to support democracy and governance, and what will you prioritize in processes to administer such assistance?

Answer. If confirmed, I intend to utilize all resources at my disposal. In particular, I will continue to ensure that DRL programs will align with national security goals, including defeating ISIS and other terrorist groups, by addressing conditions that are conducive to the spread of these threats such as poor governance, corruption, and human rights violations and abuses. I understand that DRL's rule of law programs counter radicalization to violence caused by inability to seek redress of human rights violations and abuses, which enhances U.S. security and interests through greater stability. DRL will aid civil society to advocate for peaceful reform, more openness in repressive states, and enhanced respect for human rights. If confirmed, I will continue to prioritize protecting victims of religious discrimination globally, promoting rule of law in China, and improving the free flow of information in the DPRK. Under my leadership, DRL will continue to provide rapid responses to democratic openings and human rights crises; assert U.S. leadership by utilizing strategic partnerships with governments, the private sector, and faith-based organizations, as appropriate; oppose corruption and improve market-oriented governance, thereby fostering economic opportunities for the American people; and promote uncensored access to the Internet.

Question. If confirmed, do you commit to meet with civil society members, human rights and other non-governmental organizations in the U.S. and with local human rights NGOs, and other members of civil society when you travel abroad? What steps will you take to pro-actively address efforts to restrict or penalize NGOs and civil society via legal or regulatory measures?

Answer. Yes, if confirmed, I will meet with civil society members, human rights groups, and other non-governmental organizations in the United States, as well as during my overseas trips. The United States values the voice and opinions of civil society and has a long history of engaging leaders both inside and outside the government, a tradition I will continue. Hearing this range of views is essential in understanding country conditions, including the state of democracy and human rights, and plays a key role in informing and advancing U.S. foreign policy.

If confirmed, I will continue the Department's efforts to provide direct assistance to embattled civil society organizations around the world that are under threat or attack, in addition to empowering civil society around the world to build democratic institutions, support access to justice, create independent media, and document human rights abuses.

Question. If confirmed, do you commit to meet with democratically oriented political opposition figures and parties? What steps will you take to encourage genuine political competition? Will you advocate for access and inclusivity for women, minorities and youth within political parties?

Answer. Yes on all counts. If confirmed, I will meet with a wide range of actors who are committed peacefully to promote democratic principles and human rights within their countries. If confirmed, I will explore how U.S. government programming and advocacy can push for space for political competition, the inclusion of diverse voices and opinions, and space for civil society and citizens to exercise their fundamental freedoms. I will advocate for access and inclusivity for women, youth, and minorities in the political process.

Question. Will you actively engage with governments on freedom of the press and address any government efforts designed to control or undermine press freedom through legal, regulatory or other measures? Will you commit to meeting regularly with independent, local press when you travel abroad?

Answer. Yes to both questions. If confirmed, I will actively engage with governments on free expression and freedom for the press. I will work to advance press freedom, knowing that an informed citizenry is a fundamental requirement for free nations and people. If confirmed, I will meet regularly with independent, local press when I travel abroad.

Question. Will you actively engage with governments on the right of labor groups to organize, including for independent trade unions?

Answer. Yes. I have spent a good portion of my career as a labor lawyer and remain actively involved in advocating for whistle-blowers and other employees who face discrimination and retaliation in the workplace for reasons unrelated to their job performance. I strongly believe that the right to organize and operate labor unions is protected by the fundamental rights of speech, press, association, expression, and peaceful assembly, and that such organizations serve as foundation stones in the building of democracy. As a result, they should be at the heart of our engagement on labor, democracy and non-discrimination issues. Ensuring that U.S. trade partners respect internationally recognized worker rights and adhere to high labor standards promotes a level playing field for U.S. workers and helps create stronger trading partners for the United States. If confirmed, I will support workers' rights, including their ability to form and join the independent trade unions of their choice.

Question. Will you commit to using your position, if confirmed, to defend the human rights and dignity of all people, no matter their sexual orientation or gender identity? What challenges do the lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender and queer (LGBTQ) people face around the world? What specifically will you commit to do to help LGBTQ people?

Answer. Yes. If confirmed, I will work to defend the human rights and dignity of all people, including LGBTI individuals. LGBTI persons face serious challenges, including the criminalization of LGBTI status or conduct and bias-motivated violence and discrimination in employment housing and provision of government services.

If confirmed, I would use the full range of tools at our disposal—including bilateral and multilateral diplomatic engagement, emergency assistance to LGBTI persons and organizations at risk, and the imposition of visa restrictions and economic sanctions, as appropriate, against perpetrators of human rights violations and abuses.

Question. When discussing the annual Country Reports on Human Rights during your confirmation hearing, you said, "So, I'm very supportive of the reports and actually would like to take them to the next step..I'd like to see them be more interactive."

- What is the "next step"? How would you make the reports more interactive? Please be as specific as possible.

Answer. If confirmed, I will work with other bureaus and offices across the Department to explore digital and graphics tools that might be used by DRL in an effort to ensure that the information in the reports is as up to date, engaging and interactive as possible.

Question. Also in relation to the annual Country Report on Human Rights, during your hearing you said, ".there are many other pieces of information that are not in the reports that I think DRL could make available to you and to the public."

- What additional pieces of information do you think should be made available? Please be as specific as possible.

Answer. As I stated in my testimony, I consider the reports to be the "foundation" of DRL's reporting obligations. If confirmed, I would like to see if DRL can build upon that foundation by incorporating more graphical, visual and interactive elements that can effectively illustrate the content of the reports. I believe, for example, that additional data could be presented through interactive maps and charts that would further elaborate on and explain the patterns of abuses outlined in the reports.

Question. Many believe that the current administration has embarked on an unprecedented diminution of support for democracy and human rights around the world. Abroad, the President routinely praises dictators and congratulates autocrats on winning rigged elections. The administration's budget request would decimate foreign assistance provided to promote democracy and human rights in foreign countries.

Answer. The National Security Strategy states that, "Liberty, free enterprise, equal justice under the law, and the dignity of every human life are central to who we are as a people." It also makes clear that a commitment to human rights is essential to advance U.S. influence abroad, and that respect for human rights produces peace, stability and prosperity—making it integral to U.S. national security. If confirmed, I will use diplomacy, sanctions and other tools to press states and leaders who act contrary to human rights norms to change their behavior. I appreciate

and share the longstanding Congressional support for democracy programming, and I pledge to respond quickly and flexibly to changing needs and opportunities to advance human rights around the world. I will also, for example, use the Human Rights and Democracy Fund rapid response mechanisms to reinforce U.S. leadership in global human rights promotion, leveraging partnerships with governments, the private sector, and faith-based organizations.

Question. If confirmed, do you think the President's actions and statements are helpful or harmful to the work you will be doing to advance human rights and democracy? If harmful, how do you intend to mitigate that harm?

Answer. President Trump has been clear that promoting human dignity is key to our national security. As he said at his speech in Poland in 2017: "we value the dignity of every human life, protect the rights of every person, and share the hope of every soul to live in freedom. That is who we are. Those are the priceless ties that bind us together as a nation, as allies, and as a civilization."

Secretary Pompeo has told this committee that he is firmly committed to defend the human rights of all people and will work to strengthen democracy where it exists and promote it where it does not.

If confirmed, I will support the President's policy by raising human rights and cases with counterparts, including when I travel.

Question. Do you believe that public criticism of violations of human rights or democratic norms committed by foreign governments can advance the cause of human rights and should be a technique used by the United States in appropriate cases?

Answer. Yes.

Question. Are there any circumstances in which you believe the United States should not criticize other governments for violating human rights or democratic norms? What are the factors that you would consider in weighing that question?

Answer. I do not believe there are any circumstances in which we should ignore violations of human rights or democratic norms. At times, it may be more effective to raise our concerns in a constructive rather than a critical tone, and sometimes it may be more effective to make criticisms in private. If confirmed, I will raise human rights and democracy issues bilaterally and multilaterally, including when I travel, using the tactics I judge will be most likely in a given situation to bring about progress.

Question. Should it make a difference in deciding whether to publicly criticize a government for violating human rights or democratic norms that the nation in question is considered to be an ally of the United States?

Answer. We should hold all nations to their internationally accepted human rights standards and norms. If confirmed, I will do that. Whether we do that privately, publically, or both should be based on a calculation of which approach is most likely to bring about the change in respect for human rights we seek.

Question. Do you believe that raising concerns about human rights and democratic norms enshrined in international agreements and universally recognized documents such as the Universal Declaration of Human Rights constitutes interference in the internal affairs of another state?

Answer. No. If confirmed, I commit to you that I will continue to raise human rights cases and issues.

Question. Do you believe that publicly raising concerns about corruption or violations of rights committed by a government currently in power and seeking to remain in power constitutes interference in the internal affairs of a state?

Answer. No, I do not.

Question. What is the right balance for the United States when it comes to engaging or even partnering with deeply abusive governments?

Answer. If confirmed, it will be my job to ensure that human rights and democracy issues are always part of the discussions at the foreign policy table. I commit to you that I will raise human rights cases and issues to ensure that they are part of the engagement when we find it necessary to engage with abusive governments.

Question. In general, how do you believe the U.S. can strike the right balance between addressing national security and human rights concerns? Many Central American women, adolescent girls, and families migrate to the U.S. because of gender-based violence, inadequate accountability for perpetrators, and inadequate support for survivors in their home countries. International human rights law recog-

nizes that gender-based violence, including domestic violence, is a human rights violation. This year, the annual State Department Human Rights Report scaled back reporting on incidences of gender-based violence in many countries, including Central American countries like El Salvador, Guatemala, and Honduras where women and girls are fleeing unspeakable risks.

Answer. President Trump's National Security Strategy explicitly states that the U.S. will support efforts to advance women's equality and protect the rights of women and girls. I believe that reporting on the prevalence of violence against women and girls is one of the many ways in which the Department of State is advancing U.S. efforts to press governments to create policies and practices that protect women and girls from violence.

If confirmed, I would work to ensure that the Department of State's annual Country Reports on Human Rights Practices report on the extent of gender-based violence such as: rape and domestic violence; female genital mutilation/cutting; harmful traditional practices such as dowry-related deaths, so-called honor killings, acid attacks, and widow violence. While it is not possible to list each instance of these terrible abuses, we need to find ways to give those who utilize the HRR access to qualitative, quantitative, graphical and geographic distribution data for every country in which such information is available.

Question. Do you believe, based on your understanding of international human rights law, that gender-based violence, including domestic violence, is a human rights violation?

Answer. Yes. Gender-based violence, including domestic violence, violates and impairs or nullifies the enjoyment by women and girls of their human rights and fundamental freedoms.

President Trump's National Security Strategy explicitly states that the United States will support efforts to advance women's equality and protect the rights of women and girls.

Question. How will you ensure that the annual State Department Human Rights Report restores its prior levels of reporting on gender-based violence as a serious human rights violation afflicting millions of women around the world?

Answer. If confirmed, I will seek to ensure that the Country Reports on Human Rights Practices provide both qualitative and quantitative reporting on gender-based violence in each country report.to include rape and domestic violence, female genital mutilation/cutting; harmful traditional practices such as dowry-related deaths, so-called honor killings, acid attacks, and widow violence.I

Question. n your view, what message does a reduction in funding for democracy program, whether via NED, State or USAID send to those struggling for human rights and democracy as well as our adversaries, like China and Russia, who are seeking to disrupt the democratic world order and replace it with their authoritarian political, economic and governance model?

As Assistant Secretary, will you commit to supporting a budget that invests in DRG funding, and will you recommend that the President abandon his proposed cuts to DRG funding in future budgets?

Answer. I believe democracy programs are critical for defending national security, fostering economic opportunities for the American people, and asserting U.S. leadership and influence. I understand the FY 2020 budget request upholds U.S. commitments to key partners and allies through strategic, selective investments that enable America to retain its position as a global leader, while relying on other nations to make greater contributions toward shared objectives, including advancing democracy worldwide. If confirmed, I will look to continue support for these critical programs.

Question. How will you use the various diplomatic and development tools that DRL has at its disposal to promote the human rights of LGBT people and the need to hold violators of those rights to account?

Answer. If confirmed, I will work to protect and defend human rights for all people equally—including LGBTI individuals. I would use the full range of tools at our disposal—including bilateral and multilateral diplomatic engagement, emergency assistance to LGBTI persons and organizations at risk, and the imposition of visa restrictions and economic sanctions, as appropriate.

Question. How specifically would you seek to support reform efforts in the nearly 80 countries that still criminalize same-sex, adult relationships?

Answer. If confirmed, I will fully support long-standing U.S. efforts to advocate the de-criminalization of LGBTI status or conduct. These efforts are best led by local

LGBTI human rights defenders. I would seek and listen carefully to their advice on where and how the United States can bring its diplomatic and programmatic tools to bear. I would continue the practice of highlighting criminalization of LGBTI status or conduct in the annual Human Rights Reports and the Department's consular information. I would work with our embassies and consulates to carefully calibrate our public and private messaging, and explore opportunities to work with private industry, law enforcement, faith leaders, and other allies whose voices may have greater influence than our own. In my interactions with governments, I would make clear that human rights are universal—and that that LGBTI persons are, like everyone else, entitled to equal protection of the laws.

Question. Despite pledging to fill the job of Special Envoy for the Human Rights of LGBTI Persons almost a year ago, Secretary Pompeo has yet to do so. If confirmed, will you commit to ensuring that a Senior Foreign Service Officer is appointed promptly to that position, and to ensuring that he or she is empowered to accomplish the advocacy duties of that position?

Answer. I support the administration's plan to retain the position of Special Envoy for the Human Rights of LGBTI Persons. If confirmed, I will fully support the Department's efforts to fill the position with a qualified individual empowered to perform its mandate.

Question. Will you commit to raising issues related to discrimination against LGBTI populations directly with your foreign counterparts, at your level, rather than delegating these issues to lower levels?

Answer. Yes. If confirmed, I will personally advocate with foreign counterparts decriminalization of LGBTI status or conduct, bias-motivated violence, and discrimination such as in employment, housing and access to government services. As I said in my confirmation hearing, LGBTI individuals are entitled to the same freedoms and protections as all other human beings.

Question. Will you commit to ensure that DRL programs and engagement include transgender populations, wherever human rights reports have indicated that issues with transgender acceptance/exclusion exist?

Answer. Yes. All humans, including LGBTI individuals are entitled to respect for their human rights. Where people are subject to criminal penalties, violence or discrimination in housing, employment or the provision of government services, I would, if confirmed, use diplomacy and programming to help them end such abuses.

Question. As the Assistant Secretary of the bureau that leads U.S. efforts to protect human rights around the world, what concrete measures will you take to protect those individuals who are on the frontlines of defending human rights in Guatemala?

Answer. I support efforts to increase protections for human rights defenders and to promote their key role in a healthy democracy. If confirmed, I will support the work of Guatemalan human rights defenders. I will engage Guatemalan officials and commit DRL resources to promote respect for human rights and the rule of law to end impunity for violence against human rights defenders.

Question. Do you believe that DRL has been given adequate resources to fulfill its mission over the last decade?

Answer. Yes, and I appreciate the committee interest in the welfare of the bureau.

Question. Do you believe that there is value in DRL directly managing programmatic budgets that allow it to quickly and flexibly support human rights defenders, support and defend democracy and help accomplish other objectives?

Answer. Yes, I understand that the majority of DRL programming is implemented in repressive, authoritarian, or transitioning countries, including where the United States has no diplomatic presence. If confirmed, I will utilize the HRDF like a "venture capital fund for freedom" therefore enabling DRL to be flexible, adaptable, and responsive to complex and changing situations on the ground. I understand DRL has developed programming tools gives them the ability to respond to critical human rights and democracy issues in a matter of days. If confirmed, I will continue to expand our capacity to assist threatened human rights activists and organizations by providing them small infusions of support—to allow them to continue their work in safety. I understand such emergency assistance to human rights activists attacked or under threat includes paying the costs of temporary relocation, installation of surveillance cameras, and medical, legal, psychosocial, and other support services.

Question. Do you have any thoughts about how you might like to restructure DRL, its offices and programs?

Answer. Not at this time. If confirmed, I will seek to ensure that we are organized to most effectively advance the bilateral and multilateral work of the bureau, and to make sure that we have strong democracy programs. I appreciate the question, and if confirmed and if I determine that we could be better organized, I would look forward to discussing these issues, including with Members of Congress.

Question. Do you have any criticisms concerning DRL's past programs, activities or priorities?

Answer. No. As I said in my opening statement, if confirmed, I will be privileged to serve our great nation as a member of Secretary Pompeo's team and as the leader of the dedicated public servants who, together, are the Bureau of Democracy, Human Rights and Labor (DRL). I care very deeply about the work of the bureau, which has historically enjoyed strong bipartisan support. Also, I hope to work closely with all the members of the committee, and would be pleased to discuss any concerns the committee members may have.

Question. If so, what are those criticisms and in what way to you plan to address them?

Answer. I do not, at this time, have enough information to formulate any criticisms. If confirmed, I would be pleased to discuss any concerns raised by staff with them and with senior management of the Department, and to discuss any concerns about the Bureau or its operations that committee members may have.

Question. What do you think is the appropriate role for DRL within the Department of State? What should be the relationship between DRL and the regional bureaus?

Answer. I believe the role of the regional bureau is to synchronize all of the different aspects of our relations with the countries in their areas of responsibility. I believe the job of DRL is to ensure that human rights and democracy are always part of that mix and being given proper priority, and that DRL can do so by seeking to understand the needs and priorities of those who must implement policy at the regional and country levels. If confirmed, I will build strong working relationships with my counterparts throughout the Department of State, especially in the regional bureaus. I commit to you that I will press DRL issues diligently including by raising the issues to more senior levels when necessary.

Question. Will you be willing to state disagreements with officials within regional bureaus and embassies on issues of human rights when they arise?

Answer. I commit to you that I will, if confirmed, press DRL issues, including with regional bureaus and embassies.

Question. Will you pledge to do everything in your power to ensure that DRL has adequate resources and manpower to fulfill its many mandates, and that you will inform this committee if you feel that your efforts to strengthen DRL are being resisted by others within the administration?

Answer. Absolutely. If I am confirmed, I do hope to work very closely with the committee and commit to consult regularly.

Question. Freedom of the press is enshrined in the first amendment to the United States constitution. Freedom of expression, including through a free news media, is also enshrined in Article 19 of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights and International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights. Today, the President of the United States routinely labels members of the news media "enemies of the people." This is a term generally associated with Soviet dictators Lenin and Stalin, who applied the term to many of those executed by the communist state. Variations on the term were also used in the 20th century by Hitler and Mao. Today, dictators around the world, from Prime Minister Hun Sen in Cambodia, to President Recep Tayyip Erdogan in Turkey, to President Abdel Fattah el-Sisi in Egypt use similar language to delegitimize independent media. In these countries, journalists are routinely harassed, imprisoned, and killed.

- What are your views on the role of the fourth estate in functioning democracies?
- Do you believe that journalists are "enemies of the people"?

Answer. A free press is an essential pillar of democracy. If confirmed, I will draw attention to the cases of journalists who have been imprisoned for their work, will push for accountability for violence against journalists around the world, and will oppose legal and regulatory measures to restrict press freedom. In addition, I would

support programs to strengthen the professional capacity of independent journalists and to defend them against censorship and other such assaults on press freedom.

Question. Will you be willing, if confirmed, to stand up for freedom of expression in your dealings with foreign governments who seek to delegitimize the news media as a means to repress members of their society?

Answer. Yes. If confirmed, I will work to advance press freedom, and where countries fall short to uphold their commitments to free expression and a free press, I will push to call out those countries and encourage reforms.

Question. How do you plan to respond to critiques from foreign governments, journalists, and activists that the U.S. president does not support the notion that a free press is an essential check on government power?

Answer. As an open society, the President and political leaders on both sides of the aisle encourage people to scrutinize all information they receive and come to informed judgments. Media in the United States remains fiercely independent with multiple points of view represented. If confirmed, I will work to advance press freedom, and I will also draw attention to the cases of journalists who have been imprisoned around the world for their work, and I will push for accountability for violence against or killings of journalists around the world.

Question. Turkey leads the world in the most jailed journalists. This is not behavior we expect from a NATO partner. If confirmed, what steps will you take to address this concern?

Answer. I share your concern about Turkey's negative trajectory on rule of law, and respect for human rights and fundamental freedoms, including media freedom. U.S. officials speak out privately and publicly on issues of human rights and fundamental freedoms in Turkey. As noted in the U.S. National Security Strategy, these principles form the foundation of our most enduring alliances.

If confirmed, I will urge Turkey to respect and uphold human rights and fundamental freedoms, release all those held arbitrarily—including unjustly detained journalists, Dr. Serkan Golge, an American citizen and NASA physicist who is serving a sentence for a conviction that the Department regards as wrongful, and locally employed staff of the U.S. Mission—and support judicial independence.

Question. The Leahy Laws—one for assistance provided through the State Department and one for assistance provided through the Department of Defense—were adopted by Congress to help insure that taxpayer funded assistance provided to foreign governments by the United States is not used to facilitate gross human rights violations. Do you support these laws?

Answer. Yes. I believe that promoting democracy, human rights, and fundamental freedoms advances our national security. I believe that our most valued, dependable, and effective partner governments and security forces around the world uphold democratic values, protect the human rights of their citizens and civilians they protect, hold human rights violators accountable when necessary, and do not unduly restrict the fundamental freedoms of their people. I believe that we must continue to create and maintain strong security relationships with such partners through diplomacy, measured assistance, and frequent and ongoing cooperation. I believe that the Leahy laws are important tools that assist us in this effort, and I fully support the laws and their continued rigorous implementation by both the Department of State and Department of Defense.

Question. Do you have any criticisms of or concerns about the Leahy Laws?

Answer. I believe that the Department of State and Department of Defense should continuously seek to make improvements to the policies, procedures, and the tools that are used to implement the Leahy laws, in order to make them as effective, transparent, accountable, and efficient as possible. While I believe that we should strive for constant improvement in the Leahy law implementation programs, I fully support the letter and spirit of the Leahy laws and their continued rigorous implementation, and do not have criticisms of or concerns about the Leahy laws.

Question. Do you believe that the Leahy Laws should be changed in any way?

Answer. I believe that the improvements I will strive to implement to our Leahy law implementation programs are fully supported by the current Leahy laws. I understand the Departments are investing in new technology to carry out Leahy vetting, developing clearer guidance for Leahy law implementers throughout the world, and actively working to tackle remaining challenges in implementing the Leahy laws through policy solutions. I fully support these efforts and I believe that these efforts are further supported by the existing Leahy laws.

Question. Do you believe that DRL should be provided with sufficient resources to adequately vet the records of security force and police units intended to receive U.S. assistance and to do so in a timely fashion?

Answer. Yes, I believe that DRL should be provided with sufficient resources to adequately vet the records of security force and police units in a timely fashion. This is an important mission for the bureau. The resources needed to vet these cases are included in the annual DRL budget request for Diplomatic Programs.

Question. Do you believe that DRL has been provided with sufficient resources in recent years to accomplish the objectives set forth in the prior question?

Answer. Based on the information I currently have, yes. I understand that in addition to the amounts appropriated directly for democracy and human rights programming, regional bureaus in the Department have routinely transferred funds to DRL to support such programming in their areas of responsibility.

Question. The Leahy Laws encourage the United States government to offer assistance to foreign governments to clean up units found to be ineligible to receive assistance. Do you support these provisions?

Answer. Yes. I fully support all provisions of the Leahy laws, including the provision to seek to offer assistance to partner governments to bring security force members who have committed gross violations of human rights to justice. I understand that the Department of State and the Department of Defense have worked together to draft and publish policies and procedures to recognize when partner governments have done this, and that U.S. assistance can be provided to these remediated foreign security forces units in accordance with the Leahy laws. I fully support this process. I agree with Senator Leahy's remarks that such "Leahy diplomacy" is a highly effective way to promote respect for human rights and security force accountability throughout the world.

Question. Do you believe that the Leahy Laws interfere with legitimate and important security cooperation?

Answer. No. I am aware that sometimes inefficiencies in the nominating and vetting system have caused unnecessary complications in security cooperation, support the efforts now being made to upgrade technology, and if confirmed will look for every opportunity to make the administrative system more efficient while fully applying the law. I believe that promoting democracy, human rights, and fundamental freedoms advances our national security. I believe that our most valued, dependable, and effective partner governments and security forces around the world uphold democratic values, protect the human rights of their citizens and civilians they protect, hold human rights violators accountable when necessary, and do not unduly restrict the fundamental freedoms of their people. I believe that we must continue to create and maintain strong security relationships with such partners through diplomacy, measured assistance, and frequent and ongoing cooperation. I believe that the Leahy laws are important tools that assist the U.S. government in this effort.

Question. Do you believe that the Leahy Laws promote U.S. interests by allowing the United States to operate in conflict situations without underwriting gross human rights violations that alienate the public and create ill-will toward the U.S.?

Answer. Yes. I believe that promoting democracy, human rights, and fundamental freedoms advances our national security and is a U.S. interest. I believe that even in conflict situations, the U.S.'s most valued, dependable, and effective partner governments and security forces uphold democratic values, protect the human rights of their citizens and civilians they protect, hold human rights violators accountable when necessary, and do not unduly restrict the fundamental freedoms of their people. I believe that the U.S. must continue to seek out and create and maintain strong security relationships with such partners, in accordance with the Leahy laws.

Question. Please describe steps that you will take to enhance effective implementation of this law within the Department of State and in U.S. embassies.

Answer. I understand that in 2019, DRL plans to field a brand-new cloud-based International Vetting and Security Tracking (INVEST) system called INVESTc with upgraded software features and security protocols to make Leahy Law implementation even more effective and beneficial to U.S. national security and human rights objectives. This system should make the work of our embassies more effective. I will fully support this step to enhance the Department of State's Leahy Law implementation program.

If confirmed, I also plan to fully support DRL's work with Department of State, U.S. embassies and Department of Defense partners to encourage accountability for partner security forces. I would seek to ensure that our messaging is consistent and

that partner governments understand to the maximum extent possible what has resulted in the ineligibility of a particular unit and what steps they need to take with our support to make it eligible again. The purposes of the law are not served if our partners believe that assistance is being withheld for anything other than the commission of gross violations of human rights and the failure to take steps to bring the perpetrators to justice.

Question. Please describe the steps you would take to increase awareness of the intent of the law-helping allied governments end impunity for human rights violations.

Answer. If confirmed, I will, in my engagements with partner governments, increase their awareness of the Leahy laws and their intent, with the goal of promoting accountability for human rights violators and ending impunity for human rights violations.

I understand that in 2019, DRL plans to hold a Leahy law workshop in Washington D.C. The workshop will be attended by Leahy law practitioners from the Departments of State and Defense, as well as civil society organizations. I understand that the Department will hold panels to discuss Leahy law implementation topics that will be recorded and published to U.S. Embassies throughout the world who will be able to share them with our partner governments and security forces units and members. If confirmed, I will fully support this effort.

Question. Will you commit to briefing this committee every 6 months on the steps you have taken to increase the efficacy and implementation of Section 620M?

Answer. Yes, I fully support all efforts to improve the Department of State and Department of Defense Leahy Law implementation programs, and, if confirmed, am happy to commit to regularly brief this committee on our progress.

Question. Will you work to ensure that the Leahy Laws are faithfully implemented?

Answer. Yes, I fully support the letter and spirit of the Leahy laws and their rigorous implementation by DRL, the Department of State, and the Department of Defense. If confirmed, I will work to ensure that efforts to enhance the Department of State Leahy Law implementation programs continue to be fully resourced and are completed. I will also continue to seek to develop and implement further enhancements to the Department of State Leahy law implementation programs.

Question. If confirmed, what process will you put in place for thorough human rights vetting of munitions sales?

Answer. The Bureau of Political-Military Affairs (PM) has primary responsibility for the process of vetting munitions export license applications that are subject to the International Traffic in Arms Regulations. The Bureau of International Security and Nonproliferation Affairs (ISN) and the Bureau of Economic and Business Affairs (EB) have shared responsibility for the process within the Department of State of vetting munitions export license applications that are subject to the Export Administration Regulations and overseen by the Department of Commerce. The Conventional Arms Transfer Policy (CAT Policy; National Security Presidential Memorandum Regarding U.S. Conventional Arms Transfer Policy, April 19. 2018) directs the executive branch to continue to meet the requirements of all applicable statutes, including the Arms Export Control Act (22 U.S.C. ⧫2751) and the Foreign Assistance Act (22 U.S.C. ⧫2304), and that "in making arms transfer decisions, the executive branch shall account for" human rights and international humanitarian law alongside other considerations including the national and economic security of the United States.

DRL plays an important role in making recommendations based on human rights. If confirmed, I will commit to making sure DRL's recommendations are appropriately considered.

Question. Do you agree that any targeting of or retaliation against career employees based on their perceived political beliefs, prior work on policy, or affiliation with a previous administration, is wholly inappropriate and has no place in the federal government?

Answer. Yes. Targeting of or retaliation against career employees based on their real or perceived political beliefs, prior work on policy, or affiliation with a previous administration should not be tolerated.

Question. If confirmed, what will you do to ensure that all employees under your leadership understand that any retaliation, blacklisting, or other prohibited personnel practices will not be tolerated?

Answer. If confirmed, I will hold all employees to the highest standards of professional conduct and will reiterate to all employees under my leadership that retaliation, blacklisting, or other prohibited personnel practices will not be tolerated. I will take allegations of such practices seriously and ensure they are referred to the Department's Inspector General.

Question. Has anyone ever made a formal or informal complaint or allegation of sexual harassment, discrimination (e.g., racial, ethnic, religious, etc.), or inappropriate conduct against you, in a workplace or any other setting? If so, please describe the nature of the complaint or allegation, your response, and any resolution, including any settlements.

Answer. No. I take the issues of sexual harassment, discrimination (e.g., racial, ethnic, religious, etc.), and inappropriate conduct with the utmost seriousness and do not tolerate any types of behavior that could be considered discriminatory.

Question. Have you ever addressed concerns or allegations of sexual harassment, discrimination (e.g., racial, ethnic, religious, etc.), or inappropriate conduct made against any employee over whom you had supervisory authority? If so, please describe the outcome and actions taken.

Answer. Yes. I take the issues of sexual harassment, discrimination (e.g., racial, ethnic, religious, etc.), and inappropriate conduct with the utmost seriousness and do not tolerate any types of behavior that could be considered discriminatory. I would welcome further conversation with you on the importance of these topics and how I believe institutions and individuals can best respond to any complaints or allegations.

RESPONSES TO FOLLOW-UP QUESTIONS FOR THE RECORD
SUBMITTED TO ROBERT DESTRO BY SENATOR ROBERT MENENDEZ

Question. State Department Personnel: During your hearing, I expressed my concern over remarks you made in March 2017 regarding the sophistication of State Department employees. In response you said, ".many of the people in the State Department-I shouldn't say everyone-have had a hard time dealing with the issue of religion, and that's one of the issues I'd like to bring to their attention and this question of who is a terrorist and who isn't requires a lot of sophistication:"

- Please elaborate on what you meant by this statement.

Answer. If confirmed, I look forward to working with the individuals at the Department who advise those who serve abroad and at our borders, to ensure they are effectively and accurately applying the First Amendment and the No Religious Test Clause in our foreign and visa policies. Section 103 of the Frank R. Wolf International Religious Freedom Act, P.L. 114-281, 130 Stat. 1426, already requires that the training of all Foreign Service Officers, deputy chiefs of mission and ambassadors include "segments tailored to the particular religious demography, religious freedom conditions . in each receiving country." For a more detailed discussion of the relationship between attitudes about religious freedom and cultural awareness please see my article "Genocide, Statecraft and Domestic Geopolitics," a copy of which has been submitted for the committee's consideration.

Question. During your hearing, your referenced "equal protection of the laws" several times:

- Please explain in more detail your understanding of the equal protection to which LGBTI persons should be entitled as part of your work, and for which you will advocate, as stated at your hearing.

Answer. Like all other human beings, LGBTI individuals are entitled to the freedoms and protections enumerated in internationally accepted human rights instruments such as the Universal Declaration of Human Rights. If confirmed, I will personally advocate with foreign counterparts and work with civil society to end bias-motivated violence, criminalization of LGBTI status or conduct, and discrimination such as in employment, housing and access to government services.

Question. Arms Sales: In your response to Question 54, when you wrote that DRL's recommendations will be "appropriately considered", in what circumstances would you consider a DRL recommendation not to approve the sale to be "inappropriate?"

- If the government of a country has been credibly accused of committing gross violations of human rights, would you approve sales of defense articles that themselves would likely not be used for additional human rights violations? If so, would not that conflict with U.S. foreign policy principles to use all means

of U.S. leverage, including security assistance such as arms sales, to eliminate such abuses? What human rights abuses do you consider to be "gross violations of human rights"?

Answer. In no circumstances would I consider a DRL recommendation not to approve an arms sale to be inappropriate. If confirmed, I would seek to ensure that DRL's views are always considered in the arms sales approval process. In cases of arms sales to countries that have been credibly accused of committing gross violations of human rights but where the particular arms in question might not likely be used to commit human rights violations, if confirmed, I would seek to use all forms of leverage to advance respect for human rights. If confirmed, I would apply the definition of gross violations of human rights in 22 USC 2304(d)(1) of the Foreign Assistance Act.

RESPONSES TO ADDITIONAL QUESTIONS FOR THE RECORD
SUBMITTED TO ROBERT DESTRO BY SENATOR ROB PORTMAN

Question. Mr. Destro, if confirmed to this position will you support the Trump Administration's initiative to end the criminalization of homosexuality globally in nations where it is still illegal to be a homosexual?

Answer. Absolutely.

Question. Further, do you affirm to protect the rights of LGBTQ people worldwide and acknowledge that these people will be affirmed the same basic rights and human dignities that all people should receive?

Answer. Yes. Again, as I articulated in my statement, respect for the rights and freedoms of others is the foundation of effective diplomacy and a stable foreign policy.

RESPONSES TO ADDITIONAL QUESTIONS FOR THE RECORD
SUBMITTED TO ROBERT DESTRO BY SENATOR BENJAMIN L. CARDIN

Question. What are the most important actions you have taken in your career to date to promote human rights and democracy? What has been the impact of your actions?

Answer. I have been working on civil and human rights issues for most of my career, both here in the United States and abroad. Here are some three (3) examples:

- *Release of prisoners—journalists and prisoners of conscience.* Since the early 2000s, I have been actively involved in efforts to seek the release of prisoners of conscience and journalists. Because of my work in the Middle East, I have had the privilege to work with American families whose loved ones are imprisoned, and to press the case for the release of their family members at every available opportunity. In several cases, we succeeded. Where individuals remain imprisoned or missing, I am committed to the effort to get them out for as long as it takes, and will, if confirmed, use whatever authorities I have to multiply the force of ongoing efforts. I am, as I make this report, working on four (4) such cases.
- *Human Rights.* From a policy perspective, the most important accomplishment was the drafting, field work and advocacy for the ISIS genocide resolutions: House Concurrent Resolution 75, co-sponsored by Reps. Jeff Fortenberry and Anna Eshoo (adopted 393-0); Senate Res. 340, co-sponsored by Senators Bill Cassidy and Joe Manchin (adopted by unanimous consent). Then-Secretary of State, John Kerry, responded by making a formal genocide declaration on March 17, 2016. I have remained involved in the anti-genocide effort since that time, and have used the experience to inform my ongoing efforts to prevent and document the atrocities that are continuing in many parts of the world. If confirmed, I will bring that experience, and the many committed people with whom I have worked, into a broadly-based, international effort to implement the Elie Wiesel Atrocities Prevention Act.
- *Democracy.* My experience as a Commissioner on the U.S. Commission on Civil Rights from 1983-1989, and as voting rights counsel for the Ohio Secretary of State from 2004-2006, has given me a "ground-based" understanding of the entire range of voting rights issues—from registration to the security of voting technology. My work with Christians, Muslims, Jews and other minorities in

the Middle East and North Africa has given me unparalleled opportunities to discuss how to make the case for democracy and human rights in countries that do not have a democratic tradition.

Question. International human rights law recognizes that gender-based violence, including domestic violence, is a human rights violation. This year, the annual State Department Human Rights Report scaled back reporting on incidences of gender-based violence in many countries, including Central American countries like El Salvador, Guatemala, and Honduras where women and girls are fleeing unspeakable risks. Do you believe, based on your understanding of international human rights law, that gender-based violence, including domestic violence, is a human rights violation? How will you ensure that the annual State Department Human Rights Report restores its prior levels of reporting on gender-based violence as a serious human rights violation afflicting millions of women around the world?

Answer. President Trump's National Security Strategy explicitly states that the United States will support efforts to advance women's equality and protect the rights of women and girls. I believe that reporting on the prevalence of violence against women and girls is one of the many ways in which the Department of State is advancing U.S. efforts to press governments to create policies and practices that protect women and girls from violence.

If confirmed, I would work to ensure that the Department of State's annual Country Reports on Human Rights Practices report on the extent of gender-based violence such as: rape and domestic violence; female genital mutilation/cutting; harmful traditional practices such as dowry-related deaths, so-called honor killings, acid attacks, and widow violence. While it is not possible to list each instance of these terrible abuses, we need to find a way to give both a qualitative and quantitative description of them for every country in the world.

Question. The report also removed reporting on women's rights issues broadly defined as reproductive rights. This term was adopted by states in a consensus document at the International Conference on Population and Development in 1994, but it was a recognition that reproductive rights are rights already recognized by international law. Will you restore the annual State Department Human Rights Report to its prior levels of reporting on reproductive rights? If not, why not? If yes, what specific steps will you take to ensure this mandate is followed by all U.S. embassies?

Answer. U.S. law requires that we report on "wherever applicable, practices regarding coercion in population control, including coerced abortion and involuntary sterilization." The Cairo Program of Action and the Beijing Platform for Action provide for the recognition of the basic right of all couples and individuals to decide freely and responsibly the number, spacing and timing of their children and to have the information and means to do so, and the right to attain the highest standard of sexual and reproductive health. It also includes their right to make decisions concerning reproduction free of discrimination, coercion and violence, as expressed in human rights documents.

If confirmed, I will report facts relevant to these provisions fully and efficiently.

Question. Do you believe it acceptable that religious freedom can be used, in any case, as a justification for policies that criminalize, stigmatize or otherwise discriminate against LGBTI people, relationships, or organizations? In some countries, governments cite their citizens' religious beliefs as a justification for their discriminatory policies. Given your history and writings, I am concerned that you might actually agree with them. Will you commit to standing by the State Department's policies, that religious beliefs should not be used as justification for discriminatory policies? If confirmed, how would you work with the Ambassador-at-Large for Religious Freedom to ensure that the legal and access rights of any minority population-including LGBTI populations-are not disrespected by the majority population, in law or otherwise?

Answer. There is no justification for criminalization of LGBTI status, nor for violence against LGBTI persons, nor for discrimination in housing, employment or the provision of government services. Respect for the inherent dignity of every human person is a universal duty, and is the foundation of an effective foreign policy. If confirmed, I will work closely with colleagues across the State Department and beyond to promote respect for fundamental freedoms, human rights and democratic governance for all people, including LGBTI persons. governments around the world must understand they are obligated to provide every citizen with equal protection under the law, and if confirmed, I would stand forcefully for that principle.

I see no inherent tension between the U.S. government's longstanding effort to protect the human rights of LGBTI people globally and concepts of international religious freedom. In fact, the U.S. government promotes all these rights for exactly

the same reason: we believe every person has the right to equal protection of the laws. All have an equal right to be free to live their lives without fear of persecution.

United States policy is to oppose criminalization, bias-motivated violence, and serious discrimination targeting LGBTI persons in areas such as employment, housing, or the provision of government services. If confirmed, I look forward to the opportunity to advance those principles.

Question. DRL is responsible for promoting human rights, including women's rights and sexual and reproductive rights. The U.S. is a party to both the International Conference of Population and Development Programme for Action and the Beijing Platform for Action, which reaffirm reproductive rights and the right to reproductive health care. Implicit in the right to reproductive health is the right of men and women to be informed and to have access to safe, effective, affordable and acceptable methods of family planning of their choice, including information and access to the full range of modern contraceptive services such as hormonal contraception, condoms and barrier methods, and long-acting reversible contraception. Do you believe that the U.S. and other countries should work to ensure that women, young people and LGBTI receive accurate information about and access to a full range of information and services about their sexual and reproductive health? Do you think that health care providers in developing countries should be able to refuse to provide women, girls and LGBTI with information about modern contraception with the use of U.S. funds? Similarly, should health care providers be allowed to discriminate against LGBTI people, unmarried adolescent girls, or other minorities people in the delivery of services? Can providers deny to provide LGBTI people information about condoms, pre-exposure prophylaxis, or methods to prevent transmission of HIV? How would you address these issues and potential sexual and reproductive rights violations in your role as Assistant Secretary?

Answer. The U.S. has been a leader in promoting the dissemination of information about and access to contraception around the world as envisioned in the Cairo and Beijing documents. If confirmed, I will work to ensure that human rights for women and LGBTI people, including with respect to health, are promoted and protected.

Question. What will you do to promote, mentor and support your staff that come from diverse backgrounds and underrepresented groups in the Foreign Service?

Answer. I agree with Secretary Pompeo's recent statement: "Our mission is, of course, to represent all of the American people in all corners of the globe, so the makeup of our workforce matters ." He was referring to the longstanding commitment of the Department of State to having a diverse workforce. If confirmed, I will work to attract new talent from the diverse groups that make up U.S. society, inspire all of our employees, and encourage individual growth. I will foster an organization-wide environment in which diversity and inclusion are valued and respected.

Question. What steps will you take to ensure each of the supervisors in the Foreign Service are fostering an environment that is diverse and inclusive?

Answer. If confirmed, I will vigorously uphold the Department's commitment to foster, support and realize the full potential of a diverse staff. I will utilize resources within the Department and the Foreign Service Institute to provide training and enhance professional development that values and respects unique perspectives.

Question. Do you commit to bring to the committee's attention (and the Inspector General of the State Department and Foreign Service) any change in policy or U.S. actions that you suspect may be influenced by any of the President's business or financial interests, or the business or financial interests of any senior White House staff?

Answer. I commit to comply with all relevant federal ethics laws, regulations, and rules, and to raise concerns that I may have through appropriate channels.

Question. Do you commit to inform the committee if you have any reason to suspect that a foreign government, head of state, or foreign-controlled entity is taking any action in order to benefit any of the President's business or financial interests, or the interests of senior White House staff?

Answer. I commit to comply with all relevant federal ethics laws, regulations, and rules, and to raise concerns that I may have through appropriate channels.

Question. Do you or do any members of your immediate family have any financial interests in any country abroad?

Answer. My investment portfolio includes diversified mutual funds that may hold interests in companies with a presence abroad. I am committed to ensuring that my

official actions will not give rise to a conflict of interest and I will remain vigilant with regard to my ethics obligations.

Question. For the third consecutive year, the Trump administration has put forward a budget for the State Department and USAID that would decimate much of U.S. diplomacy, including with respect to foreign assistance geared toward promoting democracy and defending human rights. In an era in which human rights are increasingly under threat, what are your views on the role played by U.S. foreign assistance in promoting fundamental freedoms around the world? If confirmed, will you commit to support a robust Democracy, Rights and Governance (DRG) budget, and to inform this committee if you feel that support for human rights funding is being threatened? If confirmed, do you commit to utilize the resources that Congress appropriates and respect the Congressional intent for the use of those resources?

Answer. U.S. foreign assistance to promote fundamental freedoms around the world is a low cost/high return element of our foreign policy. If we can help people who share our commitment to those freedoms bring about reform in their own sovereign countries, international stability and prosperity will be enhanced.

I believe democracy programs are critical for defending national security, fostering economic opportunities for the American people, and asserting U.S. leadership and influence. If confirmed I would of course advocate for adequate funding for these programs.

If confirmed, I commit to utilizing the resources that Congress appropriates and to respect the Congressional intent for the use of those resources.

Question. Your portfolio covers not only religious liberty, but the full range of human rights and labor rights issues, including support for democracy and good governance. What experience do you have supporting democracy, good governance, or labor rights overseas? How can the U.S. work to reverse the disturbing trends of democratic backsliding we see taking place worldwide? If confirmed, how would you use DRL's diplomatic and programmatic resources to support democratic actors and counter authoritarianism? Numerous countries in Latin America have created—or have discussed creating—anti-corruption commissions to support good governance. If confirmed, do you commit to support these efforts to prevent and combat corruption to promote good governance?

Answer. I have worked on human rights and labor issues throughout my career. For example, I have practiced labor law, have pressed for the release of political prisoners around the world since 2007, and have worked to support organizations and individuals active in human trafficking prevention and victim recovery in both Central America and the Middle East. For almost twenty years I have built dialogues that encourage tolerance and collaboration among Christians, Muslims and Jews in the U.S. and Middle East on issues including basic human rights, the release of prisoners, atrocities prevention, religious freedom and human trafficking.

If confirmed, I commit to create an enabling environment for civil society, and to support the work of individual citizens and associations to encourage their own governments to be more responsive and accountable. I will also press foreign governments to increase transparency and eliminate corruption, and continue the Bureau's work in support of civil society and democracy activists, especially in places where we have no USAID programs and sometimes no diplomatic representation. Corruption in Latin America is a significant problem that erodes support for democracy and enables human rights violations and abuses. Corruption robs societies of economic opportunity, erodes the rule of law, and serves as a driver for migration. As such, the U.S. national interest is clear in supporting meaningful Latin American efforts to prevent and combat corruption.

Question. As I'm sure you know, the U.N. describes the situation in Yemen as the world's worst humanitarian crisis, with 24 million Yemenis in need of humanitarian assistance. Data shows that the Saudi and Emirati forces supported by the United States in Yemen are increasingly targeting civilians in what may amount to war crimes. On Monday, I introduced legislation—along with Senators Durbin, Wyden and Markey—that would require the Secretary to make human rights certifications for certain arms sales and transfers, specifically those involving heavy weapons capable of causing mass casualties or destruction, such as attack aircraft and missile launchers.

- Should the United States continue to facilitate arms sales to foreign governments like Saudi Arabia and the UAE credibly suspected of acts that may amount to war crimes?

Answer. I am aware of and concerned by reports of civilian casualties and damage to civilian infrastructure resulting from Saudi-led Coalition airstrikes in Yemen. I understand the State Department adjudicates all potential arms transfers through an Administration review process on a case-by-case basis and through a consultation process with Congress, as required by law. If confirmed, I would expect to contribute to that process.

Question. What are your views on the position put forth by Secretary Pompeo that, in effect, continuing to arm and otherwise support Saudi Arabia and the UAE in Yemen is the best way to support human rights there?

Answer. I believe U.S. priorities are advanced if we are able to influence, steer, and achieve results because of our ability to have honest, often difficult conversations with Saudi leadership on issues like the Yemen conflict. Saudi Arabia and the UAE helped get the parties to Sweden and continue to actively support the U.N. Special Envoy as he helps them implement the Stockholm Agreement and reach a political agreement. This agreement is the only way to end Yemen's conflict and humanitarian crisis and to secure a peaceful, stable Yemen that upholds human rights and is free of malign Iranian influence.

Question. Two weeks ago, the Senate passed S.J. Res. 7, which calls for an end to U.S. support for the Saudi- and Emirate-led war. In response to that bipartisan vote, Secretary Pompeo said, in effect, that those that really care about human rights in Yemen should be worried about Iran, not about the massive civilian harm being imposed on the people of Yemen by our security partners.

- If confirmed, how would you propose to engage security partners like Saudi Arabia and the UAE?

Answer. If confirmed as DRL Assistant Secretary, I commit to consistently engage with security partners like Saudi Arabia and the UAE to mitigate civilian harm and strengthen human rights protections. Partnership with the United States in many cases provides political, security, and economic benefits, and we should use these relationships to advance American values and ideals, including protection of basic human rights, which undergird stable and prosperous societies.

Question. What would you do as DRL A/S to raise these and other human rights issues both privately and publicly with Saudi and Emirati authorities?

Answer. If confirmed, I will raise human rights issues of concern with counterparts, including Saudi Arabia and the United Arab Emirates, and seek to publicize those concerns when appropriate. The National Security Strategy prioritizes support for the dignity of all persons. Secretary Pompeo has said that "we expect every country to behave in a way that treats their citizens with the dignity and respect they deserve."

Question. If U.S. officials witness court proceedings in Saudi Arabia that fall short of international standards, will you urge them to say so publicly?

Answer. If confirmed, I will urge the government of Saudi Arabia to ensure fair trial guarantees, freedom from arbitrary and unlawful detention, transparency, and respect for the rule of law. I will call on the government of Saudi Arabia to treat prisoners and detainees humanely, and to ensure that allegations of abuse are investigated quickly and thoroughly and that anyone found responsible is held accountable. I will urge that we publicize our concerns when I believe it will advance our human rights objectives.

Question. Would you seek to visit in their places of detention human rights activists who are at risk of torture?

Answer. Yes. If confirmed, I will work closely with my colleagues in the Department, as well as seek the views of civil society and human rights groups, to determine the best course of action, including possible visits to detained activists, for ensuring any detentions and prosecutions respect the rights of those detained and accused, and guarantee the humane treatment of any individuals involved.

Question. As you know, in response to the Saudi murder last October of Jamal Khashoggi, the Senate Foreign Relations Committee triggered a provision of the Global Magnitsky Act that directed the president to report on those individuals—up to and including Saudi Crown Prince Mohammed bin Salman—whom the U.S. government believes had a role in killing Khashoggi, and on whether the administration intended to sanction those responsible.

- Do you agree that Mr. Khashoggi's killing is a completely unacceptable violation of national and international laws and norms? Do you agree that anyone in-

volved in committing or directing that killing should face accountability, no matter their position or rank?

Answer. Yes.

Question. Do you commit to brief this committee in the future with the whole truth about what the U.S. government knows concerning the circumstances of Mr. Khashoggi's killing?

Answer. Yes to the full extent permissible under U.S. security laws and regulations. I would also favor using other channels to convey relevant information to the Congress when security so requires.

Question. If, once confirmed, you were told by appropriate officials within the IC and law enforcement communities that they assess with high confidence that MBS played a role in directing Khashoggi's killing, or was otherwise witting of the murder, can you commit to saying that you would advise Secretary Pompeo and President Trump that Crown Prince Mohammed's role in the murder should be made public, and that he should be held accountable?

Answer. The President and Secretary of State have been clear that Saudi Arabia must hold accountable every individual implicated in the horrific murder of Jamal Khashoggi, including high-ranking members of the Saudi government. If confirmed, I will do my utmost to advance this process.

Question. If MBS or other senior Saudi officials were found to have played a role in Khashoggi's murder, what specific steps toward accountability would you recommend the U.S. government undertake?

Answer. The President and Secretary of State have been clear that Saudi Arabia must hold accountable every individual implicated in the horrific murder of Jamal Khashoggi, which was fundamentally inconsistent with American values. Secretary Pompeo has stated that all those involved in the murder must be brought to justice regardless of rank and King Salman has made a similar demand. If confirmed, I will commit to engaging deeply on additional steps toward accountability that the administration could take.

Question. If confirmed, do you commit to implementing the Global Magnitsky Act robustly?

Answer. Yes. Global Magnisky is an extremely valuable tool as it allows us to target human rights violators without creating a sanctions program for an entire country. If confirmed, I look forward to working with the Department's experts and the interagency to advance implementation of this law.

Question. Do you commit to recommend sanctions designations under the Act against individuals found to have committed the most egregious or systemic crimes, and not to politicize sanctions determinations?

Answer. Yes. If confirmed, I will work with the Department and interagency to ensure a principled approach to implementation of the Global Magnitsky sanctions program.

Question. Do you commit to moving as expeditiously as possible to produce the global tranche of designations that were expected last December?

Answer. Yes. If confirmed, I will work within the Department and interagency to develop both global, thematic, and region specific sanctions tranches.

Question. Do you commit to informing this committee if you lack the resources to carry out robust implementation of the Russia Magnitsky Act and Global Magnitsky Act?

Answer. Yes. You have my commitment.

Question. It's safe to say that democracy and human rights are being challenged right now. They're certainly being challenged by governments the United States views as hostile and/or as competitors, like China, Russia, Venezuela, and Iran. But they're also being challenged by U.S. partner states, from NATO allies like Turkey, Poland, and Hungary, to Middle East security partners like Saudi Arabia, UAE, Bahrain, and Egypt. In this year's DRL Human Rights Report, Secretary Pompeo wrote: "The policy of this Administration is to engage with other governments, regardless of their record, if doing so will further U.S. interests." What is the right balance for the United States when it comes to engaging or even partnering with deeply abusive governments? How would you recommend the Secretary of State approach such partnerships? In general, how do you believe the U.S. can strike the right balance between addressing national security and human rights concerns? Do you believe there are cases where political isolation or sanctions are appropriate, ei-

ther based on a country's human rights abuses or other foreign policy concerns?Answer:

Answer. Human rights advocates should always have a seat at the foreign policy table. We should always be pressing other governments, both abusive and friendly, to adhere to internationally accepted human rights standards. Promoting human rights is always in the best interests of the United States and of the countries for whose citizens we are advocating because societies that respect human rights and the rule of law are more stable, and make better allies. It is in our national interest to work with allies and partners to try to prevent conflict by addressing the causes of violence. Diplomatic efforts to prevent conflict are much more effective than engagement after conflict erupts. Secretary Pompeo has said that, under his leadership, the Department will use a range of programs and partners to promote our values abroad, including through bilateral and multilateral channels, and imposing visa restrictions and economic sanctions, as appropriate. Yes, there are cases where sanctions are appropriate.

Question. In addition to the concerning humanitarian crisis, Venezuela's democratic institutions have greatly deteriorated over the past two decades. What can the U.S. do to ensure that any transition paves the way for a return to democracy rather than a new authoritarian regime? What do you see as DRL's role in ensuring that any transition is peaceful and democratic?

Answer. The administration has been clear and consistent that a change from one authoritarian regime to another is neither our objective, nor an acceptable outcome. I agree that our objective should be free and fair elections and reinvigoration of democratic institutions. The sprawling humanitarian crisis in Venezuela is a direct result of the former Maduro regime's efforts to dismantle democratic institutions, eliminate checks and balances, and repress the rights and freedoms of the Venezuelan people.

I am deeply committed to helping the Venezuelan people restore their democracy and regain their freedom. I will work with the Organization of American States to urge its members to achieve the objectives of the Inter-American Democratic Charter.

DRL has a key role to support Venezuela's embattled civil society and democratic institutions, to shine light on human rights abuses and to support free and fair elections.

Question. On December 03, 2018, the Holocaust Museum announced for the first time that it believes there is compelling evidence that the Burmese military committed ethnic cleansing, crimes against humanity, and genocide against the Rohingya, Muslim minority population. Senator Young and I plan to re-introduce our Burma Human Rights and Freedom Act, which promotes democracy and human rights in Burma, and among other actions, requires a State Department report on crimes against humanity and other serious human rights abuses committed against the Rohingya and other ethnic groups in Burma. Do you believe that the gross human rights violations that took place in 2017, in which over 700,000 fled persecution, when the Rohingya were raped, tortured, burned and killed for who they were,—do you believe those actions constitute genocide and crimes against humanity? What additional measures would you recommend the U.S. take to address allegations of genocide, crimes against humanity, and war crimes? What additional measures would you recommend the international community take? Would you recommend, for example, collaboration to establish a multilateral sanctions regime against Burmese military officials who aided, participated in, or were otherwise implicated in gross violations of internationally recognized human rights in Burma?

Answer. I share the view that gross human rights violations took place in 2017 and am deeply concerned about the Burmese military's horrific abuses directed at the Rohingya and the ongoing humanitarian crisis that has ensued.

If confirmed, I will undertake my own review of the facts, and offer my recommendations to the Secretary on appropriate actions to take to promote accountability and deter further atrocities. Our goal should be a mix of private and public and bilateral and multilateral diplomacy, economic sanctions and visa restrictions designed to remove from positions of responsibility those responsible for ordering these atrocities and to bring about the full transition to a civilian-led democracy. We also must address the causes of violence and discrimination in all regions of Burma.

I will also support the United States' ongoing efforts to provide life-saving humanitarian assistance to those affected by these events and to ensure the security of the hundreds of thousands of Rohingya remaining in Burma

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RESPONSES TO ADDITIONAL QUESTIONS FOR THE RECORD
SUBMITTED TO ROBERT DESTRO BY SENATOR EDWARD J. MARKEY

Question. In the past, you have argued that Christians who oppose homosexuality, on the basis of religious belief, should be permitted to deny equal treatment and services to LGBT individuals. You have questioned whether a transgender person must be accepted as such by someone who doesn't accept the basis of gender identity. Given your past comments, how can you effectively carry out the position articulated by the Secretary of State and be a credible advocate of LGBTI rights globally?

Answer. Respect for the inherent dignity of every human person is the foundation of an effective foreign policy. There is no justification for violence against LGBTI persons, for criminalization of LGBTI status or relations, or for discrimination in areas such as housing, employment, or the provision of government services. If confirmed, I will work closely with colleagues across the State Department and beyond to promote respect for fundamental freedoms, human rights and democratic governance for all people, including LGBTI persons.

Question. In his statement last year during Pride month, Secretary Pompeo said, "LGBTI persons—like all persons—must be free to enjoy their human rights and fundamental freedoms, including freedom of expression, peaceful assembly, and association, without fear of reprisal." Do you agree with the Secretary's past statements on the role of the U.S. government in promoting the human rights of LGBTI people abroad?

Answer. Yes. If confirmed, I look forward to advancing respect for the human rights and fundamental freedoms of all, including LGBTI persons.

Question. Do you believe it acceptable that religious freedom can be used, in any case, as a justification for policies that criminalize, stigmatize or otherwise discriminate against LGBTI people, relationships, or organizations?

Answer. There is no justification for criminalization of LGBTI status, nor for violence against LGBTI persons, nor for discrimination in housing, employment or the provision of government services. Respect for the inherent dignity of every human person is a universal duty, and is the foundation of an effective foreign policy. If confirmed, I will work closely with colleagues across the State Department and beyond to promote respect for fundamental freedoms, human rights and democratic governance for all people, including LGBTI persons. governments around the world must understand they are obligated to provide every citizen with equal protection under the law, and if confirmed, I would stand forcefully for that principle.

I see no inherent tension between the U.S. government's longstanding effort to protect the human rights of LGBTI people globally and concepts of international religious freedom. In fact, the U.S. government promotes all these rights for exactly the same reason: we believe every person has the right to equal protection of the laws. All have an equal right to be free to live their lives without fear of persecution.

United States policy is to oppose criminalization, bias-motivated violence, and serious discrimination targeting LGBTI persons in areas such as employment, housing, or the provision of government services. If confirmed, I look forward to the opportunity to advance those principles.

Question. Following the departure of Randy Barry, the position of the LGBTI special envoy has remained unfilled. Do you support retaining the position? If so, what are your plans to encourage the Secretary to fill this position?

Answer. I support the Administration's plan to retain the position of Special Envoy for the Human Rights of LGBTI Persons. If confirmed, I will fully support the Department's efforts to fill the position with a qualified individual empowered to perform its mandate.

Question. Following the designations of five individuals and two units for atrocities against the Rohingya population in 2017, the United States has refrained from sanctioning other senior Burmese military officials. Do you believe there should be additional sanctions against the Burmese military, including on Commander-in-chief

Min Aung Hlaing? What will you do to make sure U.S. policy protects the rights and dignities of the Rohingya and holds perpetrators of mass atrocities accountable?

Answer. The Administration has been clear that the atrocities committed against Rohingya and the ongoing humanitarian crisis that has ensued in Burma are the responsibility of the Burmese military leadership, that those responsible should be removed from power, and the military subordinated to civilian rule.

If confirmed, I will advocate for actions that promote accountability and deter further atrocities. Such actions may include targeted economic sanctions and visa restrictions. While I do not want to prejudge any specific actions including additional U.S. visa restrictions or financial sanctions on specific Burmese individuals or security force units, I believe that the United States remains a key voice in the international community on the protection and promotion of human rights and fundamental freedoms. I will, if confirmed, review the conduct of Burmese security forces during the ethnic cleansing of Rohingya, as well as human rights abuses by Burmese security forces in other parts of the country.

If confirmed, I will support programs to counter violence and discrimination in all affected regions of Burma, and I will support the United States' ongoing efforts to provide life-saving humanitarian assistance to those affected by violence.

Question. Given the trend in authoritarian behavior in the Indo-Pacific region, and China's efforts to export its authoritarian model to other countries in the region, how you will use your position to counter this trend and China's efforts to bolster authoritarianism?

Answer. If confirmed, I will work to advance a free and open Indo-Pacific through strong support for good governance including promoting transparency, openness, rule of law, and the protection of human rights and fundamental freedoms within the Indo-Pacific region. These values are embedded in the Indo-Pacific Transparency Initiative that was announced by the Vice President last November. I will express U.S. concerns about China's efforts to export its authoritarian model, seek to ensure the U.S. government utilizes appropriate tools to counter this trend, and coordinate with our international partners.

Question. In you view, what role does civil society play in the Indo-Pacific region in promoting democracy and human rights? If confirmed, how will you ensure that U.S. foreign policy regularly includes engagement and support for civil society in the region?

Answer. Civil society plays a key role in promoting democracy and human rights around the globe, including in the Indo-Pacific region. An absence of civil society means an abuse of human rights and democracy. If confirmed, I will work to promote a strong, active civil society by supporting opportunities for civil society organizations to engage their governments, to share best practices across borders, and to cooperate on common challenges affecting human rights and fundamental freedoms. I will counter efforts by certain governments in the Indo-Pacific region to place restrictions on the activities of civil society organizations and constrain the space in which civil society can operate. Finally, I will seek to ensure that democratic institutions, including elections, are more credible, inclusive, and effective.

Question. How will you ensure that the administration maintains focus on the grave situation of human rights in North Korea even as it continues diplomatic engagement on denuclearization?

Answer. The DPRK's human rights record remains among the worst in the world. If confirmed, I will meet with North Korean defectors, work with likeminded partners to increase international awareness of the egregious abuses and violations, and promote respect for human rights in North Korea. I will also support civil society efforts to increase the free flow of independent information into, out of, and within the country.

Question. If confirmed, will you use your post to advocate for U.S. negotiators to press North Korea on human rights issues, including pressing them to cooperate with U.N. human rights mechanism and to join the International Labour Organization?

Answer. Yes. The only way to resolve this human rights crisis is for the DPRK regime to join the community of nations and begin to respect human rights and adhere to international norms.

Question. If confirmed, will you use your post to raise awareness of the terms of the North Korea Sanctions and Policy Enhancement Act of 2016, which specifically imposes sanctions on the North Korean government because of its human rights record? Under the law, these broader sanctions cannot be lifted, or even waived, un-

less North Korea takes steps to improve its human rights record; will you use your post to remind negotiators—on both sides—of this basic legislative reality?

Answer. Yes. If confirmed, I will work with Department and interagency counterparts to ensure that our North Korea human rights policy, including human rights-related sanctions, is implemented consistent with the law, including the North Korea Sanctions and Policy Enhancement Act of 2016.

Question. Do you think the U.N.'s establishment of a field office in Seoul to track rights violations in North Korea is helpful in shining a light on North Korea's human rights record? As you know, the U.S. withdrew from the UNHRC in June 2018. Do you think this helps or hurts multilateral efforts to call out Kim regime abuses?

Answer. North Korea's human rights record is among the worst in the world. I support efforts to document the egregious human rights abuses and violations in North Korea for the purposes of shining a light on the country's deplorable human rights record and for future accountability purposes.

I believe there are a variety of multilateral forums and tools we can use to call out the North Korean government's terrible human rights record, including the U.N. General Assembly, the U.N. Security Council, and the Universal Periodic Review process.

RESPONSES TO ADDITIONAL QUESTIONS FOR THE RECORD
SUBMITTED TO ROBERT DESTRO BY SENATOR CORY A. BOOKER

Question. Do you support these changes made in 2018 downgrading the importance of and focus on women's reproductive rights in the annual Human Rights Reports?

Answer. U.S. law requires that we report on "wherever applicable, practices regarding coercion in population control, including coerced abortion and involuntary sterilization." The Cairo Program of Action and the Beijing Platform for Action provide for the recognition of the basic right of all couples and individuals to decide freely and responsibly the number, spacing and timing of their children and to have the information and means to do so, and the right to attain the highest standard of sexual and reproductive health. It also includes their right to make decisions concerning reproduction free of discrimination, coercion and violence, as expressed in human rights documents.

If confirmed, I will report facts relevant to these provisions fully and efficiently.

Question. Since you have taken stances on numerous pieces of legislation in the past, do you support the passage of S.707, Reproductive Rights Are Human Rights Act? If not, why not?

Answer. President Trump's National Security Strategy explicitly states that the U.S. will support efforts to advance women's equality and protect the rights of women and girls.

If confirmed, I will work to ensure that women's human rights, including their right to the enjoyment of the highest attainable standard of physical and mental health, are promoted and protected.

As a nominee, it would not be appropriate for me to express an opinion on a specific piece of proposed legislation. If confirmed, I will be happy to have a conversation about legislation of concern to you and to contribute to formulating the Administration's response to the proposed bill.

Question. The State Department's own 2018 Human Rights Reports acknowledge that the Nigerian "government did not adequately investigate or prosecute most of the major outstanding allegations of human rights violations by the security forces or the majority of cases of police or military extortion or other abuse of power." Unfortunately, this lack of lack of accountability for abuses by security forces has been a consistent challenge.

As recently as October, according to an investigation by Amnesty International researchers, Nigerian soldiers and police used excessive force which led to the killing of at least 45 supporters of the Islamic Movement in Nigeria (IMN) over two days in October 2018, as the Shi'a Muslim group held a peaceful religious procession around Abuja. Video footage shows the security forces "opening fire on unarmed demonstrators, sometimes shooting indiscriminately into the crowd at close range as people turned and tried to flee." The soldiers depicted were apparently the 7th unit of the Nigerian Brigade (also referred to as the Presidential Guard Brigade).

- To your knowledge, has the State Department implemented vetting under the Leahy Law for 7th unit of the Nigerian Brigade (also referred to as the Presidential Guard Brigade) for its alleged abuses in October?

Answer. I am deeply concerned by allegations of extrajudicial killings by Nigerian security forces members, and the lack of public accountability to date. I believe it is incumbent upon Nigerian security forces to respond to protests in a measured manner that adheres to Nigerian law, respects fundamental freedoms, and the rules for the escalation of force, while protecting the lives of civilians and security forces. If confirmed, I will seek to ensure through the Leahy Law and other tools that Nigerian security forces responsible for serious human rights abuses do not receive assistance and that they improve their respect for human rights and fundamental freedoms.

I am not privy as to whether the 7th unit of the Nigerian Brigade (also referred to as the Presidential Guard Brigade) has been nominated for assistance or training since the incident described in the Amnesty report. Were it to be to be nominated for training or assistance in the future if confirmed I would ensure that the information in that report was reviewed and taken into account.

Question. How will you seek to promote a greater respect for human rights and accountability for security force abuses in Nigeria when they remain an important security U.S. partner in fighting Boko Haram, if confirmed?

Answer. I believe that the U.S. government needs to continue its robust efforts that aim to help the Nigerian government and civil society address instability across Nigeria while building more capable, professional, and accountable Nigerian security forces that respect human rights and protect civilians. I stress that these concerns are not mutually exclusive: protecting human rights, promoting accountability, and ensuring civilian protection are instrumental to defeating terrorism.

We must press the Nigerian government for credible, transparent, and thorough investigations into allegations of corruption and human rights violations, pursuing accountability for those responsible. If confirmed, I will ensure that our security cooperation with Nigeria continues to support our goals of respect for human rights and protection of civilians.

Question. Do you support the administration's decision to ignore the statutory mandate in the Global Magnitsky Human Rights Accountability Act relating to requests for determinations from Congress?

Answer. If confirmed, I will work with interagency legal and policy experts to implement the Global Magnitsky Human Rights Accountability Act in accordance with applicable delegations of authority and other appropriate considerations.

Question. What do you view as Congress' proper role in requesting a sanctions determination under the Global Magnitsky Human Rights Accountability Act?

Answer. If confirmed, I will welcome the recommendations of Congress in Global Magnitsky Act implementation and will work to ensure congressional views are taken into account.

Question. The most recent Religious Freedom Report on Bahrain from 2017 states that: "The government continued to question, detain, and arrest clerics, community members, and opposition politicians associated with the Shia community." Moreover, the government continued its crackdown against dissent of all kinds, typified by the ongoing imprisonment of human rights defender Nabeel Rajab for tweets critical of the government.

In spite of these ongoing religious freedom and human rights concerns, according to a readout of Secretary of State Mike Pompeo's meeting with the Bahraini King and Foreign Minister on January 11th, Secretary Pompeo failed to publicly raise either of these issues during his meeting.

- What steps do you plan to take to raise the concerns of Shia citizens in Bahrain, if confirmed?

Answer. If confirmed, I will engage counterparts in Bahrain on strengthening respect for the human rights of all Bahrainis, including Shia citizens. Societies are strengthened, not threatened, by expressions of opinion and dissent, and opposition voices can play a vital role helping societies become more tolerant and inclusive.

Bahrain is an important U.S. partner. Closing avenues to legitimate civil and political discourse could open a window for external parties, including Iran, to exploit frustrated communities.

Question. What foreign policy tools do you think the United States should employ to put pressure on the Bahraini government for its failure to implement governance reforms and respect human rights?

Answer. I will support human rights issues and raise human rights cases of concern with counterparts, including when I travel. I will also consult regularly with civil society and opposition voices. The National Security Strategy prioritizes support for the dignity of all persons. I will urge that we publicize our concerns when I believe it will advance our human rights objectives.

I know the United States has many tools in addition to public and private messaging that we can use to effectuate improved human rights protections, and if confirmed, I will commit to engaging strongly on these issues regarding Bahrain.

Question. What in your view is should be the U.S. response to the Egyptian government's proposed amendments to extend President Sisi's time in power, reduce the independence of the judiciary, and increase the role of the military in civilian government?

Answer. I believe constitutional transitions of power are essential for strong democracies everywhere and that we should encourage the Egyptian government to ensure that the referendum allows all Egyptians to give voice to their views, without penalizing dissenters. I believe the United States should encourage civilian control of the military and independent judicial systems if we are to advance our objectives of prosperity and security around the globe.

Encouraging Egypt to build a more stable and secure society including through strengthening civil society and human rights protections is part of achieving those objectives.

Question. What innovative ideas will you propose, if confirmed, to support human rights defenders and civil society organizations in Egypt?

Answer. If confirmed, I will raise our serious concerns about the human rights situation in Egypt with senior Egyptian government officials. In those conversations, I will emphasize the obligation that all governments have to protect and respect human rights, and to ensure that all persons enjoy fundamental freedoms, including freedoms of expression, peaceful assembly, association, and religion. As I said at the hearing, I want our reporting to be more real time. If confirmed, I will look for new ways to use social media and other platforms to report on human rights problems and show support for civil society and human rights activists in places like Egypt and around the world.

Enabling an environment for human rights defenders and civil society organizations to operate is critical Egypt's to stability and prosperity, and to meeting the very real security and terrorism challenges Egypt faces. Around the world, these individuals and groups are often key to identifying the most innovative initiatives to advance reform in their own countries, and I would look forward to seeking their views on how the United States can support their own efforts.

Question. Will you pledge to work with the Ambassador-at-Large for International Religious Freedom to ensure the Egyptian government takes concrete steps to end discrimination towards and ensure the safety of the Coptic Christian community and places of worship in Egypt, if confirmed?

Answer. Yes. If confirmed, I pledge to work with the Ambassador-at-Large for International Religious Freedom to ensure the Egyptian government takes steps to end discrimination towards and ensure the safety of the Coptic Christian community and places of worship in Egypt.

Question. Will you pledge to raise the cases of prominent human rights workers, lawyers, and political activists who have arbitrarily detained in your conversations with Egyptian authorities, if confirmed?

Answer. Yes. If confirmed, I will raise our serious concerns about these issues with senior Egyptian government officials. In those conversations, I will emphasize the obligation that all governments have to protect and respect human rights, and to ensure that all persons enjoy fundamental freedoms, including freedoms of expression, peaceful assembly, association, and religion.

Respecting these values and principles, and allowing space for the emergence of a robust civil society are critical to Egypt's stability and prosperity, and to meeting the very real security and terrorism challenges Egypt faces.

Question. According to the recently released State Department's 2019 Human Rights Report on China, which includes Tibet: "Official repression of the freedoms of speech, religion, movement, association, and assembly of Tibetans in the Tibet Autonomous Region (TAR) and other Tibetan areas and of Uighurs and other ethnic and religious minorities in Xinjiang worsened and was more severe than in other areas of the country." Moreover, the report states that "arbitrary arrest and deten-

tion remained serious problems" in Tibet and as of November 27, 2017, there were 303 Tibetan political prisoners known to be detained or imprisoned in China.

- Will to commit to raising the cases of Tibetan political prisoners and prisoners of conscience in meetings with Chinese government officials, if confirmed?

Answer. Yes. If confirmed, I am committed to pressing for respect for human rights, including freedom of religion and belief, in my conversations with Chinese officials, and advocating for the release of Tibetan political prisoners and prisoners of conscience.

Question. Will you support full implementation of the Reciprocal Access to Tibet Act of 2018, including revoking the visas of Chinese officials determined to substantially involved in the formulation or execution of policies related to access for foreigners to Tibetan areas, if confirmed?

Answer. If confirmed, I will support full implementation of the Reciprocal Access to Tibet Act.

RESPONSES TO ADDITIONAL QUESTIONS FOR THE RECORD
SUBMITTED TO KEITH KRACH BY SENATOR JOHNNY ISAKSON

Question. Last spring, the State Department negotiated an agreement with the UAE to address subsidies provided by the UAE government to their state-owned airlines.

When subsidized carriers open routes to the U.S., American jobs are put at risk. That's why Open Skies agreements are so important, particularly to my home state.

However, an earlier agreement with Qatar appears to have been undermined when state-owned Qatar Airways acquired a 49% stake in an Italian airline. They are now able to use that airline to launch new service to the United States:

- If confirmed, will you commit to strictly enforce Open Skies agreements?

Answer. If confirmed, I would commit to strictly enforcing our Open Skies agreements and leveling the playing field to ensure U.S. companies have an opportunity to succeed globally.

Question. What efforts will you undertake to remedy these types of violations?

Answer. I would support the Department's leadership in ensuring appropriate follow-though on the Understandings reached in January 2018 with Qatar and in May 2018 with the UAE. I would seek to address concerns of U.S. industry regarding subsidized competition while maintaining the Open Skies framework of U.S. international aviation policy. My goal would be to provide beneficial results for as many U.S. stakeholders as possible.

RESPONSES TO ADDITIONAL QUESTIONS FOR THE RECORD
SUBMITTED TO KEITH KRACH BY SENATOR ROBERT MENENDEZ

Paris Agreement

Question. 2019 is a significant year for U.S. participation in the Paris Agreement because November 4th is the day when President Trump can officially initiate the formal withdrawal process. November 4th happens to be 4 weeks before the start of COP25 in Santiago, Chile. According to the historical responsibilities of your predecessors, if confirmed, you would be Head of Delegation to COP25.

- Do you believe the United States should withdraw from the Paris Agreement?

Answer. I fully support the President's decision that the United States will withdraw from the Paris Agreement unless we can identify terms for participation that are better for the American people. If confirmed, I will ensure that the United States promotes a balanced approach to economic growth, energy security, and environmental protection. We will remain a global leader on the issue of climate change to advance and protect U.S. economic and environmental interests, including by participating in ongoing international climate change negotiations to ensure a level playing field for all countries. We will continue to work with other countries to reduce greenhouse gas emissions and enhance resilience in ways that drive innovation and market-friendly solutions.

Question 2 How is it in the best strategic and economic interests for the United States to remove itself from the international Agreement every other nation of the world is using to shape the future of the global economy?

Answer. If confirmed, I will ensure that the United States remains engaged in international negotiations and discussions on the issue of climate change to advance and protect U.S. interests, working with other countries to help drive innovation and market-friendly solutions, so that our efforts to protect the environment and grow our economy are mutually supportive.

Question. When President Trump announced he would withdraw the United States from the Paris Agreement he did so with the caveat that he would work to seek a "better deal" wherein the United States would remain a party to the Paris Agreement.

- Are you aware of what work or progress to advance the president pledge to reach a new or better deal on international climate action, wherein he may justify keeping the United States party to the Paris Agreement?

Answer. As I am not a government employee, I have not been engaged in conversations concerning this matter, but I understand that the United States has remained active in international negotiations related to the Paris Agreement in order to protect U.S. interests and keep all policy options open for the President. I also understand that the Administration policy regarding withdrawal from the agreement remains unchanged and that the United States intends to withdraw as soon as possible, consistent with the terms of the agreement.

Question. Will you commit to the committee that, if confirmed, you will develop and provide details on what a "better deal" would be as well as the strategy for achieving a new or better deal?

Answer. As I am not a government employee, I have not been engaged in conversations concerning this matter. If confirmed, I will ensure that the United States remains actively engaged on the issue of climate change, in multilateral bodies, as well as directly through our diplomatic and development activities with other countries.

Question. Senator Collins and I wrote Secretary Pompeo a letter several weeks ago, for which we have not received a response, requesting the Secretary explain how he intends to maintain power and influence in a process that we are walking away from.

- Do you believe that U.S. interests are better served when we are inside and actively involved in diplomatic negotiations, or when we excuse ourselves, and walk from processes that the rest of the entire world is actively engaging in?

Answer. The United States continues to participate in ongoing international climate change negotiations to to protect U.S. economic and environmental interests. Regardless of our position on the Paris Agreement, the United States' approach to environmental protection serves U.S. interests and has unburdened communities, individuals, and industries to develop and implement policies that fit their needs. This approach leverages the ingenuity of our citizens and businesses to protect our environment and grow our economy.

Question. Can the U.S. maintain its leadership and influence in negotiations of policy and implementation processes, in multi-lateral forums like the Paris Agreement, when we have chosen not to be party to these agreements? If you believe we can, how? If confirmed, will you develop and present the State Department's strategy for continued leadership on climate change diplomacy, international climate change cooperation, and engagement in the Paris Agreement, both during the year-long interim period wherein the U.S. withdrawal process is being processed, and for the years after a U.S. withdrawal is finalized and our country is no longer party to the Paris Agreement?

Answer. Yes, I believe the United States can maintain its leadership and influence in these multilateral policy forums regardless of our position on the Paris Agreement. If confirmed, I will ensure that the United States remains actively engaged on the issue of climate change, in multilateral bodies, as well as directly through our diplomatic and development activities with other countries. I will ensure that we work to advance and protect U.S. interests, working with other countries to help drive innovation and market-friendly solutions, so that our efforts to protect the environment and grow our economy are mutually supportive.

Question. The outcomes from COP24 are widely regarded as successful and favorable towards the U.S.'s interests. a. Do you agree with this assessment? b. How much credence do you put on the achievement of these positive outcomes resulted

from the U.S.'s full participation in the negotiations as a party to the Paris Agreement?

Answer. I welcome the outcomes of the 24th Conference of the Parties to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC COP24) in Katowice and appreciate the hard work of our negotiators, whose active and constructive engagement made it possible for the United States to achieve such outcomes. The outcome took a significant step toward holding our economic competitors accountable for reporting their emissions in a manner consistent with standards the United States has met since the early 1990s.

Question. What is your strategy for maintaining and growing U.S. influence, cooperation, and power on climate diplomacy at COP25? (Taking into consideration that in the coming months leading up to November 4, 2019, which is the earliest date the President can officially begin the United States' withdrawal process).

- How do you think our partner and ally, as well as rival, parties to the Paris Agreement posture and willingness to deal with the United States may change, knowing that on November 4, 2019 the United States may very likely initiate the withdrawal process?

Answer. With COP25 months away, it is too early to say anything specific. That said, I understand that the United States was actively engaged at COP24 and, if confirmed, I would work with U.S. negotiators to develop an approach to advance and protect U.S. interests at COP25.

Question. Given your experience in business and negotiations, if your negotiating partner affirmatively states and maintains an intention to walk away from a deal, even after gaining concessions, would, or rather when, do you as the party sitting across the table from the walking party move on and write off further talks and concessions for the walking party?

Answer. Regardless of our position on the Paris Agreement, I would work to ensure that the United States remains engaged on the issue of climate change internationally, to advance and protect U.S. interests, working with other countries to help drive innovation and market-friendly solutions, so that our efforts to protect the environment, enhance energy security, and grow our economy are mutually supportive.

Question. Are you aware that many major U.S. companies, like Microsoft, Nike, Walmart, Apple, Unilever, Kelloggs, Mars, Best Buy, and Exelon support U.S. remaining in the Paris Agreement?

Answer. I am aware of the views of these private U.S. companies. Regardless of our position on the Paris Agreement, the United States' approach to environmental protection has unburdened communities, individuals, and industries to develop and implement policies that fit their needs. This approach leverages the ingenuity of our citizens and businesses to protect our environment and grow our economy.

Question. Congress approved funding for bilateral assistance for both renewable energy and adaptation programs in the FY19 omnibus appropriations bill. State and USAID have long and well-established channels and programs towards which to obligate these funds.

- Do you support implementing Congress's clear intention in this spending legislation, and devoting resources toward renewable energy and adaptation programming?

Answer. If confirmed, I will work to ensure that all funds are implemented in a manner that is consistent with Administration policy and applicable law.

Question. If confirmed, will you work with the F bureau at State, to ensure the State Department will execute and spend these fund according to Congress's clear intent in the FY19 omnibus appropriations bill?

Answer. If confirmed, I will work with the F bureau to ensure that all funds are implemented in a manner that is consistent with Administration policy and applicable law.

Question. If confirmed, will you ensure that the full sums are obligated as intended, and not applied to existing spending or otherwise double-counted?

Answer. If confirmed, I will work with colleagues on implementing programs consistent with Administration policy and applicable law.

Question. Regardless of whether the U.S. withdraws from the Paris Agreement, the U.S. remains a party to the U.N. Framework Convention on Climate Change.

Should you be confirmed, will you continue U.S. engagement with the UNFCCC and prioritize payment of U.S. contributions to that organization?

Answer. If confirmed, I will ensure that the United States remains engaged on the issue of climate change, through the UNFCCC and other multilateral and bilateral fora, to advance and protect U.S. interests. The FY 2020 congressional budget justification includes a request for funds to be contributed to the UNFCCC

Question. In 2017, at the Meeting of Parties to the Montreal Protocol in Kigali Rwanda, all parties agreed to amend the Montreal Protocol to initiate a global phasedown of HFCs, a highly potent greenhouse gas used in refrigeration. U.S. industry stakeholders like Dow Chemical and United Technologies as well as the U.S. environmental community all support U.S. ratification of the Kigali amendment. In fact, 13 Republican senators led by Senator Kennedy, sent a letter to President Trump last year, including some members of the committee urging him to submit the Kigali to the Senate for advice and consent, and yet the Kigali amendment remains on his desk, where it's been since he took office.

- Will you ensure that, if confirmed, you will work to get the Kigali Amendment sent to the Senate for its Advice and Consent?

Answer. I understand that the Administration is actively considering transmittal of the Kigali Amendment to the Senate for its advice and consent, but no final decision has been reached. If confirmed, I will ensure that the State Department remains fully engaged in the interagency process considering the Kigali Amendment.

Question. Are you aware of the Senate's strong bi-partisan support for the Kigali Amendment and, if you have not already, will you read the attached letter of support for the Kigali Amendment from 13 Senate Republicans, led by Senator John Kennedy of Louisiana, and signed by three members of this committee, and commit to reaching out to Sen. Kennedy to discuss the Kigali Amendment and brief him on the status of the Administration's deliberations?

Answer. I am aware of the letter and, if confirmed, I would be happy to discuss this issue with Senator Kennedy and other co-signers.

Question. Are you aware of the strong support for the Kigali Amendment from affected U.S. industry leaders?

Answer. I understand the Administration is aware of U.S. industry's views and that the State Department and other agencies are in regular communication with industry leaders on this issue.

Question. Will you reach out to these industry leaders to understand their perspective on how U.S. ratification of the Kigali Amendment improves their global economic competiveness and to brief them on the status of the Administration's deliberations?

Answer. If confirmed, I will work with colleagues in the State Department to continue to work closely with all relevant stakeholders, including U.S. industry, as the Administration considers the Kigali Amendment.

Administrative

Question. Do you agree that any targeting of or retaliation against career employees based on their perceived political beliefs, prior work on policy, or affiliation with a previous administration, is wholly inappropriate and has no place in the federal government? If confirmed, what will you do to ensure that all employees under your leadership understand that any retaliation, blacklisting, or other prohibited personnel practices will not be tolerated?

Answer. I view our Foreign and Civil Service employees in the highest regard. Having now met with many of them in preparation for my hearings before the committee, I have been impressed with their professionalism, patriotism, and expertise. Career civil servants and Foreign Service employees should be evaluated on merit and are protected under law from being treated differently due to their real or perceived political affiliation or beliefs. As the Secretary has said, such prohibited personnel actions will not be tolerated at the State Department. If confirmed, I will ensure that employees under my leadership understand the rules and understand that they have the ability to report prohibited actions to the appropriate authorities, for example the Office of the Inspector General.

Question. Has anyone ever made a formal or informal complaint or allegation of sexual harassment, discrimination (e.g., racial, ethnic, religious, etc.), or inappropriate conduct against you, in a workplace or any other setting? If so, please describe the nature of the complaint or allegation, your response, and any resolution, including any settlements.

Answer. I take the issues of sexual harassment, discrimination (e.g., racial, ethnic, religious, etc.), and inappropriate conduct with the utmost seriousness and do not tolerate any types of behavior that could be considered discriminatory. I would be happy to speak with you on the importance of these and similar topics of this nature, and give you my perspective on the need to treat everyone with respect, courtesy, and fairness.

Question. Have you ever addressed concerns or allegations of sexual harassment, discrimination (e.g., racial, ethnic, religious, etc.), or inappropriate conduct made against any employee over whom you had supervisory authority? If so, please describe the outcome and actions taken.

Answer. I take the issues of sexual harassment, discrimination (e.g., racial, ethnic, religious, etc.), and inappropriate conduct with the utmost seriousness and do not tolerate any types of behavior that could be considered discriminatory. I would be happy to speak with you on the importance of these and similar topics of this nature, and give you my perspective on the need to treat everyone with respect, courtesy, and fairness.

RESPONSES TO ADDITIONAL QUESTIONS FOR THE RECORD
SUBMITTED TO KEITH KRACH BY SENATOR BENJAMIN L. CARDIN

Human Rights

Question. What are the most important actions you have taken in your career to date to promote human rights and democracy? What has been the impact of your actions?

Answer. Even though I haven't served in government, I have focused on reinforcing human rights and democracy by putting American values into action in the business, education, and social sectors around the world.

Business sector

I helped to build four category-defining companies that have had a positive impact on productivity, standard of living, human empowerment, and the health of the planet. As I mentioned in my opening statement, my goal was always to create values-driven companies that were built to last. The values I worked to instill in my companies are fundamental principles of transparency, courtesy and respect for all, and accountability. U.S. companies serve as a model to promote good governance, human rights, and democracy around the world.

Social sector

As the founder and chairman of the DocuSign Impact Foundation, I led our team with the mission to transform lives through commitment to noble causes. We instituted a one-for-one match for employee's contributions to their favorite charities, which provided $30 million for these organizations. I also served on the board of Opportunity International, the largest global private issuer of micro loans, as chairman of the advisory board of New Story- which builds homes in third world countries, and as co-founder of the Children's Autistic Network.

If confirmed, I will look for ways to have synergistic public/private partnerships with non-profits, to be a force for good in developing countries, and to amplify the moral high ground of American values by bringing the power of entrepreneurship and economic empowerment of women and the social sector alive.

Diversity

Question. What will you do to promote, mentor and support your staff that come from diverse backgrounds and underrepresented groups in the Foreign Service?

Answer. My life's work has been focused on creating innovative companies and transformative social causes by building high-performance teams that challenge the status quo. You cannot do that with old ideas and ways of thinking. I believe the team with the best people wins and that diversity of thought on any team is the catalyst for genius. You cannot have diversity of thought without having individuals from diverse backgrounds, particularly underrepresented groups. I pledge to you that I will do all that I can to recruit, support, and mentor a Foreign and Civil Service not only on my staff but throughout the Department that matches the incredible diversity of this country. The Foreign Service Act directs the Department to be representative of the American people and to do that we must encourage varied viewpoints and thinking at all levels. With that aim in mind, if confirmed, I will be hon-

ored to work side-by-side with our accomplished and committed diplomatic corps and with you to make this diversity a reality. I would also prioritize recruitment, training, and acquisition of appropriate tools and resources for the success of all employees.

Question. What steps will you take to ensure each of the supervisors in the Foreign Service are fostering an environment that is diverse and inclusive?

Answer. As I have sought to do in my private business and philanthropic work, I believe it is essential for any truly effective leader to model the inclusive behavior I have outlined above for supervisors, and, if confirmed, I pledge to do so. In cases where modeling has not been entirely effective, I will take swift and effective action to ensure Department employees are supervised by those who foster a diverse and inclusive workplace free from any form of discrimination. Additionally, to foster diversity I would support the utilization of recruitment and development programs such as the Pickering Fellowship, Rangel Fellowship, and others. I also believe that training is as essential for supervisors as it is for employees, and I will make every effort to have supervisors take part in leadership, diversity, and other training to ensure a workplace free of discrimination and harassment. I will also encourage mentoring and the use of career advancement and leadership development courses for promising employees.

Conflicts of Interest

Question. Do you commit to bring to the committee's attention (and the Inspector General of the State Department and Foreign Service) any change in policy or U.S. actions that you suspect may be influenced by any of the President's business or financial interests, or the business or financial interests of any senior White House staff?

Answer. I commit to comply with all relevant federal ethics laws, regulations, and rules, and to raise concerns that I may have through appropriate channels.

Question. Do you commit to inform the committee if you have any reason to suspect that a foreign government, head of state, or foreign-controlled entity is taking any action in order to benefit any of the President's business or financial interests, or the interests of senior White House staff?

Answer. I commit to comply with all relevant federal ethics laws, regulations, and rules, and to raise concerns that I may have through appropriate channels.

Question. Do you or do any members of your immediate family have any financial interests in any country abroad?

Answer. As listed on my financial disclosure form, I am a passive investor in several foreign-based private investment funds. Pursuant to the Ethics Agreement I executed, if confirmed I will divest these interests.

Small Business

Question. Both at home and around the world, small businesses help drive innovation and economic growth. In developing countries in particular, they help build state capacity. I am working with Congressman Joaquin Castro to update and introduce the Global Small Business Network Act, which supports expanding the existing Small Business Development Center model-already adopted by Central America, South America, and the Caribbean-to Southeast Asia.

- If confirmed, will you commit to use your role to support economic security in partner countries through promoting small business and entrepreneurship?

Answer. To promote American prosperity and jobs, Secretary Pompeo and the Department of State advance key relationships to secure commercial opportunities and foster investment and innovation. If confirmed, I will work to promote U.S. small business and entrepreneurship opportunities in partner countries.

As you are aware, U.S. embassies and consulates support development of entrepreneurial values and job creation through small business development.

We also advocate vigorously for open, fair, and transparent markets as an essential condition for U.S. and foreign entrepreneurs to create economic growth and jobs. If confirmed, I will seek to leverage all efforts in a way that engages U.S. small businesses and boosts entrepreneurship.

WEEE Act Implementation

Question. In January of this year, the President signed into law the Women's Entrepreneurship and Economic Empowerment Act, which aims to reduce-and eventually eliminate-gender disparities related to economic participation. The WEEE Act

supports women's property rights and capability to determine life outcomes, among other actions.

- If confirmed, will you commit to use your role to promote not only micro, small, and medium sized enterprises globally, but especially businesses owned, managed, and controlled by women?
- Will you commit to the committee to provide regular updates on the Bureau's progress in this regard?

Answer. I am fully committed to supporting women's entrepreneurship and economic empowerment, and to implementing the objectives of the WEEE Act.

Women's economic empowerment contributes to the overall advancement of U.S. economic interests, aligns with the National Security Strategy, and supports the recently launched White House-led Women's Global Development and Prosperity (W-GDP) Initiative. If confirmed, I would welcome the opportunity to provide updates to the committee on the State Department's work in support of the WEEE Act, as well as the W-GDP Initiative.

Tariffs

Question. What are the risks to the international trading system of continued unilateral action on tariffs by the United States?

- Does the U.S. defense of certain industries, such as steel and aluminum, on national security grounds set a precedent for other countries to use similar exemptions to impose trade barriers against the United States?

Answer. Our goal is to ensure that hard work and innovation are rewarded and there is a level playing field for U.S. companies, while unfair trade practices and illegal government subsidies are punished. For many years after World War II, the United States benefited from a global trading system that generally encouraged more efficient markets here and around the world. However, there are significant flaws in that trading system that are hurting American workers and businesses. Existing trade agreements have become imbalanced and outdated, and efforts to negotiate new rules within the multilateral trading system have failed. In fact, the global trading system has created unsustainable imbalances that appear to be tilted in favor of non-market economies like China.

It is critical to take actions to protect our national security and to obtain fairer and better treatment for U.S. companies and workers. If confirmed, I look forward to working with Congress, my interagency counterparts, and private sector and civil society stakeholders to help open markets for American goods and services while protecting American workers and businesses from unfair competition.

Paris Agreement

Question. This is a critical time for U.S. climate action. As you know, in December 2018, we had a successful COP24 summit, due in large part to continued U.S. participation and input in high level climate strategy discussions.

- Will you commit to maintaining U.S. engagement throughout the remainder of its membership to the Paris Agreement?

Answer. If confirmed, I will ensure that the United States remains engaged internationally on the issue of climate change to advance and protect U.S. interests, working with other countries to help drive innovation and market-friendly solutions, so that our efforts to protect the environment and grow our economy are mutually supportive. I will ensure that the United States is actively engaged in international climate change negotiations, as appropriate.

Question. How will you continue to advance these efforts after we withdraw from the Agreement in 2020?

Answer. If confirmed, I will ensure that the United States remains engaged internationally on the issue of climate change to advance and protect U.S. interests, working with other countries to help drive innovation and market-friendly solutions, so that our efforts to protect the environment and grow our economy are mutually supportive.

Question. Will you share with this committee your post-2020 strategy to maintain and/or advance U.S. strategic and economic interests within the Paris Agreement framework?

Answer. As I am not a government employee, I have not been engaged in conversations concerning this matter. Regardless of our participation in the Paris Agreement, we will continue to advance U.S. strategic and economic interests

through active participation in international climate change negotiations, as appropriate, to protect U.S. economic and environmental interests.

RESPONSES TO ADDITIONAL QUESTIONS FOR THE RECORD
SUBMITTED TO KEITH KRACH BY SENATOR JEANNE SHAHEEN

Question. The Trump administration has emphasized "great powers" competition as a pillar of its foreign and national security policy, and at the same time has focused its economic and trade policies on withdrawing from multilateral agreements, such as the Trans-Pacific Partnership, in favor of bilateral negotiations:

- In your view, what is the impact on U.S. economic influence in the world when the United States steps back from its international partnerships?

Answer. The Administration has revised U.S. trade agreements and focused on much stricter enforcement of U.S. trade laws to create a more level playing field for American workers and a more fair and efficient global economy. President Trump withdrew from the Trans-Pacific Partnership and is negotiating better trade deals. NAFTA was renegotiated into the United States-Mexico-Canada Agreement (USMCA) to rebalance America's trade relationships and better serve the interests of American workers, farmers, ranchers, and businesses.

The administration will continue pursuing new trade deals with strategic partners, including the launch of new trade negotiations with Japan, the European Union, and the United Kingdom and to deepen trade with Kenya through a trade and investment working group. If confirmed, I look forward to working with Congress, my interagency counterparts, and our partners around the world to strengthen our international partnerships and create economic opportunities for all Americans.

Question. On March 22, President Xi was in Rome to sign a memorandum of understanding with Italy, the first G-7 country to join the Belt and Road Initiative:

- What are the implications for U.S. interests when a member of the G-7 breaks with its allies on an issue as serious as economic partnership with China?

Answer. It is important that we underscore the value of enduring international norms and standards as well as the continued benefits of cooperation among G7 nations in our mutual interests. The investment model practiced by the U.S. private sector offers commercially viable solutions, on transparent and financially sustainable terms, to the long-term benefit of partner countries.

This approach offers an alternative to state-directed, predatory investment and lending practices that often leave countries worse off. If confirmed, I will work with our allies and partners, including the G7, to promote fair, transparent, and market-based approaches to economic engagement that are also consistent with our values.

Question. If confirmed, how would you approach countering Chinese influence among our closest allies and how would you advocate with partners, as Italy did last week, who have drawn on the Administration's "America First" slogan to pursue their own interests rather than our mutual interests?

Answer. The United States and our allies and partners, including Italy, have longstanding and economic and political ties. If confirmed, I will work closely with our partners to highlight ?areas in which we believe Chinese actions pose a risk to their economic or national security interests. Our partners are sovereign nations that will make their own decisions, but I am confident they will make good decisions when they understand the risk.

I would also underscore the value of enduring international norms and cooperation with the United States in advancing our mutual interests.

Question. China has undergone significant market reform, but the transition to a fully free-market economy has clearly stalled. China abuses the rules and norms of the institutions that it has become a part of, including the World Trade Organization, in order to further its own strategic interests:

- Does the U.S. have a clear strategy to counter Chinese efforts to degrade the free market norms of these multilateral trade institutions? If confirmed, what partners would you work with in order to address China's economic and trade policies, especially China's delinquent membership in bodies such as the WTO?

Answer. The trading system is inherently flawed, with problems that have affected U.S. trade agreements as well as global trade institutions. That system rewarded countries like China that engaged in unfair and market-distorting trading

practices. China's behavior has been undermining the global trading system and the WTO for years, using its protected market to force technology transfers and acquiring leading technology companies overseas. Import substitution policies, like China's Made in China 2025 initiative, clearly state that China seeks to take away domestic and international market share from foreigners, in defiance of global norms.

The United States and other WTO Members have focused on WTO reform, with G20 Leaders expressing support for the necessary reform of the WTO to improve its functioning. The Administration believes that WTO reform must address the unanticipated challenges of non-market economies, such as China. The United States is working with the European Union and Japan under a trilateral process to address these challenges. If confirmed, I look forward to working with Congress, my interagency counterparts, and our partners around the world to develop a common understanding of the harm posed by China's economic and trade policies, to build support for WTO reform proposals, and to ensure we continue to defend the interests of American workers, farmers, and businesses.

RESPONSES TO ADDITIONAL QUESTIONS FOR THE RECORD
SUBMITTED TO KEITH KRACH BY SENATOR EDWARD J. MARKEY

Question. There are now 350,000 wind and solar jobs in our country. Compare that to only 50,000 coal jobs. Meanwhile, 50,000 solar jobs were created in 2016 alone. Do you commit to promoting renewable energy as a job-creation engine for our economy?

Answer. Advancing clean energy technologies and energy efficiency are key elements of an overall approach to promote diversified energy supply for the United States and our partners and allies. Global renewable energy markets will only grow in importance over the next decades and are projected to account for almost two-thirds of the expected $11 trillion global investment in power generation through 2040.

U.S. technology positions U.S. firms to be major exporters, integrators, and developers of the full range of renewable energy technologies. This can serve to complement economic growth, lessen dependence on unstable or nefarious foreign sources, and increase energy access. Emerging economies like China, India, Indonesia, and others are poised to see explosive growth in energy consumption. Promoting U.S. technologies, business models, and financing sources abroad will be critical to capturing this $7 trillion market. U.S. jobs in export-oriented sectors can complement the exciting growth in domestic renewable energy manufacturing, installation, and servicing employment.

The State Department leads coordinated U.S. government efforts to encourage the adoption and implementation of policies and programs to promote U.S. economic interests and improve energy security through bilateral, multilateral, and regional engagements. If confirmed, I will advocate strongly for the adoption of U.S. business and finance models across the globe and open, transparent global energy markets in which U.S. companies can successfully complete.

Question. Do you think climate change is a problem? Should we be working with our allies and partners to address climate change? If we are not party to the Paris Agreement, is the United States truly a leader when it comes to protecting the environment?

Answer. I believe that climate change is a complex global challenge and that the United States should maintain its leadership and influence in multilateral policy forums, including international climate change negotiations, regardless of our position on the Paris Agreement. If confirmed, I will seek to maintain U.S. leadership to advance and protect U.S. economic and environmental interests, including by participating in ongoing international climate change negotiations. We will continue to work with other countries to reduce greenhouse gas emissions and enhance resilience in ways that drive innovation and market-friendly solutions, while ensuring energy security.

Question. How do you plan to address the United States' participation in upcoming international meetings on climate change, including the U.N. Climate Change Conference at the end of this year?

Answer. I believe the United States should maintain its leadership and influence in these multilateral policy forums regardless of our position on the Paris Agreement. If confirmed, I will seek to maintain U.S. leadership to advance and protect

U.S. economic and environmental interests, including by participating in ongoing international climate change negotiations.

Question. Do you believe it acceptable that religious freedom can be used, in any case, as a justification for policies that criminalize, stigmatize or otherwise discriminate against LGBTI people, relationships, or organizations?

Answer. There is no justification for criminalization of LGBTI status, nor for violence against LGBTI persons, nor for discrimination in housing, employment or the provision of government services. Respect for the inherent dignity of every human person is a universal duty, and is the foundation of an effective foreign policy. If confirmed, I will work closely with colleagues across the State Department and beyond to promote respect for fundamental freedoms, human rights and democratic governance for all people, including LGBTI persons. governments around the world must understand they are obligated to provide every citizen with equal protection under the law, and if confirmed, I would stand forcefully for that principle.

I see no inherent tension between the U.S. government's longstanding effort to protect the human rights of LGBTI people globally and concepts of international religious freedom. In fact, the U.S. government promotes all these rights for exactly the same reason: we believe every person has the right to equal protection of the laws. All have an equal right to be free to live their lives without fear of persecution.

United States policy is to oppose criminalization, bias-motivated violence, and serious discrimination targeting LGBTI persons in areas such as employment, housing, or the provision of government services. If confirmed, I look forward to the opportunity to advance those principles.

Question. Following the designations of five individuals and two units for atrocities against the Rohingya population in 2017, the United States has refrained from sanctioning other senior Burmese military officials. Do you believe there should be additional sanctions against the Burmese military, including on Commander-in-chief Min Aung Hlaing? What will you do to make sure U.S. policy protects the rights and dignities of the Rohingya and holds perpetrators of mass atrocities accountable?

Answer. If confirmed, I will support the Department of State's efforts to promote accountability for those responsible for these abuses and achieving justice for victims. I support continued U.S. leadership of the international response to the crisis and efforts to deter further atrocities. In my role, I will work with my Department of State and interagency colleagues to consider the utility of all policy tools at our disposal, including sanctions where appropriate.

Question. How you will use your position to make sure the United States is seen as a leader and partner with the Indo-Pacific, particularly in maintaining robust economic and commercial ties to the region?

Answer. Our vision for a free and open Indo-Pacific excludes no nation. Our approach is centered on private-sector led development, innovation, and open markets.

No government has enough money to meet the region's economic and development needs. Countries that rely on state-dominated funding for development crowd out the private-sector investments their economies need to promote long-lasting prosperity and stability.

Private companies shun markets that are not transparent, unstable, and corrupt. If confirmed, I will work to foster private sector-led growth, address the infrastructure gap and uneven economic development, and help build welcoming business environments to promote mutual prosperity.

Question. How would you make sure that our North Korea sanctions enforcement efforts are communicated clearly and effectively?

Answer. As the Secretary has made clear, pressure is what opened the door for diplomacy, and pressure will ensure the DPRK's final, fully verified denuclearization. Sanctions remain in full effect until North Korea denuclearizes. If confirmed, I plan to engage actively with the international community, to include outreach on U.S. sanctions actions, and call on countries to strictly implement all sanctions.

Question. Do you support the appointment of a designated focal point in the interagency to coordinate our sanctions efforts?

Answer. Sanctions are a fundamental tool of diplomacy and the timely implementation of sanctions is critical to United States foreign policy objectives.

Sanctions coordination will be a priority for me, if confirmed. I believe we have to be thoughtful and deliberative in assessing where we have been successful and where we may need further resources to ensure institutional success without cre-

ating unnecessary bureaucracy and inefficiencies. If confirmed, I will carefully evaluate this issue.

Question. What steps would you take to ensure that China, Russia, and other enablers of the Kim regime are held accountable for violations of sanctions?

Answer. The United States continues to work with governments around the world, including China and Russia, to ensure all nations are fully implementing U.N. sanctions obligations. All U.N. Member States are required to implement U.N. Security Council sanctions resolutions and we expect them all to continue doing so.

RESPONSES TO ADDITIONAL QUESTIONS FOR THE RECORD
SUBMITTED TO DAVID STILWELL BY SENATOR MARCO RUBIO

Question. What will be your top priorities to counter Chinese influence in the Indo-Pacific region?

Answer. The Indo-Pacific strategy is built on principles that are widely shared throughout the region: ensuring the freedom of the seas and skies; insulating sovereign nations from external coercion; promoting market-based economics, open investment environments, fair and reciprocal trade; and supporting good governance and respect for individual rights.

The United States seeks a constructive, results-oriented relationship with China, wherever possible, but if confirmed I will not shy away from speaking forthrightly and contesting Chinese policies and actions that undermine the rules-based international order that has fostered peace and prosperity in the Indo-Pacific for decades.

Question. How do regional U.S. allies such as Australia, Japan, the Philippines, South Korea, Taiwan, and Thailand fit into the U.S. vision for a "free and open Indo-Pacific"?

Answer. Our strong relationships with allies and partners deliver invaluable benefits. Five of our seven non-NATO treaty allies, plus Taiwan, are in the Indo-Pacific. Their capabilities, and a shared vision of the principles that underpin a free and open international order, provide critical comparative advantage over those who challenge our presence in the Indo-Pacific. If confirmed, I will work with Japan, Australia, Korea, the Philippines, Thailand, New Zealand, the Compact States, Singapore, Taiwan, and others to strengthen security and cyber capabilities, combat transnational crime, foster sound economic growth, good governance, and transparency and uphold the rules-based international order.

Question. If confirmed, will you commit to reviewing and updating the 2015 State Department's "Guidelines on Relations with Taiwan"?

Answer. Yes. I understand that the Department periodically updates and issues a memorandum detailing executive branch guidelines on relations with Taiwan, which reflects current U.S. policy related to Taiwan. If confirmed, I will explore the possibility of potentially updating these guidelines.

Question. As part of that review, do you commit that you will evaluate and potentially update the State Department's internal guidance to allow for more U.S. official engagement with Taiwan?

Answer. Yes. I will seek opportunities for visits to Washington and Taipei by senior-level officials and authorities that advance our robust unofficial relationship and enable substantive exchanges on issues of mutual concern, consistent with the Taiwan Relations Act and the U.S. One China Policy.

Question. Pursuant to the 2015 Guidelines Memo on U.S. relations with Taiwan, the Taiwanese flag was removed from the State Department's website. If confirmed, will you commit to reviewing this and potentially updating the guidelines?

Answer. I am not familiar with the specific circumstance that led to the removal of the Taiwan flag. If confirmed, I commit to reviewing the situation and will explore the possibility of potentially updating the guidelines.

Question. Do you commit to supporting high-level Taiwanese officials to enter the United States under conditions that are of appropriately respectful for the dignity of such high-level officials pursuant to the Taiwan Travel Act (Public Law 115-135) which encourages high-level visits between U.S. and Taiwanese officials?

Answer. Yes. If confirmed, I will seek opportunities for visits to Washington and Taipei by senior-level officials and authorities that advance our robust unofficial re-

lationship and enable substantive exchanges on issues of mutual concern, consistent with the Taiwan Relations Act and the U.S. One China Policy.

Question. In recent years, governments have switched diplomatic relations from Taiwan to China due to pressure from Beijing. If confirmed, what will you do to help Taiwan maintain and expand official relations with friendly nations and warn U.S. allies of the risks associated with doing business with China?

Answer. Taiwan is a democratic success story, a reliable partner, and a force for good in the world. The United States must continue to support Taiwan as it seeks to expand its already significant contributions to addressing global challenges, and as Taiwan resists efforts to constrain its appropriate participation on the world stage.

Working with our allies and partners, we are expressing our concerns that Chinese infrastructure development and financing is often not coordinated with other donors or development banks. We are raising awareness that, in many cases, the resulting debt loads are unsustainable. If confirmed, I pledge to continue this important work.

Question. If confirmed, do you commit to supporting Taiwan's ability to defend itself against Chinese aggression?

Answer. Yes. If confirmed, I commit to fully implement the provisions of the Taiwan Relations Act under which the United States makes available to Taiwan defense articles and services in such quantity necessary to enable Taiwan to maintain a sufficient self-defense capability.

Answer. Taiwan's defensive capability gives it the confidence to engage with the mainland in dialogue to improve cross-Strait relations. In this context, our arms sales to Taiwan support peace and stability—not only in the Taiwan Strait, but also across the entire Asia Pacific region.

Question. What is your view on the principle of reciprocity in the context of U.S.-China relations?

Answer. I view reciprocity as a key aspect of our relationship with China in order to ensure Americans are not disadvantaged, be it in trade, visa policy, academic access, or other areas.

The United States National Security Strategy recognizes China as a strategic competitor. This reflects our increasing concerns about Chinese actions that undermine American interests.

If confirmed, I will not shy away from speaking forthrightly and contesting Chinese policies and actions that undermine reciprocity and the international order that has fostered peace and prosperity in the Indo-Pacific for decades.

Question. If confirmed, will you support the use of Global Magnitsky Act sanctions on Chinese officials implicated in gross human rights abuses, in particular abuses in Xinjiang, where credible estimates suggest up to a million Uyghurs and other Muslims are arbitrarily detained and subjected to gross human rights abuses in "political re-education" camps?

Answer. I am deeply troubled by the Chinese government's worsening crackdown on the human rights and fundamental freedoms of Uighurs, ethnic Kazakhs, and other members of Muslim minority groups in the Xinjiang Uyghur Autonomous Region and elsewhere in China. China's detention of more than one million individuals in Xinjiang since April 2017 is illustrative of the worsening human rights situation. If confirmed, I am committed to supporting the implementation of the Global Magnitsky sanctions program and promoting the pursuit of targets that reflect our deep concern for human rights and corruption issues, including with respect to Xinjiang.

Question. If confirmed, will you commit to developing a longer-term U.S. strategy to address human rights abuses in China?

Answer. I am deeply concerned about the worsening human rights situation in China. I understand that the United States coordinates closely with likeminded partners to address China's systemic human rights abuses and to press individual cases of concern. If confirmed, I am committed to continuing to take a long-term strategic approach to addressing China's human rights violations and abuses, and promote accountability. As part of this approach, I will support the Indo-Pacific Transparency Initiative's drive for accountable governance and the Department's global diplomatic campaign to galvanize international pressure on China to limit or halt its repression of Uighurs, ethnic Kazakhs, Kyrgyz, and members of other Muslim minority groups in Xinjiang and elsewhere in China.

Question. If Washington hopes to deter the militarization of the South China Sea, it has to take a tougher stance now. What can be done to support this U.S. goal?

Answer. China's efforts to assert its sovereignty claims over disputed land features and its unlawful maritime claims in the South China Sea, including through massive land reclamation, construction, and militarization of outposts, threaten the security and economic interests of our allies and partners, as well as the broader rules-based order in the Indo-Pacific that has been vital to American security and prosperity. If confirmed, I intend to work with interagency partners to use the range of national security tools that we have—diplomatic, economic, and military—to ensure the South China Sea remains free and open.

Question. If confirmed, will you commit to pressing the Chinese government for a resolution over the Tibet issue and to pressing Chinese authorities to guarantee unfettered access to Tibet for American citizens as required by the Reciprocal Access to Tibet Act (Public Law 115-330)?

Answer. If confirmed, I will fully implement the Tibetan Policy Act and the Reciprocal Access to Tibet Act. I will press the Chinese government to enter into dialogue with the Dalai Lama or his representatives, without preconditions, to seek a resolution of longstanding differences. I will also press Chinese authorities for reciprocity regarding the open access that China and many other countries enjoy in the United States. I am committed to working closely with Congress in pursuit of our shared goal of seeing Americans have full access to China, including to the Tibetan Autonomous Region and other Tibetan areas.

Question. If confirmed, what steps will you take to strengthen the U.S. government's efforts to push the Burmese government to cooperate with international investigators over the recent atrocities against the Rohingya population?

Answer. If confirmed, I will work closely with the U.S. Mission to the United Nations, as well as with like-minded countries and regional partners, to press the government of Burma to grant unhindered access for established U.N. mechanisms, including the International Investigative Mechanism for Myanmar, the U.N. Special Rapporteur on Myanmar, and the U.N. Special Envoy to Myanmar. The United States has played a key role in creating and funding these mechanisms and has supported their efforts to promote accountability for atrocities and other human rights abuses in Burma.

Question. If confirmed, will you use your position to help enhance targeted sanctions on Burmese military commanders implicated in human rights abuses, by directing resources to support efforts to identify perpetrators and obtain information required to have them sanctioned under the Global Magnitsky Act?

Answer. If confirmed, I will support vigorous efforts to identify and hold accountable perpetrators of atrocities in Burma. The Global Magnitsky Human Rights Accountability Act is a valuable tool Congress has provided to promote accountability for gross violations of human rights around the globe and I will seek to use it along with the full range of tools available to the U.S. government to advance accountability in Burma.

Question. Will you pledge to advocate within the State Department and to the Secretary of State, as requested by many members of Congress, including myself, to reach a formal determination about whether the atrocities committed against the Rohingya by Burmese security forces in Rakhine State amount to crimes against humanity or genocide?

Answer. I am deeply concerned about and appalled by the Burmese military's ethnic cleansing of Rohingya and the ongoing humanitarian crisis. The process for deciding whether and when to make a determination that certain acts may amount to genocide, crimes against humanity, or ethnic cleansing, has historically been reserved within the Executive Branch to the Secretary of State. If confirmed, I will seek to advise the Secretary on any future determinations as they fit into the Department's overarching objectives of easing the humanitarian crisis, seeking accountability for those that committed atrocities, deterring future such atrocities, and addressing root causes of violence.

Question. Do you commit to pushing for accountability for the atrocities committed-not just against the Rohingya in Rakhine State, but also against other ethnic minority groups in Burma targeted by the military?

Answer. If confirmed, I will prioritize promoting accountability for the perpetrators of these gross violations of human rights and ensuring justice for victims. I will aim to continue the United States' leadership of the international response to the crisis and efforts to deter further atrocities. In this regard, I will consider the utility

of all policy tools at our disposal. I also will continue U.S. efforts to support Burma's transition to a civilian-led democracy and to address the root causes of the violence in all regions of Burma. Further, I will seek to ensure the generous humanitarian funding from Congress is used effectively to relieve suffering and underwrite reconciliation and development efforts.

RESPONSES TO ADDITIONAL QUESTIONS FOR THE RECORD
SUBMITTED TO DAVID STILWELL BY SENATOR ROBERT MENENDEZ

Question. If confirmed, you are joining an administration that has, quite frankly, been very inconsistent on its approach to our allies and alliances, certainly in Europe but also in Asia. It's a view and approach I find deeply troubling. But the President's own words and tweets—which are U.S. policy—have been extremely divisive. Secretary Pompeo has also been clear that the President deserves a team that supports him, and that if you can't support the president don't work for the administration. That's a view I share, by the way. We can and must vet to make sure that people are capable and computer [sic] and not corrupt, and that their views are not dangerously out of the mainstream, but presidents do deserve their own teams.

- Do you associate yourself with all of the president's views on our allies and alliances?

Answer. I recognize the invaluable advantages that our strong relationships with allies and partners deliver. Five of our treaty allies are in the Indo-Pacific. Their capabilities, and a shared vision of the principles that underpin a free and open international order, provide critical comparative advantage over those who challenge our presence in the Indo-Pacific. Under the leadership of President Trump and Secretary Pompeo, this Administration has taken concrete steps to strengthen our alliances and partnerships in the East Asia and Pacific region to uphold the rules-based order. The Indo-Pacific Strategy is about ensuring competition is fair and transparent and bounded by the commonly shared principles of the rules-based order.

Question. What role do you see for U.S. alliances in the region?

Answer. I recognize the invaluable advantages that our strong relationships with allies and partners deliver. Five of our treaty allies are in the Indo-Pacific. Their capabilities, and a shared vision of the principles that underpin a free and open international order, provide critical comparative advantage over those who challenge our presence in the Indo-Pacific. If confirmed, I look forward to finding ways to strengthen our relations with our allies and partners.

Question. How do you view the role of human rights in U.S. national security and foreign policy in general, and as an issue in the bilateral relationship with China?

Answer. Promoting respect for human rights and fundamental freedoms, including freedom of religion or belief, is a key component of American foreign policy. If confirmed, I am committed to ensuring that advancing respect for the rule of law and human rights and fundamental freedoms remain key priorities in our bilateral relationship with China.

Question. Are there particular issues—Xinjiang, Tibet, broader closure of civil society space under President Xi—that you find troubling?

Answer. I am deeply concerned about the worsening human rights situation in China. I am alarmed by the Chinese government's crackdown on Uighurs, ethnic Kazakhs, and other members of Muslim minority groups in Xinjiang and elsewhere in China. I share Congress's concerns about the lack of respect for human rights and fundamental freedoms in Tibet, and the lack of regular access to the Tibetan Autonomous Region and other Tibetan areas for Americans. I am concerned by China's arbitrary detention of lawyers and human rights defenders. Finally, I am troubled by the increasing restrictions on Chinese civil society and the significant obstacles faced by U.S. NGOs in China as a result of the implementation of the Foreign NGO Management Law.

Question. If confirmed, how will you prioritize these issues in your portfolio?

Answer. If confirmed, I am committed to working closely with Congress to advance the Administration's priorities with regard to improving respect for human rights and fundamental freedoms in China and to addressing human rights issues there, including China's systemic abuses as well as individual cases of concern. Lim-

iting or halting China's campaign of repression and mass detention of Uighurs, ethnic Kazakhs, and other members of Muslims minority groups in Xinjiang and elsewhere in China must be a top priority given the scale and severity of abuses. If confirmed, I am committed to continuing the Department of State's efforts to galvanize international pressure on China to end these counterproductive and repressive policies and to release all those who are arbitrarily detained.

Question. What diplomatic tools do you think the United States can effectively use to address these issues with China?

Answer. The United States has a diverse set of policy tools to address China's human rights abuses. These tools include strengthening our diplomatic and public diplomacy efforts throughout the world; imposing economic costs; placing export restrictions on items that can be misused or on entities that act in a manner inconsistent with U.S. foreign policy; and imposing visa restrictions on individuals involved in or responsible for human rights abuse. If confirmed, I am committed to using all tools available as appropriate to promote the accountability of Chinese officials responsible for human rights abuses and to press for greater respect for rule of law and human rights and fundamental freedoms, including freedom of religion and belief.

Question. Do you believe that climate change is driven by human activity?

Answer. The United States must support a balanced approach to promoting economic growth and energy security and access that also protects the environment. U.S. energy-related CO2 emissions fell by 14 percent between 2005 and 2017, even as our economy grew by 19.4 percent. This has been possible because of innovation and entrepreneurship that has allowed for the development and large-scale deployment of new, affordable, and cleaner energy technologies.

Climate change is a complex global challenge. If confirmed, I will work with other U.S. government agencies to ensure that U.S. policy in the East Asian and Pacific region is informed by the bt scientific and intelligence assessments, including on the role of human activities in influencing the global climate system.

Question. Given the existential threat that rising sea levels from climate change pose for the Pacific Island nations as well as heavily urbanized low-lying coastal areas in Southeast Asia—and given the Trump administration's withdrawal from the Paris Accords and general denial of climate change—how do you intend to address climate change, if confirmed?

Answer. I understand that the United States continues to help our partner countries reduce emissions from forests and other lands, adapt to the impacts of climate change, and respond to natural disasters. Regardless of our position on the Paris Agreement, the United States must continue to lead the world in providing affordable, abundant, and secure energy to our citizens, while protecting the environment and reducing emissions through job-creating innovation.

The United States has long been engaged in supporting disaster risk reduction programs aimed at saving lives and reducing the impact of disasters worldwide.

If confirmed, I will ensure that U.S. policy in the East Asian and Pacific region will ultimately enable us to achieve our climate and energy security goals.

Question. What is your assessment of the current state of the peace process and ethnic and national reconciliation—including in Rakhine state—in Burma?

Answer. The government of Burma has said progress on the country's national peace and reconciliation process is a top priority, though there has been limited progress since the civilian government came to office in 2016. Burma has encountered significant obstacles in its national peace process and ethnic and national reconciliation. One common denominator is the negative role of the Burmese armed forces—the Tatmadaw—which continue to commit atrocities and other human rights abuses, particularly against members of ethnic minorities. While the government has a right to respond to attacks against it, it is incumbent on the Burmese military to respect human rights of all people in Burma and to protect civilians during military operations.

Question. How do you think the United States should engage with Burma given the Rohingya genocide, given the on-going violence in Kachin and Shan states, and elsewhere?

Answer. I believe that we should seek to support through engagement and foreign assistance those elements of civil society, business, and government that seek reform and to enshrine the institutions of democracy, good governance, free markets, and respect for human rights. We should continue to condemn—through diplomacy, public messaging, and targeted sanctions—those individuals and groups that com-

mit human rights abuses and benefit from corruption, especially those in uniform. The scale of atrocities committed by the security forces against Rohingya and other ethnic minorities is appalling. Our actions to address these atrocities should not undermine the civilian government's reform efforts to the detriment of vulnerable communities.

Question. What is your assessment of the situation and the drivers behind the Filipino request for clarification?

Answer. Philippine policymakers and defense planners value clarity on U.S. strategic thinking in a contingency situation in the South China Sea and the Pacific Area. Our Mutual Defense Treaty lays out a process in Article Three for periodic consultation on the implementation of the Treaty, so it is expected that our allies seek to have these kinds of frank, open discussions.

Question. What sort of clarification do you think the United States can and should provide—and how do we establish a coordinated process so as to avoid the sort of damaging misstep that Secretary Pompeo appears to have made?

Answer. The Secretary's March 1 clarification on the applicability of the Mutual Defense Treaty represented a significant reaffirmation of U.S. commitment to the Philippines, and I understand that President Duterte and Philippine cabinet officials have welcomed it. Top officials from the Office of the President and the Department of Foreign Affairs have expressed their satisfaction with this clarification and have publicly stated they do not see the need to review the Treaty. Other partners in the region took note and responded positively to the Secretary's clear stance on our alliance commitments with the Philippines.

To the extent that the Philippines wishes to continue the conversation on our Treaty, if confirmed I will work with my interagency partners to engage the Philippine government through our many established channels for discussion, such as the Bilateral Strategic Dialogue.

Question. What additional measures for partner capacity building do you believe that the Philippines needs to undertake as part of this process?

Answer. We enjoy significant collaboration with the government of the Philippines including the Armed Forces of the Philippines. I understand that there is an ongoing process of formulating potential additional capacity-building measures for discussion at the next iteration of the Bilateral Strategic Dialogue. If confirmed, I will continue this process and work to ensure that the U.S.-Philippines Mutual Defense Treaty continues to be part of the bedrock of the U.S. regional alliance network.

Question. How do we counter-balance the need to strengthen the alliance with ongoing concerns regarding extra-judicial killings?

Answer. The United States has not shied away from expressing its concerns with the prosecution of the drug war and, if I am confirmed, I commit to raising our concerns with the Philippine government. I will urge the Philippines to ensure that its law enforcement efforts are consistent with its international human rights obligations and commitments, and all credible accusations of extrajudicial killing are investigated and perpetrators are brought to justice. If confirmed, I will focus on working with the Philippine government to improve respect for human rights, strengthen the criminal justice system, counter transnational crime, and reduce drug demand through prevention, treatment, and recovery programs. I will also work to ensure that the Leahy Law continues to be rigorously applied.

Question. A few days ago Thailand held its long-awaited elections, starting the process to return to democracy after far too many years under military rule. I want to acknowledge this important step by Thailand and offer the Thai people my congratulations and best wishes.

- What are the next steps, now that the elections have been held, to strengthen U.S.-Thai relations after several years where the bilateral relationship has "underperformed" because of the coup?

Answer. Foreign assistance to the government of Thailand remains restricted due to the 2014 military coup until the Secretary is able to certify and report to Congress that a democratically elected government has taken office in Thailand. I understand that a newly elected government may be in place by June. If confirmed, I look forward to working with Thailand's newly elected government to advance values that bring our countries closer together, including democracy, security, and prosperity for all citizens.

Question. Where do you see opportunities for greater U.S. engagement in working with the region to develop the right sorts of institutions and structures—supporting

international law, international norms, and consistent with our interests and values—for the twenty-first century?

Answer. The United States' Strategic Partnership with ASEAN supports the pursuit of our shared goal: a rules-based order which underpins peace, stability, and prosperity. ASEAN-centered fora such as the East Asia Summit and the ASEAN Regional Forum are vital to our efforts to promote a free and open Indo-Pacific region rooted in clear and transparent rules. I understand that the United States seeks to broaden and deepen our engagement in the Mekong region, a strategic area of engagement in our efforts to strengthen the Indo-Pacific architecture and continues to work through APEC to support the development of a rules-based regional trade and investment architecture, and to remove barriers for U.S. businesses to access markets in the region. If confirmed, I look forward to continuing to advance these efforts.

Question. What is your vision of a positive economic, development and trade agenda for the Asia-Pacific?

Answer. I look forward to working with my colleagues across the Department to advance sustained and high-quality economic and commercial engagement in the Indo-Pacific. This includes promoting best practices for transparency and governance that enable sustainable, private sector-led development.

If confirmed, I will work with E family bureaus and with the interagency to build strong, reciprocal, and balanced bilateral trade and investment relationships in the region. I am committed to supporting the Administration's efforts to conclude bilateral agreements that will lead to free, fair, and reciprocal trade and significantly improve market access for U.S. companies, workers, farmers, and ranchers.

Question. If confirmed, how do you plan to strengthen our partnership with Taiwan?

Answer. If confirmed, I pledge to lead our team to ensure the United States continues to support Taiwan as it seeks to expand its already significant contributions to addressing global challenges, and as Taiwan resists Chinese efforts to constrain its appropriate participation on the world stage, such as through the Global Cooperation and Training Framework (GCTF). If confirmed, I commit to further strengthen our partnership with Taiwan.

Question. How would you update our "One-China Policy" in order to better enhance U.S.-Taiwan relations?

Answer. I understand that the Department periodically updates and issues a memorandum detailing executive branch guidelines on relations with Taiwan, which reflects current U.S. policy related to Taiwan. This memorandum was last revised in October 2015. If confirmed, I will explore the possibility of potentially updating these guidelines.

Question. If confirmed, what will you do to secure Taiwan's participation in important international organizations?

Answer. If confirmed, I pledge to support Taiwan as it seeks to maintain and expand its already significant contributions to addressing global challenges. I commit to working with like-minded partners to support Taiwan's meaningful participation in the World Health Organization and to push for Taiwan's participation in the ICAO Triennial Assembly and in the INTERPOL General Assembly in late 2019.

I understand that the United States supports Taiwan's membership in international organizations that do not require statehood, such as APEC. In organizations that require statehood for membership, the United States supports Taiwan's meaningful participation.

Question. If confirmed, what will you do to help Taiwan maintaining formal relations with its diplomatic allies?

Answer. China's efforts to unilaterally alter the status quo by reducing Taiwan's diplomatic relationships are harmful and do not contribute to regional stability. Rather, they undermine the framework that has enabled peace, stability, and development for decades.

If confirmed, I pledge to provide leadership to ensure the United States supports Taiwan as it seeks to expand its already significant contributions to addressing global challenges and resists Chinese efforts to squeeze its international space and constrain its appropriate participation on the world stage.

Question. If confirmed, how would you review the Guidelines in a way that we can promote instead of discourage a stronger U.S.-Taiwan relationship?

Answer. I understand that the Department periodically updates and issues a memorandum detailing executive branch guidelines on relations with Taiwan, which reflects current U.S. policy related to Taiwan. This memorandum was last revised in October 2015. If confirmed, I will explore the possibility of potentially updating these guidelines.

Question. If confirmed, what will you do to fully implement the Taiwan Travel Act to allow regular and high-level exchanges between U.S. and Taiwanese officials?

Answer. If confirmed, I will seek opportunities for visits to Washington and Taipei by senior-level officials and authorities that advance our robust unofficial relationship and enable substantive exchanges on issues of mutual concern, consistent with the Taiwan Relations Act and the U.S. one China policy.

Question. It has long been the policy of the U.S. government, provided by the Tibetan Policy Act, to promote dialogue between the envoys of the Dalai Lama and the Chinese government toward a solution on the Tibet issue, that guarantees the respect of the "distinct identity" of the Tibetan people, who continue to suffer under China's oppressive rule. The dialogue is now at a standstill and, as we have seen, the lack of substantive progress toward a genuine resolution continues to be a thorny issue in U.S.-China relations.

- Would you personally commit to pressing the Chinese leadership for a resolution of the Tibetan issue through a speedy resumption of dialogue with the Tibetan side, without preconditions?

Answer. If confirmed, I am committed to urging Chinese authorities to engage in meaningful and direct dialogue with the Dalai Lama or his representatives, without preconditions, to lower tensions and resolve differences.

Question. The major rivers of Asia that flow from the Tibetan Plateau and are subject to current and potential dam and diversion projects by China. These projects are planned and implemented without the proper involvement of the Tibetan people, who are the best stewards for the preservation of the delicate environment of the Tibetan Plateau. India and other governments in Asia are increasingly worried about China's plans to dam rivers originating in Tibet which serve over a billion people downstream.

- Would you raise the need to fully involve Tibetans in the preservation of Tibet's fragile environment with the Chinese authorities?

Answer. If confirmed, I will encourage all countries to manage their water resources soundly and to cooperate on the management of shared waters. I will urge China to make decisions on dams and other major water-related infrastructure needs deliberatively, based on the best science available, and in transparent consultation with all affected stakeholders, including Tibetans.

Question. Would you call on the Chinese authorities to engage China's neighbors for the development of a regional framework on water security?

Answer. If confirmed, I will encourage all countries, including China, to manage their water resources soundly and to cooperate on the management of shared waters. I will urge China to make decisions on dams and other major water-related infrastructure needs based on the best available science, deliberatively, and in transparent consultation with all affected stakeholders, including neighboring countries. I will also sustain our own cooperation with neighboring countries through the Lower Mekong Initiative and other U.S.-led mechanisms.

Question. Will you commit to pressing the Chinese authorities to allow for the opening of a U.S. consulate in Lhasa and to guarantee unfettered access to Tibet for American citizens as required by the Reciprocal Access to Tibet Act passed by Congress last year?

Answer. If confirmed, I will press the Chinese government to allow the opening of a U.S. Consulate in Lhasa, consistent with the Tibetan Policy Act. I will also fully implement the Reciprocal Access to Tibet Act and I will press Chinese authorities for reciprocity regarding the open access that China and many other countries enjoy in the United States. I am committed to working closely with Congress in pursuit of our shared goal of seeing Americans have full access to China, including the Tibetan Autonomous Region and other Tibetan areas.

Question. During the U.S.-China Summits held to date, President Trump did not publicly raise the issue of Tibet. Since 1997, all U.S. Presidents have publicly challenged the sitting Chinese President to negotiate with the Dalai Lama or his representative to find a lasting solution to the Tibetan issue.

- If confirmed, would you recommend and make sure that President Trump calls publicly on the Chinese President to address the grievances of the Tibetan people through dialogue with the Dalai Lama?

Answer. I share your concerns about China's lack of respect for human rights and rule of law in Tibet. If confirmed, I will recommend that the United States express publicly, and at the highest levels of government, that Chinese authorities need to engage in meaningful and direct dialogue with the Dalai Lama or his representatives, without preconditions, to lower tensions and resolve differences.

Administrative

Question. Do you agree that any targeting of or retaliation against career employees based on their perceived political beliefs, prior work on policy, or affiliation with a previous administration, is wholly inappropriate and has no place in the federal government?

Answer. Throughout my career of public service, I have had zero tolerance for any form of workplace harassment or discrimination based on political beliefs, religion, race, gender, disability, sexual orientation, or age. I understand that the Department has established procedures for reporting such incidents, and there are mechanisms to hold employees accountable. I will support these efforts wholeheartedly. The Department also has training that encourage bystanders to report workplace harassment or discrimination when victims are afraid to do so. At all levels of the organization, the Department provides mentoring and career counseling to help employees develop the skills needed to contribute to a respectful and courteous work culture. In addition, there are measures in place to protect employees from retaliation. Targeting of any career employees for their previous work or perceived political affiliation is not acceptable and I will not tolerate it. I understand the Department's Office of Civil Rights (S/OCR) and Bureau of Human Resources (HR) manage the Department's diversity and inclusion initiatives and work to propagate fairness, equity and inclusion at the Department of State and I will support their efforts.

Question. If confirmed, what will you do to ensure that all employees under your leadership understand that any retaliation, blacklisting, or other prohibited personnel practices will not be tolerated?

Answer. I will refer allegations of political reprisal against any career employees to the Department's Office of the Inspector General. I will ensure all personnel practices are carried out consistent with all laws and regulations. I hold our Foreign and Civil Service colleagues, and all our employees both domestic and overseas, in the highest regard. If any of my employees feel that prohibited personnel practices are taking place, I will ensure it is reported to the Office of the Inspector General. If I am confirmed, the Department's employees can be assured of the freedom to express their views within the Department's policy formulation process without fear of reprisal.

Question. Has anyone ever made a formal or informal complaint or allegation of sexual harassment, discrimination (e.g., racial, ethnic, religious, etc.), or inappropriate conduct against you, in a workplace or any other setting?

- If so, please describe the nature of the complaint or allegation, your response, and any resolution, including any settlements.

Answer. In my personal life and throughout my military service, I have held myself to the highest standards of integrity and conduct in my interactions with others. I have never received a formal or informal complaint or allegation of sexual harassment, discrimination, or inappropriate conduct in any setting. I commit to continue to uphold these high standards for conduct at the Department of State and to comply with all relevant federal ethics laws, regulations, and rules, and to raise concerns that I may have or that are brought to me through appropriate channels.

Question. Have you ever addressed concerns or allegations of sexual harassment, discrimination (e.g., racial, ethnic, religious, etc.), or inappropriate conduct made against any employee over whom you had supervisory authority?

Answer. I have promptly addressed through appropriate channels any concerns that were ever brought to me about sexual harassment or discrimination against employees under my supervisory authority.

Question. If so, please describe the outcome and actions taken.

Answer. I complied with applicable laws, rules, and regulations pertaining to the protection of employees from workplace discrimination and harassment.

North Korea

Question. If confirmed, will you commit to brief all Members of the SFRC, if and as requested, on all aspects of the administration's policy towards and negotiations with North Korea?

Answer. I understand that the Department believes congressional oversight of diplomacy is key, and the Department is committed to keeping you and other members of Congress updated on all relevant matters. If confirmed, I will work to ensure that EAP continues to value close coordination with Congress and appreciates its role in America's foreign relations.

RESPONSES TO ADDITIONAL QUESTIONS FOR THE RECORD
SUBMITTED TO DAVID STILWELL BY SENATOR BENJAMIN L. CARDIN

Question. What are the most important actions you have taken in your career to date to promote human rights and democracy? What has been the impact of your actions?

Answer. Throughout my 35 years of service in the Air Force, and subsequent work in Asia-Pacific political and military affairs, I have extensively studied the region and worked to ensure that the promotion of democracy and the protection of human rights are an integral part of U.S. policy. The impact of such actions has been increased protection of the rights of vulnerable and marginalized populations, and more accountability for violations of those rights. Human rights and democracy ensure that societies are prosperous and peaceful. If confirmed, I intend to support fully and ensure the coordinated, whole-of-government implementation of the Indo-Pacific Strategy's Transparency Initiative.

Diversity

Question. What will you do to promote, mentor and support your staff that come from diverse backgrounds and underrepresented groups in the Foreign Service?

Answer. I believe strongly in the value of diversity. I will continue to be committed to fostering a diverse and inclusive team, as I have throughout my career. If confirmed, I will ensure that the EAP Bureau promotes equal opportunities for all of our personnel, those from diverse backgrounds or historically underrepresented groups no less than anyone else. I will encourage my EAP leaders to play an active role in outreach to the Department of State's 13 Employee Affinity Groups and 19 Employee Organizations so we can recruit and retain a workforce that reflects the diversity of American society. I will foster a work environment which recognizes the contributions of all employees regardless of their employment status, to include Foreign Service, civil service, American and foreign staff hired overseas, and contractors.

Question. What steps will you take to ensure each of the supervisors in the Foreign Service are fostering an environment that is diverse and inclusive?

Answer. I understand that diversity is a core value in EAP's recruitment at all levels, especially for leadership positions, and I believe we need to model diversity at the highest levels of government. If confirmed, I look forward to collaborating with the Director General of the Foreign Service and Director for Human Resources and my leadership team to make greater progress in all areas of diversity. I will make sure that domestic and overseas managers maintain a positive and productive working environment open to different ideas and different ways of doing business.

Conflicts of Interest

Question. Do you commit to bring to the committee's attention (and the Inspector General of the State Department and Foreign Service) any change in policy or U.S. actions that you suspect may be influenced by any of the President's business or financial interests, or the business or financial interests of any senior White House staff?

Answer. I commit to comply with all relevant federal ethics laws, regulations, and rules and to raise concerns that I may have through appropriate channels.

Question. Do you commit to inform the committee if you have any reason to suspect that a foreign government, head of state, or foreign-controlled entity is taking any action in order to benefit any of the President's business or financial interests, or the interests of senior White House staff?

Answer. I commit to comply with all relevant federal ethics laws, regulations, and rules and to raise concerns that I may have through appropriate channels.

Question. Do you or do any members of your immediate family have any financial interests in any country abroad?

Answer. I am committed to ensuring that my official actions will not give rise to a conflict of interest. I am in compliance and will continue comply with any guidance received from the Department's ethics office.

Question. On December 03, 2018, the Holocaust Museum announced for the first time that it believes there is compelling evidence that the Burmese military committed ethnic cleansing, crimes against humanity, and genocide against the Rohingya, Muslim minority population. Senator Young and I plan to re-introduce our Burma Human Rights and Freedom Act, which promotes democracy and human rights in Burma, and among other actions, requires a State Department report on crimes against humanity and other serious human rights abuses committed against the Rohingya and other ethnic groups in Burma.

Answer. I am deeply concerned about and appalled by the Burmese military's ethnic cleansing of ethnic Rohingya and the ongoing humanitarian crisis that has ensued. The process for deciding whether and when to make a determination that certain acts may amount to genocide, crimes against humanity, or ethnic cleansing, has historically been reserved within the Executive Branch to the Secretary of State. I understand that the Secretary has already determined that abuses against the Rohingya amount to ethnic cleansing, but, if confirmed, I will seek to advise the Secretary on future determinations as they fit into the Department's overarching objectives of easing the humanitarian crisis, seeking accountability for those that committed atrocities, deterring future such atrocities, and addressing root causes of violence.

Question. What additional measures would you recommend the U.S. take to address allegations of genocide, crimes against humanity, and war crimes?

Answer. If confirmed, I will prioritize promoting accountability for the perpetrators of these gross violations of human rights and justice for victims. I will aim to continue the United States' leadership of the international response to the crisis and efforts to deter further atrocities. In this regard, I will consider all policy tools at our disposal. I also will continue U.S. efforts to support Burma's transition to a civilian-led democracy and to address the root causes of the violence in all regions of Burma. Further, I will also seek to ensure the generous humanitarian funding from Congress is used effectively to relieve suffering and underwrite reconciliation and development efforts.

Question. What additional measures would you recommend the international community take? Would you recommend, for example, collaboration to establish a multilateral sanctions regime against Burmese military officials who aided, participated in, or were otherwise implicated in gross violations of internationally recognized human rights in Burma?

Answer. If confirmed, I will continue the Department's efforts to engage, influence, and lead actions of the international community, including with like-minded nations, non-traditional partners, and international organizations, with respect to advancing U.S. interests and values in Burma. I will seek to further the Department's efforts with allies and partners to support efforts and mechanisms at the United Nations to foster accountability for human rights abuses in Rakhine State and other areas of Burma. These include the Independent Investigative Mechanism for Myanmar, along with the U.N. Special Envoy to Myanmar and the U.N. Special Rapporteur on the Human Rights Situation in Myanmar.

Question. China's shares its largest land border with Mongolia, the only Asian nation to successfully transform from communism to democracy. As such, Mongolia's success as a democracy, its strategic location between China and Russia, its sovereignty, territorial integrity, and ability to pursue an independent foreign policy are extremely relevant to the national security of the United States. I am working on a bill with Senator Sullivan to promote U.S.-Mongolia cashmere trade while simultaneously reducing Mongolia's reliance on China as its primary trading partner. Currently, 85 percent of Mongolia's exports go to China.

- Do you believe that bilateral trade promotion would help cement this important strategic alliance? How else can the U.S. demonstrate its support for this democracy?

Answer. Mongolia is a free and democratic society and an important Indo-Pacific partner. I understand that the United States and Mongolia upgraded our bilateral

relationship to an "Expanded Comprehensive Partnership" in September 2018 and created a "Roadmap for Expanded Economic Partnership," in which the United States and Mongolia expressed a joint intent to seek new opportunities to increase mutually beneficial bilateral trade that is free, fair, and reciprocal and also to promote the introduction of new sectors and areas for bilateral trade.

If confirmed, I look forward to working with you on continuing our support for Mongolia's free and democratic society.

Question. China has arbitrarily detained over one million Uyghur and Kazakh Muslims in the Xinjiang region as part of an effort to punish and reform those who have adhered to traditional cultural and religious practices. Many observers believe that this level of ideological indoctrination has not been seen in China since the Cultural Revolution over 40 years ago

- Have these events affected the overall U.S. approach toward China? If not, do you believe they should? How?

Answer. Promoting respect for human rights and fundamental freedoms, including freedom of religion or belief, remains a key component of American foreign policy. The President has made it clear that we want a constructive and results-oriented relationship with China where our prosperity and security grow together, not apart. China has been moving further away from this vision, including in the areas of respect for human rights and fundamental freedoms. I am deeply troubled by the Chinese government's worsening crackdown on the human rights and fundamental freedoms of Uighurs, ethnic Kazakhs, and other members of Muslim minority groups in the Xinjiang Uyghur Autonomous Region and elsewhere in China.

Question. China has arbitrarily detained over one million Uyghur and Kazakh Muslims in the Xinjiang region as part of an effort to punish and reform those who have adhered to traditional cultural and religious practices. Many observers believe that this level of ideological indoctrination has not been seen in China since the Cultural Revolution over 40 years ago

- Have they affected U.S. policies toward China in other areas of the relationship, such as diplomacy, trade, security, and cultural exchange? If not, do you believe they should? How?

Answer. China's detention of more than one million individuals in Xinjiang since April 2017 is the starkest example of the worsening human rights situation in China, and makes it harder for democracies like the United States to engage with Beijing. However, China's leaders can still change course and return to the spirit of reform and opening. If confirmed, I am committed to standing up for freedom and human dignity and will push China to respect universal human rights and fundamental freedoms, including the freedom of religion. I am committed to working in close coordination with Congress and our like-minded partners to speak out against China's human rights abuses and promote accountability for these abuses.

Question. What do you see as the long-term strategic implications of China's building artificial islands in the South China Sea and converting them into military outposts?

- What do you see as the long-term impact on international norms of maritime behavior?
- What are your recommendations for U.S. policymakers for addressing these strategic and legal implications over the long run?

Answer. China's efforts to assert its sovereignty claims over disputed land features and its unlawful maritime claims in the South China Sea, including through massive land reclamation, construction, and militarization of outposts, threaten the security and economic interests of our allies and partners, as well as the broader rules-based order in the Indo-Pacific that has been vital to American security and prosperity. If confirmed, I plan to work with interagency partners to use the range of national security tools that we have—diplomatic, economic, and military—to ensure the South China Sea remains free and open.

Question. On Sunday, February 24, President Trump delayed his deadline to increase tariffs on $200 billion in Chinese imports, citing "substantial progress" resulting from a continued trade talks between U.S. and Chinese officials in Washington. U.S. Trade Representative Robert Lighthizer and Secretary of the Treasury Steven Mnuchin are continuing negotiations this week in China.

- How do you see this trade war impacting broader U.S. foreign policy objectives in the Asia-Pacific region?

Answer. The concerns that the United States is raising with China are concerns also shared by countries around the world. The President's trade policies focused on

China will set the stage for long-term economic growth, not only in the United States, but in the Asia-Pacific region and globally.

Question. How can we be sure that China will not walk back commitments made in any trade deal?

Answer. For these negotiations to be successful, China must demonstrate real structural changes across the range of unfair policies and practices that yield actual, verifiable, and enforceable results. These changes include stopping forced technology transfers, stronger protection and enforcement of intellectual property rights, and elimination of numerous tariff and non-tariff barriers faced by U.S. companies in China.

Question. What does a "fair deal" with China look like under this administration?

Answer. An effective enforcement mechanism will be essential in any such deal to address any failure by China to properly implement its commitments and other related issues that may arise.

Question. What enforcement mechanisms will be in place to ensure China's compliance?

Answer. If confirmed, I will work with our State and interagency colleagues to implement any enforcement mechanism in an agreement that is reached by U.S. Trade Representative negotiators to ensure China's compliance.

Question. To what extent is the "maximum pressure" strategy still intact?

Answer. Even as diplomacy with the DPRK proceeds, it is critical that the international community continue to apply diplomatic and economic pressure on the DPRK, including through the full implementation of U.N. sanctions. As the President has made clear throughout this process, he expects international pressure on the DPRK to continue until denuclearization is achieved, and we continue to reinforce this message with countries around the world.

Question. What evidence do you have that China and Russia, in particular, are continuing to enforce United Nations Security Council sanctions?

Answer. I understand that the Administration is seeking to improve the effectiveness of pressure through several lines of effort, including engaging China and Russia as the DPRK's largest trading partners.

The United States has made clear to China and Russia that they must continue to hold the North Korean regime accountable through applying economic and diplomatic pressure to achieve our shared objective of the final and fully verified denuclearization of North Korea. This includes the continued implementation of all relevant U.N. Security Council resolutions, which remain critical to ensuring progress on the commitments North Korea made at the 2018 Singapore summit. If confirmed, I will continue to engage Chinese and Russian officials on this objective and, where appropriate, ensure that we take action against entities involved in DPRK sanctions evasion activity.

Question. What about other countries that had taken measures to reduce even marginal trade with North Korea?

Answer. International solidarity and increased pressure on the DPRK opened the door for U.S. engagement with North Korea on denuclearization. Implementation of U.N. Security Council resolutions by the international community brought us to this moment, and continued implementation will be necessary to ensure a successful outcome of this process. President Trump has consistently emphasized to allies, partners, and the DPRK that the international community cannot let up on pressure until the DPRK denuclearizes.

Question. What specific steps does North Korea need to take to warrant some sanctions relief?

Answer. The President has been clear that sanctions relief cannot occur absent final, fully verified denuclearization. He has made clear that the United States remains ready to proceed-in parallel with denuclearization-with concrete steps to transform the U.S.-North Korea relationship and establish a lasting and stable peace regime on the Korean Peninsula. The United States looks forward to building a bright economic future for North Korea, the region, and the world when the DPRK fulfills its commitments to denuclearize.

The international community must continue to implement U.N. Security Council resolutions to underscore to North Korea that the only way to achieve the security

and development it seeks is to forsake its weapons of mass destruction and their means of delivery.

RESPONSES TO ADDITIONAL QUESTIONS FOR THE RECORD
SUBMITTED TO DAVID STILWELL BY SENATOR JEANNE SHAHEEN

Question. Last year, China increased its spending on foreign affairs by more than 12 percent, and recently Beijing announced that it would increase its foreign affairs budget by another 7.4 percent for next year. This comes at a time when the President's budget request called for a 24% reduction in the budget for the State Department and other international programs:

- How important is "soft power" in countering Chinese influence today and, if confirmed, where would you prioritize investment?

Answer. The promotion of U.S. values is critical to countering Chinese malign influence activities. China is employing a whole-of-government approach to advance its interests globally. While Beijing-friendly programs from China Radio International and China Global Television Network broadcast freely in the United States, U.S. officials, scholars, journalists, and internet companies face limited or no access in China. If confirmed, I am committed to ensuring the State Department continues to use strategic messaging, international exchanges, and outreach to educational institutions to address Chinese influence efforts. These measures will complement our Indo-Pacific vision, which advances market economics, good governance, and transparency.

Question. If confirmed, how would you advocate not only for U.S. economic and security interests but also U.S. values in contrast to the Chinese approach that does not take human rights or democracy promotion into account in its global investments?

Answer. Promoting respect for human rights and fundamental freedoms, including freedom of religion or belief, is a key component of American foreign policy. If confirmed, I am committed to upholding U.S. values and practices as an alternative to China's opaque investments and commercial activities, and disregard for basic human rights, by promoting adherence to high international standards of transparency, anti-corruption, good governance, and labor rights and taking into consideration of the needs and concerns of local communities.

Question. Recent negotiations with North Korean leaders have focused on how best to apply "maximum pressure" on Pyongyang. However, lost in all of these recent discussions has been North Korea's deplorable record on human rights:

- If confirmed, what would you do to ensure that in seeking peace with North Korea we do not give North Korean leaders a pass for their barbaric treatment of their people?

Answer. The DPRK is among the most repressive authoritarian states in the world. North Korea's human rights record is deplorable. If confirmed, I will work with likeminded governments and civil society to raise awareness, highlight abuses and violations, increase access to independent information, and promote respect for human rights in the DPRK.

Question. If confirmed, could you describe how you plan to coordinate with the Bureau on Europe and Eurasia to ensure that the Department has a comprehensive view of Russia's global malign efforts?

Answer. I share your concern about Russia's global malign efforts. If confirmed, I will confer closely with not only our colleagues in the Bureau of European and Eurasian Affairs but also with the Bureau of Political Military Affairs, the interagency, countries with traditional ties with Russia in the Asia-Pacific region, and our close allies, including Japan and the Republic of Korea, to ensure we have a comprehensive view of Russia's global malign efforts.

Question. The local population of Okinawa, Japan seems to understand that the U.S. presence in Okinawa is necessary for the security of Japan and the United States. However, resistance to the U.S. presence has been gaining ground, and foreign propaganda outlets like Sputnik and others have spread disinformation about the U.S. military to play on the local population's worst fears:

- In your view, why is our presence in Okinawa critical and, if confirmed, what would you do to counter efforts to malign our forces there? If confirmed, how

would you ensure the U.S. Mission in Japan engages in more public diplomacy to improve the U.S. image in Okinawa?

Answer. Okinawa plays a crucial role in the defense of Japan and the preservation of peace and security in the Indo-Pacific region. U.S. forces in Okinawa are ready to respond to regional contingencies, including humanitarian crises and natural disasters. If confirmed, I will work to continue enhancing the U.S.-Japan Alliance and our operational capabilities while addressing the concerns of local base-hosting communities. I will support the State Department's ongoing work with the Department of Defense and the government of Japan to ensure a positive impact of U.S. forces on local communities. I will also lend my full support to public diplomacy programs in Okinawa that build understanding between U.S. forces and local communities and strengthen people-to-people ties, including English language programs, youth exchanges with base personnel, and speaker programs highlighting the threat regional actors' malign activities pose to shared U.S. and Japanese values.

Question. Will you also commit to ensuring that our own administration does not engage in self-defeating policies such as making the Japanese government pay even more to support the U.S. troop presence or saying that Japan should develop its own nuclear weapons?

Answer. Our commitment to the defense of Japan is ironclad and is backed by the full range of U.S. military capabilities, including conventional and nuclear weapons. The United States continues to maintain a credible nuclear umbrella extended to over 30 allies and partners, including Japan. Credible U.S. extended nuclear deterrence will continue to be a cornerstone of U.S. non-proliferation efforts.

Japan's host nation support facilitates our force presence in Japan and throughout the region. If confirmed I commit to working with Japan to ensure that the cost of maintaining our alliance's operational capability is shared fairly.

RESPONSES TO ADDITIONAL QUESTIONS FOR THE RECORD
SUBMITTED TO DAVID STILWELL BY SENATOR CORKER A. BOOKER

Question. If confirmed, what steps will you take to ensure perpetrators are held accountable for the atrocities committed not just against the Rohingya but also against other ethnic minority groups in Burma, such as the Karen or the Kachin?

Answer. If confirmed, I will prioritize promoting accountability for those responsible for these abuses and achieving justice for victims. I will aim to continue U.S. leadership of the international response to the crisis and efforts to deter further atrocities. In this regard, I will consider the utility of all policy tools at our disposal, including targeted sanctions. I will also continue U.S. support for Burma's transition to a civilian-led democracy. Further, I will work closely with the U.S. Mission to the U.N. and with like-minded countries and regional partners, to press the government of Burma to grant unhindered access to U.N. mechanisms, including the International Investigative Mechanism for Myanmar, the U.N. Special Rapporteur, and the U.N. Special Envoy.

Question. How do you believe the U.S. should be engaging on the question of accountability for such atrocities in multilateral fora, such as the United Nations?

Answer. I believe that the United States should use all appropriate means to pursue our goal of ensuring accountability for atrocities, including by engaging in multilateral fora such as the United Nations. If confirmed, I commit to working with other senior officials in the Department and the interagency to find ways to pursue this objective and continue the United States' global leadership in seeking justice for the victims of atrocities.

Question. Hundreds of thousands of Muslims have reportedly been detained, tortured, and subjected to massive surveillance in "re-education" camps throughout Xinjiang. At the recent ministerial on religious freedom, Secretary of State Pompeo expressed grave concerns about the situation in Xinjiang for Uighur Muslims. Such treatment of religious and ethnic minorities in China is widespread. And these actions are part of a broader crackdown on civil society and independent media.

- Do you believe that senior Chinese government officials should be held accountable for these human rights abuses?

Answer. I am deeply troubled by the Chinese government's worsening crackdown on the human rights and fundamental freedoms, including religious freedom, of Uighurs, ethnic Kazakhs, and other members of Muslim minority groups in the

Xinjiang Uyghur Autonomous Region and elsewhere in China. China's detention of more than one million individuals in Xinjiang since April 2017 is illustrative of the deteriorating human rights situation in China. If confirmed, I am committed to using all tools available as appropriate to promote accountability of Chinese officials responsible for these human rights abuses.

Letter Submitted by Organizations Opposing the Nomination of Robert A. Destro to be Assistant Secretary of State for Democracy, Human Rights, and Labor

March 22, 2019

The Honorable Jim. Risch, Chairman
Committee on Foreign Relations
United States Senate
483 Russell Senate Office Building
Washington, DC 20510

The Honorable Bob Menendez, Ranking Member
Committee on Foreign Relations
United States Senate
528 Hart Senate Office Building
Washington, DC 20510

Dear Chairman Risch, Ranking Member Menendez, and Members of the Senate Committee on Foreign Relations:

We, the undersigned 46 human rights and civil society organizations, write to express grave concerns about Professor Robert A. Destro, nominated by President Trump on January 16, 2019, to be Assistant Secretary of State for Democracy, Human Rights, and Labor. If confirmed, Prof. Destro would head the Bureau of Democracy, Human Rights, and Labor (DRL) which leads U.S. government efforts to promote democracy, protect human rights and international religious freedom, and advance labor rights globally. Prof. Destro's record evinces a strong hostility to the health and human rights of women, girls, and LGBTI individuals. We do not believe that a nominee with this record should be confirmed to lead the State Department's Bureau dedicated to protecting, defending, and promoting the human rights of all persons around the world, especially members of vulnerable communities like women, girls, and LGBTI persons. We strongly urge you to oppose his confirmation based the clear conflict between his record and the Bureau's mission.

Destro currently serves as a Professor of Law and founding Director of the Interdisciplinary Program in Law & Religion at the Catholic University of America's Columbus School of Law in Washington, D.C., where he has taught since 1982. Prof. Destro does not support a woman's constitutional right to safe, legal abortion. Rather, he has a long career of actively advocating for fetal personhood and for the reversal of the Supreme Court's precedent upholding women's constitutional liberty right to make personal decisions about abortion as recognized in *Roe v. Wade*.[1] He also has a lengthy record of supporting expanded interpretations of religious freedom under the First Amendment, to the exclusion of other constitutional rights. For example, he has represented parties that advocated for expansive religious refusal and exemption rules, especially concerning abortion and contraception.[2] Prof. Destro has also argued against the expansion of civil rights and liberties for LGBTI persons on the same basis.[3]

Further, while contraception and abortion are medically routine and necessary health care which is often difficult for many women to afford and access, Prof. Destro has a long track record and has played an active role in advocating against coverage for these services since 1977.[4] For example, when asked to comment by the National Catholic Register on the California and Pennsylvania federal court cases brought by state attorneys general defending ACA coverage for contraception, he stated, "[t]his whole idea that you're entitled to have somebody pay for your birth-control pill is kind of ridiculous."[5]

Prof. Destro also advocated against the Community Health Care Center Fund, a provision of the Affordable Care Act (ACA) that allocated funding for comprehensive health care services

at Community Health Centers, which primarily serve disadvantaged populations such as migrant, tribal, rural and low-income communities. Prof. Destro specifically opposed the provision because it did not clearly prohibit the use of the funds for abortions as part of comprehensive health care services for women."[6] In 2015, Destro joined a small group of other professors to oppose the Reproductive Health Non-Discrimination Act of 2014 (RHNDA), a bill passed by the D.C. City Council that prohibited discrimination against employees based on their or their dependent's personal reproductive health decisions. Destro, along with the other professors opposed the act arguing that it violated RFRA and precedents set post-*Hobby Lobby*.[7]

Prof. Destro has also failed to respect the rights of LGBTI individuals. In 2014, he commented on the *Hobby Lobby* ruling and its impact on President Obama's Executive Order 11246,[8] which prohibited federal contractors from discriminating on the basis of sexual orientation and gender identity. In his statement to the National Catholic Register, [9] he expressed concern that the Executive Order would be interpreted to require that federal contractors offer coverage for in-vitro fertilization and sex-reassignment operations for LGBTI individuals. In referring to the anti-discrimination policy, he stated "[o]nce it becomes an issue of 'these are my rights,' then rational discussion goes out the window."[10]

The Bureau of Democracy, Human Rights, and Labor is responsible for promoting democracy and protecting human rights, including the reproductive rights of women and girls, as well as the rights of LGBTI individuals, around the world. DRL advances the human rights of all people through bilateral diplomacy, multilateral engagement, provision of foreign assistance, imposition of economic sanctions, and through reporting and public outreach. For example, DRL is responsible for publishing the annual congressionally-mandated Country Reports on Human Rights Practices which serve to report on and expose human rights violations around the world. These reports were already subjected to inappropriate and harmful politicization when the entire reproductive rights subsection of the 2017 Reports was deleted.[11] Prof. Destro's appointment risks further decimation of this critical body of reporting and would more broadly undermine the work of the State Department in monitoring human rights violations and promoting democracy globally.

As demonstrated above, Prof. Destro's writings, interviews, and public speeches indicate that he holds a very narrow view of what constitutes human rights meriting protection. The health and human rights of women, girls, and LGBTI persons would be at severe risk if Prof. Destro were confirmed as the leader of the U.S. government's efforts to protect democracy and promote human rights globally. Based on his extensive record working to undercut essential health, constitutional, and human rights of women, girls, and LGBTI persons, Prof. Destro has demonstrated that he would be in conflict with and unable to advance the mission of the Bureau of Democracy, Human Rights, and Labor..

We strongly urge you to stand up for women, girls, and LGBTI individuals by opposing his confirmation.

Sincerely,

Center for Reproductive Rights
Advocates for Youth
Athlete Ally
Center for Biological Diversity
Center for Health and Gender Equity (CHANGE)
Clearinghouse on Women's Issues
Equality California
EverThrive Illinois
Four Freedoms Forum
Global Justice Center
Global Justice Institute, Metropolitan Community Churches
Global Woman P.E.A.C.E. Foundation
International Action Network for Gender Equity & Law
International Center for Advocates Against Discrimination (ICAAD)
International Service for Human Rights
International Women's Health Coalition
Ipas
Dr. Joia Crear Perry
Legal Aid At Work
Legal Voice
MADRE
MPact Global Action for Gay Men's Health & Rights
NARAL Pro-Choice America
National Asian Pacific American Women's Forum
National Council of Jewish Women
National Institute for Reproductive Health (NIRH)
National Organization for Women
OutRight Action International
PAI
Physicians for Reproductive Health
Planned Parenthood Federation of America
Population Connection Action Fund
Population Institute
Positive Women's Network-USA
Promundo-US
Santa Clara University - International Human Rights Clinic
Save the Planet
Sexuality Information and Education Council of the United States (SIECUS)
Synergia - Initiatives for Human Rights
The Center for Sexual Pleasure and Health
Treatment Action Group (TAG)
URGE: Unite for Reproductive & Gender Equity
Urgent Action Fund for Women's Human Rights
US People living with HIV Caucus
Women Graduates USA
Women's Environment and Development Organization (WEDO)

[1] *See, e.g.*, Robert A. Destro, *Abortion and the Constitution: The Need for a Life-Protective Amendment*, 63 Cal. L. Rev. 5 (1975) available at: https://scholarship.law.berkeley.edu/cgi/viewcontent.cgi?article=2489&context=californialawreview; *After Roe v. Wade: 10 Years' Conflict Over Abortion,* Washington Post (Jan. 23, 1983), *available at* https://www.washingtonpost.com/archive/politics/1983/01/23/after-roe-v-wade-10-years-conflict-over-abortion/28c74c0e-c543-4da5-88a9-84ba1a1ed997/?utm_term=.f00108e928fd (describing Destro as a "prominent anti-abortion lawyer.").

[2] *See, e.g., Erzinger v. Regents of University of California*, Civ. 24408, (Cal. Ct. App. 4th 1982); *Akron Center for Reproductive Health v. City of Akron*, 651 F.2d 1198 (6th Cir. 1981);

[3] *See* Brian Fraga, *U.S. Bishops Wary of White House's Promised ENDA Executive Order*, NAT'L CATH. REG., Jul. 10, 2014, *available at* http://www.ncregister.com/daily-news/u.s.-bishops-wary-of-white-houses-promised-enda-executive-order.

[4] Letter from Robert A. Destro, Professor of Law, to Bart Stupak, U.S. Representative (Mar. 20, 2010), *available at* https://www.mdrtl.org/files/DestroLetterToStupakOnCommHealthCenters.pdf ("I have been involved in the funding fights over abortion since 1977, and helped to write the amicus brief filed by 218 Members of the House of Representatives in *Harris v. McRae*.").

[5] *See* Brian Fraga, *Blue States Target Little Sisters of the Poor*, NAT'L CATH. REG., Nov. 29, 2017, *available at* http://www.ncregister.com/daily-news/blue-states-target-little-sisters-of-the-poor.

[6] Letter from Destro, *supra* note 4.

[7] 161 CONG. REC. H.2733 (daily ed. Apr. 30, 2015) (Disapproval of District of Columbia Reproductive Health Non-Discrimination Amendment Act of 2014).

[8] Press Release, White House, President Obama Signs a New Executive Order to Protect LGBT Workers (Jul. 21, 2014) *available at* https://obamawhitehouse.archives.gov/blog/2014/07/21/president-obama-signs-new-executive-order-protect-lgbt-workers.

[9] *See* Fraga, *supra* note 3.

[10] *Id.*

[11] *See* Alison Sadiq, *Democrats, rights groups urge State Dept. to bring back reports on women's reproductive rights,* POLITICO, Oct. 14, 2018, *available at* https://www.politico.com/story/2018/10/04/state-department-reproductive-rights-report-869442; Press Release, Center for Reproductive Rights, Lawmakers and Civil Society Pressure Department of State to Bring Back Deleted Reproductive Rights Sections in Annual Human Rights Reports (Oct. 3, 2018) *available at* https://www.reproductiverights.org/press-room/lawmakers-and-civil-society-pressure-department-of-state-to-bring-back-deleted-reproducti; Press Release, United States Senate Committee on Foreign Relations, Sens. Menendez, Blumenthal lead group of 31 Senators in letter To Pompeo opposing elimination of women's rights report, *available at* https://www.foreign.senate.gov/press/ranking/release/sens-menendez-blumenthal-lead-group-of-31-senators-in-letter-to-pompeo-opposing-elimination-of-womens-rights-report.

LETTER SENT BY SENATORS CORY GARDNER AND EDWARD J. MARKEY TO SECRETARY OF STATE MIKE POMPEO AND SECRETARY OF THE TREASURY STEVEN MNUCHIN REGARDING SANCTIONS ON NORTH KOREA

United States Senate
WASHINGTON, DC 20510

March 14, 2019

The Honorable Michael R. Pompeo
Secretary
U.S. Department of State
2201 C Street, NW
Washington, DC 20520

The Honorable Steven T. Mnuchin
Secretary
U.S. Department of Treasury
1500 Pennsylvania Ave, NW
Washington, DC 20220

Dear Secretary Pompeo and Secretary Mnuchin:

We write to urge that you re-commit U.S. government efforts toward robust enforcement of current U.S. and United Nations sanctions with regard to North Korea, and to deliver to Congress in a timely manner a key report on North Korea strategy, as required by U.S. law.

On March 5, 2019, the United Nations Report of the Panel of Experts, established pursuant to United Nations Security Council Resolution 1874, stated: "The nuclear and ballistic missile programmes of the Democratic People's Republic of Korea remain intact and the country continues to defy Security Council resolutions through a massive increase in illegal ship-to-ship transfers of petroleum products and coal." The report noted that North Korea continues to violate the arms embargo imposed on the regime"[f]inancial sanctions remain some of the most poorly implemented and actively evaded measures of the sanctions regime." The report further described suspected cases of prohibited North Korean arms sales to Syria, Sudan, Libya, and Yemen, including potential sales of ballistic missiles and other equipment to Houthi rebels.

This status quo is unacceptable and is contrary to the Administration's "maximum pressure and engagement" doctrine. As you know, relevant U.S. law, including the North Korea Sanctions and Policy Enhancement Act (Public Law 114-122) and the Asia Reassurance Initiative Act (Public Law 115-409), mandates the imposition of U.S. sanctions for behaviors described in the UN Panel of Experts report, including human rights violations and malign activities in cyberspace.

Unfortunately, it appears that the pace of U.S. sanctions designations with regard to North Korea has slowed considerably. According to research conducted by the Foundation for Defense of Democracies, since March 31, 2017, the Trump administration sanctioned 182 persons and entities for North Korea sanctions violations. However, after February 23, 2018, the Treasury Department has issued only 26 new designations, despite ample evidence of illicit behavior from Pyongyang and its enablers.

While we welcome continuing diplomacy to achieve the complete, verifiable, and irreversible denuclearization of North Korea, the evidence presented by the UN Panel of Experts and the noticeably slowing pace of U.S. sanctions designations require a correction of course and more urgent attention to sanctions enforcement efforts in your respective agencies.

Section 210 (d) of the Asia Reassurance Initiative Act also requires that the Secretary of State, in consultation with the Secretary of Treasury, submit an unclassified report (with a classified annex, if necessary) by March 31, 2019 that "describes actions taken by the United States to address the threats posed by, and the capabilities of, the Democratic People's Republic of Korea." We seek your commitment to deliver this report to Congress on time, and with each of the necessary elements required by the letter of the law included.

Thank you for your urgent attention to this important matter. We stand ready to work with each of your agencies to ensure diplomatic efforts with North Korea are backed by the robust sanctions enforcement necessary to ensure those efforts can be successful.

Sincerely,

Cory Gardner
United States Senator

Edward J. Markey
United States Senator

NOMINATIONS

TUESDAY, APRIL 9, 2019

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

The committee met, pursuant to notice, at 3:03 p.m. in Room SD–419, Dirksen Senate Office Building, Hon. Todd Young presiding.

Present: Senators Young [presiding], Kaine, and Merkley.

Senator YOUNG. This hearing of the Senate Foreign Relations Committee will come to order.

OPENING STATEMENT OF HON. TODD YOUNG, U.S. SENATOR FROM INDIANA

Senator YOUNG. Today the committee will hold a nomination hearing for three very important positions.

First we have Mr. Jeffrey Eberhardt to be Special Representative for the President for Nuclear Proliferation, with the rank of Ambassador.

Second, we have the Honorable James Gilmore to be U.S. Representative to the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe, with the rank of Ambassador.

And our third nominee is Mr. Alan Swendiman to be the Deputy Director of the Peace Corps.

We also have one of our distinguished committee members, Senator Tim Kaine of Virginia, who will be joining us momentarily. He wishes to introduce one of our nominees, so we are going to allow him to proceed with his introduction as soon as he arrives. I will postpone my statement and ask the Ranking Member to do the same until after the nominees' introductions.

I will go ahead and proceed in light of Senator Kaine's absence—we have such busy schedules here. Everyone is attuned to the schedules here on the Hill.

So, welcome to each of the nominees to the committee, and thank you and your families for having the willingness to serve.

First, I am pleased to welcome Mr. Jeffrey Eberhardt of Wisconsin and a career member of the Senior Executive Service who has been nominated to be Special Representative of the President for Nuclear Nonproliferation. Mr. Eberhardt is currently the Director of the Office of Multilateral and Nuclear Affairs in the Bureau of Arms Control, Verification, and Compliance at the State Department. Previously, Mr. Eberhardt served as a Foreign Affairs Officer in the Office of Nuclear Affairs at the State Department. He has also served as a Senior Military Adviser at the Pentagon; as a For-

eign Area Officer with assignments in Europe and Asia; and as a Senior Fellow at the George Marshall Center; and a battery commander in Germany.

At a time when the pursuit of nuclear weapons remains a deep ambition for the regimes in Iran and North Korea, as we face threats through Russia's repeated violations of the INF Treaty, and as China's nuclear ambitions continue to rise, it is critically important that we combat the proliferation of nuclear weapons and examine the future of the Nuclear Nonproliferation Treaty.

Following the Administration's announcement that the United States would withdraw from the INF Treaty due to Russian violations and their refusal to return to compliance, I think it is critical for this committee to examine your views on the future of arms control and whether any nonproliferation agreement can be successful with unreliable partners like Russia and China.

At this point, I would like to pivot to Senator Kaine, who has joined us, and I believe he would like to make an introduction of one of our nominees.

STATEMENT OF HON. TIM KAINE,
U.S. SENATOR FROM VIRGINIA

Senator KAINE. Absolutely. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

Welcome to all. We were all just coming from a classified briefing of the committee, but it is my pleasure to introduce before the committee the 68th Governor of Virginia, a personal friend, the Honorable Jim Gilmore, just to share a few words about Jim with the committee.

He is a nominee who I strongly support to be the Ambassador to the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe, OSCE.

Governor Gilmore began his public service in the military, where he was posted in Western Europe and became fluent in German. He has served as a local elected official, Commonwealth's Attorney, our elected prosecutor, and then the Attorney General of Virginia, then the Governor of Virginia, 68th Governor of Virginia.

He has also had additional service past his time as governor. From 1999 to 2003, he was Chairman of the congressional panel assessing America's capabilities to respond to terrorist attack, the Congressional Advisory Panel to Assess Domestic Response Capabilities. That panel was known as the Gilmore Commission.

As governor, he did extensive work to build ties between Virginia and partners around the world, economic missions to nations all over Europe, all over the world, and he currently works in Alexandria at the American Opportunity Foundation as the President and CEO. This is a foundation—and its predecessor is the Free Congress Foundation that works to shape public dialogue about Congress and American society, with a special focus on national security issues.

Governor Gilmore is a member of the Council on Foreign Relations, somebody who is well qualified for this position. I have had the opportunity as a member of this committee to visit the OSCE and dialogue about the important work, and as we have known from committee hearings about NATO and other important issues, there are a lot of equities on the table right now with respect to security cooperation between the United States and Europe, and

not just the NATO members but all of Europe, and Governor Gilmore is very uniquely qualified to be in this position, and I am happy to be here to introduce him.

Senator YOUNG. Well, thanks so much, Senator Kaine, and congratulations to Governor Gilmore and to yourself on the big win last night at UVA's basketball game.

You have an impressive record, sir. I will not recapitulate all that was just said, blessedly. But the role, again, that you have been nominated for is Ambassador to the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe.

With 57 participating states and North America, Europe, and Central Asia, OSCE is the world's largest regional security organization. Headquartered in Vienna, Austria, OSCE sets standards in fields including military security, economic and environmental cooperation, and human rights and humanitarian concerns.

In addition, OSCE undertakes a variety of preventive diplomacy initiatives designed to prevent, manage, and resolve conflict within and among the participating states.

Mr. Gilmore, with the many challenges facing our world, I look forward to hearing more about how you envision using your post to advance American security interests.

Finally, I am pleased to welcome Mr. Alan Swendiman of North Carolina, nominated to be Deputy Director of the Peace Corps.

Mr. Swendiman currently serves as Founding Principal of the Capital Connection, a consulting strategy and business development firm. Previously, Mr. Swendiman served as a legal advisor and senior executive for a broad range of Federal agencies, including serving as Deputy Principal Legal Adviser and Chief of Staff for U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement, General Counsel of USAID, General Counsel and Acting Chief of Staff of the GSA, and General Counsel of the Federal Labor Relations Authority.

Mr. Swendiman has held positions within the Executive Office of the President and the State of North Carolina, overseeing administrative services and information technology. In addition, he has more than 30 years of experience in private law practice, where he focused on corporate counseling and government contracting.

Perhaps most notable, it is my understanding that Mr. Swendiman's daughter Shelly has served as a Peace Corps volunteer in Ukraine. Since President Kennedy established the Peace Corps in 1961, more than 230,000 Americans of all ages have served in 141 countries worldwide. The Peace Corps sends Americans with a passion for service abroad on behalf of the United States to work with communities and create lasting change. Volunteers help develop sustainable solutions to address challenges in education, health, community economic development, agriculture, environment, and youth development, and through their Peace Corps experience volunteers gain a unique cultural understanding and a lifelong commitment to service that positions them to succeed in today's global economy.

I look forward to hearing how Mr. Swendiman will work to ensure that the Peace Corps remains an organization known around the world for their commitment to service and helping those in desperate need of assistance.

With that, I would like to recognize my distinguished Ranking Member for his comments, Senator Merkley.

STATEMENT OF HON. JEFF MERKLEY, U.S. SENATOR FROM OREGON

Senator MERKLEY. Thank you very much, Mr. Chairman. I am pleased to be working with you to launch the work of this subcommittee in this cycle.

Many of the most pressing challenges facing the United States, from climate change to nuclear proliferation, are transnational threats that require collective solutions. International organizations are critical to addressing these challenges. The positions today's nominees will fill, if confirmed, are examples of this essential work.

I join you in welcoming our three nominees, and I appreciate your willingness to serve, and welcome to your family members who might be attending with you today.

Mr. Eberhardt and Governor Gilmore, if confirmed, you will have the difficult task of reasserting U.S. leadership in tackling key regional and international security challenges.

At the center of much international mischief is Russia. Your jobs, as the President's Special Representative for Nonproliferation and U.S. Representative to the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe, would require leading a unified front with allies to push back on Russia's flouting of international norms and attempts to redraw boundaries.

U.S. leadership in the arms category does not mean taking a trip back to the wild, wild west that we had before international agreements that helped control limits on both our regional and strategic forces. The collapse of the Intermediate Range Nuclear Forces Treaty in August and the lack of action to prepare for extending the new Strategic Arms Reduction Treaty, new START, past 2021 risks returning us to the instability of the time we had before we had such bilateral agreements.

It is because of, not in spite of, Russia's misbehavior that we need to double down on diplomacy and partnership with our alliances around the world.

Mr. Swendiman, it is a special joy to be able to participate in running the Peace Corps. This morning I met with the student leaders from Oregon State University in Corvallis, and one of them who is graduating is headed off to the Peace Corps in Rwanda. I was able to go to Rwanda with Chris Coons and several of our other senators a few years ago, and it is a nation that has many challenges following the intense, intense battles of a few years ago. And having our folks on the ground helping with fundamentals—clean water, education, all kinds of agricultural strategies—is something very important in their lives and important in the relationship between our two countries, and important in the development of the economy for the people there.

Of course, this is multiplied by all the volunteers all over the world, so I wish you the best in that setting.

I look forward to hearing from our nominees.

Senator YOUNG. Well, thank you, Senator Merkley.

We will now turn to our first nominee, Mr. Jeffrey Eberhardt. Thank you for your willingness again to take on this critical role. Your full statement will be included in the record, without objection, so if you could please keep your remarks to no more than 5 minutes or so, we would appreciate it so that members of the committee can engage with you with their questions, sir.

Mr. Eberhardt?

STATEMENT OF JEFFREY L. EBERHARDT, OF WISCONSIN, A CAREER MEMBER OF THE SENIOR EXECUTIVE SERVICE, TO BE SPECIAL REPRESENTATIVE OF THE PRESIDENT FOR NUCLEAR NON–PROLIFERATION, WITH THE RANK OF AMBASSADOR

Mr. EBERHARDT. Thank you, Mr. Chairman, Ranking Member Merkley.

It is an honor to appear before this committee as President Trump's nominee to be the Special Representative of the President for Nuclear Nonproliferation. I am grateful to the President and Secretary Pompeo for the confidence they have placed in me, and for the opportunity, with your approval, to continue to serve this country in a new and challenging position of responsibility.

I am proud to be joined today by two of my sons, Todd and Joshua, both of whom have the distinction of being born in what was then known as West Germany, during my first overseas tour.

I joined the State Department following 23 years in the Army, and have worked on nuclear-related issues across three successive administrations. I participated in the Six-Party Talks beginning when I was still on active duty in the Office of the Secretary of Defense, and continuing when I joined the Department. I worked on the Iran and North Korea files for many years.

Closer to our subject today, I have been involved in the review cycles of the Treaty on the Nonproliferation of Nuclear Weapons since 2005, participating in preparations for and working on the U.S. delegations to multiple NPT preparatory committees and review conferences. I was part of the State team contributing to both the 2010 and 2018 Nuclear Posture Reviews. I also contributed to numerous policy reviews over the past years on issues such as the proposed Fissile Material Cutoff Treaty, the Comprehensive Nuclear Test Ban Treaty, and the NPT itself.

What has struck me from these years of serving different administrations, Mr. Chairman, is the strong element of bipartisan continuity in U.S. nuclear policy. There have been a few guiding principles that date back decades: for instance, that the United States will work to reduce the numbers and salience of nuclear weapons, with the ultimate goal of someday eliminating them, but that for so long as nuclear deterrence remains necessary, we will maintain an effective nuclear force.

The United States has also remained steadfast in its commitment to maintaining the global nonproliferation regime, recognizing the enormous dangers that would arise from allowing the spread of nuclear weapons to additional countries. This remarkable continuity is a credit to the many thoughtful and dedicated professionals that this nation has been fortunate to have serving in positions of responsibility for these matters. I have learned a great deal

from them. They have left big shoes to fill, but if confirmed, I will strive to do so.

It is no secret that this NPT review cycle, which will culminate with the Review Conference in May 2020, is a challenging one. The United States has been engaged in wide-ranging diplomatic efforts to prepare for that conference, stressing the importance of shoring up the nonproliferation regime against the challenges it faces from North Korea and Iran, stressing the importance to human prosperity and development of sharing the benefits of peaceful nuclear technology, and stressing the degree to which these benefits depend upon the solid foundation provided by adherence to best practices in the realm of nuclear safeguards, safety, and security. If confirmed, I will work to support, and to help lead, U.S. diplomatic efforts to protect and advance the important principles and objectives of the NPT.

This may not be an easy road. There are those who believe, for example, that despite having reduced our nuclear arsenal by approximately 88 percent from its Cold War high, that the United States has not reduced far enough or fast enough. There is also the longstanding problem of how to advance toward a Middle East weapons of mass destruction free zone, an issue that dates to the Treaty's indefinite extension in 1995.

These challenges are daunting, Mr. Chairman, but what is clear is that without strong U.S. leadership, achieving success will not be possible, and we are seeking to meet these challenges. Success, I believe, should begin by ensuring that when nations meet in 2020 to mark the 50th anniversary of the Treaty's entry into force, we all recommit ourselves to the NPT in all its aspects. The NPT has been extraordinarily successful in stemming what was, decades ago, expected to be rampant proliferation of nuclear weapons. Thankfully, that has not happened. There have been setbacks, most notably with North Korea, but we live in a much safer world thanks to the NPT. And the expansion of the many benefits of the peaceful uses of nuclear energy have been made possible by the strong nonproliferation norms established by the Treaty.

The United States is also exercising leadership in the discussion of disarmament. Even as the obstacles to further progress have increased thanks to a deteriorating security environment, we are engaging a broad range of international partners in beginning to build a serious, multilateral discussion of what must be done to improve the security environment to allow further progress in reducing nuclear arsenals.

If confirmed, I will work to advance these important objectives, striving to help ensure that the NPT, and the broader nonproliferation regime that has been built around that Treaty over the last 50 years, is positioned for continued success for another half century.

Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

[The prepared statement of Mr. Eberhardt follows:]

PREPARED STATEMENT OF JEFFREY L. EBERHARDT

Thank you Mr. Chairman and members of the committee, it is an honor to appear before this committee as President Trump's nominee to be the Special Representative of the President for Nuclear Nonproliferation. I am grateful to the President

and Secretary Pompeo for the confidence they have placed in me, and for the opportunity—with your approval—to continue to serve this country in a new and challenging position of responsibility. I am proud to be joined today by two of my sons, Todd and Joshua, both of whom have the distinction of being born in what was then known as West Germany, during my first overseas tour.

I joined the State Department following my 23 years in the Army, and have worked on nuclearrelated issues across three successive administrations. I participated in the Six-Party Talks beginning when I was still on active duty in the Office of the Secretary of Defense, and continuing when I joined the Department. I worked on the Iran and North Korea files for many years. Closer to our subject today, I have been involved in the review cycles of the Treaty on the Nonproliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT) since 2005, participating in preparations for and working on the U.S. delegations to multiple NPT Preparatory Committees and Review Conferences. I was part of the State team contributing to both the 2010 and 2018 Nuclear Posture Reviews. I also contributed to numerous policy reviews over the past years on issues such as the proposed Fissile Material Cutoff Treaty, the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty, and the NPT itself.

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This may not be an easy road. There are those who believe, for example, that—despite having reduced our nuclear arsenal by approximately 88 percent from its Cold War high—the United States has not reduced far enough or fast enough. There is also the long-standing problem of how to advance toward a Middle East weapons of mass destruction free zone, an issue that dates to the Treaty's indefinite extension in 1995.

These challenges are daunting, Mr. Chairman, but what is clear is that without strong U.S. leadership, achieving success will not be possible. And we are seeking to meet these challenges. Success, I believe, should begin by ensuring that when nations meet in 2020 to mark the 50th anniversary of the Treaty's entry into force, we all recommit ourselves to the NPT in all its aspects. The NPT has been extraordinarily successful in stemming what was, decades ago, expected to be rampant proliferation of nuclear weapons. Thankfully, that has not happened. There have been setbacks, most notably with North Korea, but we live in a much safer world thanks to the NPT. And the expansion of the many benefits of the peaceful uses of nuclear energy have been made possible by the strong nonproliferation norms established by the Treaty.

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If confirmed, I will work to advance these important objectives, striving to help ensure that the NPT—and the broader nonproliferation regime that has been built around that Treaty over the last 50 years—is positioned for continued success for another half century.

Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Senator YOUNG. Well, thank you, Mr. Eberhardt.

Mr. Gilmore, you may proceed with your statement, sir.

STATEMENT OF HON. JAMES S. GILMORE, OF VIRGINIA, TO BE U.S. REPRESENTATIVE TO THE ORGANIZATION FOR SECURITY AND COOPERATION IN EUROPE, WITH THE RANK OF AMBASSADOR

Mr. GILMORE. Thank you very much, Senator Young and Senator Merkley. I am delighted to have an opportunity to appear before this committee.

I also want to thank Senator Kaine for coming here today to introduce me to the committee. Senator Kaine and I share a common background as former Governors of Virginia, and I am grateful for your support, Senator.

If confirmed, it would be my pleasure to serve as the United States' Permanent Representative to the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe and to lead that mission together with allies and partners to address the comprehensive challenges facing Europe, Eurasia, and North America. I am grateful to President Trump for the opportunity to serve my country again, and I am grateful for his confidence in my ability to advance American interests and values.

I am pleased to introduce my family members who are here with me today. First, my wife Roxane, my wife of 42 years, the former First Lady of Virginia. She holds two degrees in ancient history from the University of Virginia and has taught for more than three decades. She taught me, too. I have learned a great deal from her knowledge about all of this and Western civilization.

I have two sons. One is able to be here with me today, my son Jay, who is here also. He works here in national security in Washington. My younger son Ashton is likewise not here today, but he also works in national security in Charlottesville.

I have been a committed student of foreign policy since attending the University of Virginia. I served in the U.S. Army, as the Senator said, in military intelligence as a non-commissioned officer. I have been a prosecutor, Attorney General, and Governor. I traveled to 18 countries on three continents on trade issues. I will draw on these experiences, if confirmed, in order to work to stand up to those who seek to undermine our values and the rules of the institution of the OSCE.

The OSCE is an indispensable pillar of the security architecture that has served the United States well for generations. I am proud that the United States helped to establish this organization at the height of the Cold War in the '70s. If confirmed, I would strive to maintain strong leadership in the OSCE and defend the principles on which the organization was founded.

Its unique value stems from its broad-based membership, 57 participating states and nations across the Atlantic and Eurasia, its comprehensive approach to security, which acknowledges the relationship between security and respect for human rights, and the rule of law and democracy. It is the premier platform in Europe and Eurasia for advancing human rights and fundamental freedoms. It is a rich body of human rights that is represented in the OSCE.

The Helsinki Final Act principles speak of respect for the sovereignty and territorial integrity of states, as well as for human rights and fundamental freedoms. These tenets are enduring. The contempt that Russia has shown for these principles and commitments, through repression at home and aggression abroad, should concern us all.

Of all the challenges confronting the OSCE today, none is more consequential or vexing than the conflict in Ukraine. Russia has armed, trained, led, and fought alongside its proxy forces in eastern Ukraine since 2014, leading to approximately 13,000 deaths. Russia's fueling of the conflict, its purported annexation of Crimea, and its provocative actions in the Kerch Strait and the Black Sea undermine regional stability and directly contravene all 10 of the foundational Helsinki principles. The Special Monitoring Mission to Ukraine of the OSCE serves as the world's eyes and ears in eastern Ukraine's conflict zone. If confirmed, I will call on Russia to respect Ukraine's sovereignty and territorial integrity within its internationally recognized borders.

The unresolved conflicts in Europe weaken regional stability. If confirmed, I would promote progress within the OSCE to resolve these protracted conflicts that have undermined peace in Eastern Europe and the South Caucasus.

We have to press for full implementation of existing agreements and arrangements to rebuild military transparency. If confirmed, I will work with allies and partners to restore transparency and predictability on the European continent among conventional forces.

Respect for human rights and fundamental freedoms is an essential aspect of security. If confirmed, I would ensure that the U.S. Mission to the OSCE remains a strong voice on behalf of human rights defenders targeted for repression, and I would continue to champion the role of civil society. I am committed to defending religious freedom and combating anti-Semitism and other manifestations of intolerance, including hate crimes. I would draw on my personal experience in that regard.

Congress' active, bipartisan engagement in the OSCE has been a tremendous strength. I commend the members of Congress who serve on the Helsinki Commission and participate in the OSCE Parliamentary Assembly. They hold leadership positions in each. I am pleased to see so much active participation.

If confirmed, I will follow the path set out by the President and Secretary Pompeo to provide U.S. leadership to uphold OSCE principles and commitments. Staying true to these principles is now the work with allies and partners to leverage the capabilities and address our conventional and emerging threats.

Senator, Mr. Chairman, today I am very grateful for the opportunity to lead the outstanding team at OSCE in Vienna. If confirmed, I commit to providing my best analysis and advice to the U.S. government and to work with the committee of the Helsinki Commission and Congress to advance the policies that promote democracy, advance human rights, and enhance the prosperity and security of our country.

Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I welcome your questions.

[The prepared statement of Mr. Gilmore follows:]

PREPARED STATEMENT OF JAMES S. GILMORE

Thank you, Chairman Risch, Ranking Member Menendez, and members of the committee for the opportunity to appear before you. I thank Senator Kaine for introducing me to the committee. Senator Kaine and I share a common background as former Governors of Virginia, and I am grateful for his support. If confirmed, it would be my honor to serve as the United States' Permanent Representative to the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE) and to lead the U.S. mission as it works with Allies and partners to address the comprehensive range of challenges facing Europe, Eurasia, and North America. I am grateful to President Trump for this opportunity to serve my country again and his confidence in my ability to advance U.S. interests and values.

I am pleased to introduce my family who are here with me today. First, Roxane, my wife of forty-two years, the former First Lady of Virginia. Roxane holds two degrees in ancient history from the University of Virginia and has taught for more than three decades. I have learned a great deal from her knowledge of the beginnings of Western civilization. My two sons are here with me as well. Jay and Ashton are also University of Virginia graduates who work to defend our national security—Jay does so for the U.S. government, and Ashton works in the private sector.

I have been a committed student of foreign policy since attending the University of Virginia. I also served as a U.S. Army intelligence officer in West Germany, practiced trial law, was elected prosecutor for my home county, then Attorney General of Virginia, and then Governor. As Governor, I traveled to eighteen countries on three continents on trade missions. If confirmed, I would draw on these experiences to serve U.S. interests, collaborate with our Allies and partners, and stand up to those who seek to undermine the values, rules, and institutions that underpin freedom, prosperity, and peace in the OSCE region.

The OSCE is an indispensable pillar of the security architecture that has served the United States well for generations. I am proud the United States helped establish the organization at the height of the Cold War in the 1970s. If confirmed, I would strive to maintain strong U.S. leadership at the OSCE, defending the principles on which the organization was founded and strengthening it to face future challenges.

The OSCE's unique value stems from its broad membership—57 participating States across the Atlantic and Eurasia—and its comprehensive approach to security, which acknowledges the relationship between security and respect for human rights, rule of law, and democracy. It is the premier platform in Europe and Eurasia for advancing human rights and fundamental freedoms and defending civil society. Its rich body of human rights and security commitments, its network of field missions, and its independent institutions are strengths not replicated in any other security or regional organization.

The Helsinki Final Act principles speak of respect for the sovereignty and territorial integrity of States as well as for human rights and fundamental freedoms. These tenets are enduring. The contempt that Russia has shown for these principles and commitments—through repression at home and aggression abroad—should concern us all.

Of all the challenges confronting the OSCE today, none is more consequential or vexing than the conflict in Ukraine. Russia has armed, trained, led, and fought alongside its proxy forces in eastern Ukraine since 2014, leading to approximately 13,000 deaths.

Russia's fueling of the conflict, its purported annexation of Crimea, and its provocative actions in the Kerch Strait and the Black Sea undermine regional stability and directly contravene all ten of the foundational Helsinki principles. The OSCE's highly effective Special Monitoring Mission to Ukraine serves as the world's eyes and ears in eastern Ukraine's conflict zone. If confirmed, I will call on Russia to respect Ukraine's sovereignty and territorial integrity within its internationally recognized borders, extending to its territorial waters.

More broadly, unresolved conflicts in Europe weaken regional stability. If confirmed, I would promote progress within the OSCE to resolve the protracted conflicts that have undermined peace and stability for too long, particularly in Eastern Europe and the South Caucasus.

We must also press for full implementation of existing agreements and arrangements to rebuild military transparency. If confirmed, I will work with Allies and partners at the OSCE to begin to restore predictability, transparency, and confidence in military security relations.

Respect for human rights and fundamental freedoms is an essential aspect of security. If confirmed, I would ensure that the U.S. Mission to the OSCE remains a strong voice on behalf of human rights defenders targeted for repression and I

would continue to champion the role of civil society. I am committed to defending religious freedom and combating anti-Semitism and other manifestations of intolerance, including hate crimes. I would also draw on my personal experience to support OSCE election observation missions. Democracy can only prevail when the citizens of OSCE countries know they can change their government peacefully through genuinely free and fair elections. If confirmed, I also plan to support OSCE efforts to combat human trafficking and violence against women.

Congress's active, bipartisan engagement in the OSCE has been a tremendous strength to U.S. diplomatic efforts. I commend the Members of Congress who serve on the Helsinki Commission, participate in the OSCE Parliamentary Assembly, and hold leadership positions in both. I am pleased to see that so many members of this committee serve on the Helsinki Commission. I know you recognize the value that the OSCE brings to U.S. foreign policy.

If confirmed, I will follow the path set out by the President and Secretary Pompeo to provide U.S. leadership to uphold OSCE principles and commitments. Staying true to these principles and values, now is the time to work with Allies and partners to leverage the OSCE's capabilities to address both conventional and emerging threats in innovative and comprehensive ways.

Mr. Chairman, I am grateful for this opportunity to lead the outstanding team at USOSCE in Vienna. If confirmed, I commit to providing my best analysis and advice to the U.S. government and to work with this committee, the Helsinki Commission, and Congress to advance policies that promote democracy, advance human rights, and enhance the prosperity and security of our country.

Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I welcome your questions.

Senator YOUNG. Thank you, sir.

Mr. Swendiman, please make your opening statement, sir.

STATEMENT OF ALAN R. SWENDIMAN, OF NORTH CAROLINA, TO BE DEPUTY DIRECTOR OF THE PEACE CORPS

Mr. SWENDIMAN. Mr. Chairman, first, with your indulgence, I would like to congratulate Governor Gilmore and you, Senator Kaine, on UVA's winning the NCAA basketball championship. I told the Governor I was a little surprised he was here and you are here, Senator Kaine. I thought you would still be celebrating. Truth be told, as a graduate of the University of North Carolina, I had hoped that the Tar Heels would be there, and I suspect, Senator Young, you would have liked to see Indiana; and you, Senator Merkley, would have liked to have seen Oregon or Oregon State. Obviously, this was not our year. Needless to say, Virginia is an ACC school. So, Senator Kaine and Governor Gilmore, you have my support.

Senator YOUNG. I am trying to forget about that Purdue-Virginia game. So, all right.

[Laughter.]

Mr. SWENDIMAN. I am sorry——

Senator KAINE. And Oregon-Virginia.

[Laughter.]

Senator YOUNG. All right, all right.

[Laughter.]

Mr. SWENDIMAN. I am sorry, Mr. Chairman.

Senator YOUNG. This is not going in the right direction.

[Laughter.]

Mr. SWENDIMAN. I am sorry, Mr. Chairman, I left Purdue out.

Senator YOUNG. You can proceed with your opening statement, sir.

[Laughter.]

Mr. SWENDIMAN. Chairman Young, Ranking Member Merkley, it is an honor to appear before you today as the President's nominee to serve as Deputy Director of the Peace Corps.

I appreciate the President's confidence in me, and Director Olsen's support to join her team of dedicated individuals working toward building stronger partnerships around the world.

In addition, I would like to recognize my family. I am well aware that my public service career has been made possible because of the unconditional support my wife Kathy, daughter Shelley, and son Robert have provided over the years.

My wife, by way of note, served for 40 years in the Congressional Research Service, American Law Division, specializing in health care, Social Security, Medicare and Medicaid. You may or your staff may be familiar with her work.

My daughter regretfully could not attend today. Her 1-year-old son is quite sick, and now she has come down with it as well. She would have loved to be here, Senator Merkley.

The Peace Corps is as important and relevant as ever. It represents the face of this nation. Volunteers build positive perceptions of this country in the minds and hearts of the people served throughout the world. And the impact of Peace Corps volunteers goes far beyond their time in service.

I have witnessed this when I visited my daughter, Shelley, who was a Peace Corps Volunteer in Ukraine. She worked alongside her Ukrainian teacher counterparts to inspire the next generation of students to build and improve their English proficiency. Some of her former students still reach out to her today. After she returned to the United States, she continued her public service. She currently works at the Department of Labor Office of Child Labor, Forced Labor & Human Trafficking, overseeing grants made by this nation to foreign countries to stem the tide of child labor and forced labor, and in fact just recently came back from the Philippines on such official business.

Public service is as important to me and as meaningful to me as it is to her.

I wholeheartedly believe in the idea of service above self; that is, to serve my country and be part of something far greater than me. With that sense of mission, I am here today to share with you my commitment to advance agency priorities, focusing on ensuring that the Peace Corps remains the premiere volunteer program in the United States, while at the same time continuing to improve the application experience and mechanisms to promote the health, safety, and security of Americans representing our country in the communities throughout the world where Peace Corps volunteers are serving.

I am confident my years of experience with other Federal agencies, including USAID, will transfer to Peace Corps' environment and, if confirmed, those experiences will inform and guide my recommendations to complement Director Olsen's priorities, including strengthening the country portfolio review process. If implemented properly, this process can ensure that the Peace Corps is preparing volunteers to serve in partner countries who share the same vision of maximizing the impact of projects that can be completed with finite resources.

Coupled with the passion of volunteers, Peace Corps programs are designed to assist communities who are working hard to improve their economic opportunities. As you know, this approach has been a core mission of Peace Corps since its inception and it ensures that taxpayer dollars are used wisely in countries that have solidified their commitment by entering into a bilateral country agreement with the agency to guide expectations of our cooperation.

Equally important, I am committed to advancing procedures that have been established by subject-matter experts to continue assessing the training and service delivery systems that are responsible for the health, safety, and security of all volunteers. As a parent of a return Peace Corps volunteer, I have experienced firsthand the inspiring work a healthy and safe volunteer can accomplish when he or she is properly trained and supported.

If confirmed, I look forward to supporting current and future Peace Corps volunteers in the same manner Peace Corps professionals supported my daughter during her pre-departure and field service over 10 years ago. This includes working closely with experts and country directors to reduce risks volunteers face every day, including a professional and compassionate response to sexual assaults and other crimes when they occur.

I want families to know that, if confirmed, I will work diligently to ensure Peace Corps provides the best response and assistance in case their loved ones experience a crime during their service. That I have a vested interest in.

In closing, I want to thank your staff, who have been very courteous to me, as well as Peace Corps staffers who have helped me prepare for today's hearing.

Chairman Young, Ranking Member Merkley, thank you for the opportunity to appear before you today. I look forward to your questions.

[The prepared statement of Mr. Swendiman follows:]

PREPARED STATEMENT OF ALAN ROBERT SWENDIMAN

Chairman Young and other distinguished members of the committee, it is an honor to appear before you today as the President's nominee to serve as Deputy Director of the Peace Corps.

I appreciate the President's confidence in me, and Director Olsen's support to join her team of dedicated individuals working toward building stronger partnerships around the world.

In addition, I would like to recognize my family. I am well aware that my public service career has been possible because of the unconditional support my wife Kathy, daughter Shelley, and son Robert, have provided over the years.

The Peace Corps is as important and relevant as ever. It represents the face of this nation. Volunteers build positive perceptions of this country in the minds and hearts of the people served throughout the world. And the impact of Peace Corps volunteers goes far beyond their time in service.

I have witnessed this when I visited my daughter, Shelley, who was a Peace Corps Volunteer in Ukraine. She worked alongside her Ukrainian teacher counterparts to inspire the next generation of students to build and improve their English proficiency. Some of her now former students still reach out to her today. After she returned to the United States, Shelley continued her public service. She currently works at the Department of Labor—Office of Child Labor, Forced Labor & Human Trafficking—overseeing grants made by this nation to foreign countries to stem the tide of child and forced labor.

Public service is important and meaningful to me, as it is to her.

I wholeheartedly believe in the idea of service above self, that is, to serve my country and be part of something far greater than myself. With that sense of mission, I am here today to share with you my commitment to advance agency priorities focusing on ensuring that the Peace Corps remains the premiere Volunteer program in the United States, while at the same time continuing to improve the application experience and mechanisms to promote the health, safety and security of Americans representing our country in the communities throughout the world where Peace Corps Volunteers are serving.

I am confident my years of experience with other federal agencies, including USAID, will transfer to Peace Corps' environment and, if confirmed, those experiences will guide my recommendations to complement Director's Olsen priorities, including strengthening the country portfolio review process.

If implemented properly, this process can ensure that the Peace Corps is preparing Volunteers to serve in partner countries who share the same vision of maximizing the impact of projects that can be completed with finite resources.

Coupled with the passion of Volunteers, Peace Corps programs are designed to assist communities who are working hard to improve their economic opportunities. As you know, this approach has been a core mission of Peace Corps since its inception and it ensures that taxpayer dollars are used wisely in countries that have solidified their commitment by entering into a bilateral country agreement with the agency to guide expectations of our cooperation.

Equally important, I am committed to advancing procedures that have been established by subject matter experts to continue assessing the training and service delivery systems that are responsible for the health, safety, and security of all Volunteers. As a parent of a Return Peace Corps Volunteer, I have experienced first-hand the inspiring work a healthy and safe Volunteer can accomplish when he or she is properly trained and supported.

If confirmed, I look forward to supporting current and future Peace Corps Volunteers in the same manner Peace Corps professionals supported my daughter during her pre-departure and field service ten years ago. This includes working closely with experts and country directors to reduce risks Volunteers face every day, including a professional and compassionate response to sexual assaults and crimes when they occur.

I want families to know that, if confirmed, I will work diligently to ensure Peace Corps provides the best response and assistance in case their loved ones experience a crime during their service. I have a vested interest.

In closing, I also want to thank your staff and Peace Corps staffers who helped me prepare for today's hearing.

Chairman Young and other distinguished Members of the committee; again, thank you for the opportunity to appear before you today.

I look forward to your questions.

Senator YOUNG. Well, gentlemen, thank you for your thoughtful opening statements. Since I spent a lot of time in the Marine Corps when I was in Virginia, I am infused with the spirit of allowing my troops to eat first, which is an ethic of the Marines. So I will defer my questioning to a bit later. I am going to allow Senator Merkley to proceed with his questioning, Senator Kaine, and we may have some other members come in and out in the meanwhile. Thank you.

Senator MERKLEY. Mr. Swendiman, the Peace Corps strategic plan does not set out currently a vision for how many Peace Corps volunteers there will be. Will you advocate for an expansion of the Peace Corps programs? And if so, what do you see it possibly expanding into?

Mr. SWENDIMAN. The agency, Senator, has this country portfolio review process, and in utilizing that process, which is data driven, it seeks to determine where best to place Peace Corps volunteers. As we know, Congress authorizes and appropriates funds for the agency. And so with those funds it will utilize that process as to where Peace Corps volunteers should serve.

As you know, I am not on staff currently, so I have not been briefed specifically on where the Peace Corps is looking at expand-

ing. I do know and am aware that Sri Lanka is a country that is on the list and on the table.

Senator MERKLEY. Thank you. After you are on board, you can whisper and——

Mr. SWENDIMAN. And I will be glad, Senator, to get back to you or your staff.

Senator MERKLEY. Thank you.

Mr. Eberhardt, Saudi Arabia is seeking to acquire more nuclear reactors, and the U.S. is engaged in a conversation about the 123 standard, the gold standard. Do you feel we should not do any sales if Saudi Arabia will not agree to the gold standard?

Mr. EBERHARDT. Thank you, Senator. I know those negotiations have been going on for several years now. Those negotiations are not an issue that falls within my normal day-to-day work. I do believe the standard, the so-called gold standard, is something that we should always strive to achieve. I know that the Under Secretary shares that view, that we should always strive toward the highest nonproliferation standards possible in the negotiation of 123 agreements. How the negotiation with Saudi Arabia eventually comes out remains to be seen, but I absolutely agree that we should strive for that standard in a 123 agreement.

Senator MERKLEY. But I think we should do more than strive, because if we make the sales without the gold standard, it is a whole lot of trouble ahead. And also, in terms of the additional protocol of the NPT, if Saudi Arabia is not willing to sign on to it, especially in the context of our dialogue to restrain and/or eliminate nuclear programs in Iran, if we give a bigger leash to Saudi Arabia, it is going to be very, very hard to maintain some higher standard for Iran.

Do you support the development of the low-yield sea-launched cruise missile, and is that consistent with Article 6 of the NPT?

Mr. EBERHARDT. Senator, I know that the Department of Defense is looking at several options coming out of the Nuclear Posture Review and where we are with the INF treaty with Russia. Regardless of how that comes out, I think even with the decision to move forward in that program, we are still in good stead with Article 6 of the NPT. Article 6 requires good-faith negotiations towards cessation of the nuclear arms race, eventually a nuclear free world, and of course general and complete disarmament. The United States record on Article 6 is extraordinarily strong. As I mentioned in my opening remarks, we reduced our arsenal by 88 percent from our Cold War high. We continue to reduce the number——

Senator MERKLEY. My time is real short, so I am going to cut you off there, but thank you.

How about the new START Treaty, if we fail to extend it? Or do you have an opinion, a strong opinion at this point on whether we should extend it or not?

Mr. EBERHARDT. Senator, I know that there is an ongoing review of whether or not we should extend the new START Treaty. There are a lot of factors that are being looked at, both the gains that we get from the inspection regime to the issue of dealing with Russia when they are cheating on treaties. So there are a lot of competing factors on both sides that I think all need to be weighed carefully

before we make a final decision on extension of the new START Treaty.

Senator MERKLEY. Governor Gilmore, I have been somewhat frustrated by the U.S. leadership on human rights the last couple of years. Burma conducted a massive, massive ethnic cleansing campaign against a Muslim minority, and our President has not ever said one word of condemnation. We have had other members of the Administration who have said a few words occasionally in a few places.

The Philippines engaged in very, very significant extrajudicial slaughter of thousands of young men. We have not taken a clear stand.

These things are not under your purview perhaps in the position you would take, but they are very related. Is it not important for the U.S. to take a strong stand on human rights throughout the world?

Mr. GILMORE. It is, Senator. I can assure you that as the permanent representative to the OSCE, I will be taking a strong stand on human rights. We are observing the abuse of people in Crimea, occupied Crimea. One fellow has already been arrested and sent to an Arctic gulag. He should be returned immediately. He should be released immediately.

We are seeing an opportunity to inject human rights and calm down some of the ethnic tensions that we see in the Balkans, particularly the Balkan countries and the challenges that they are facing there. The Russians have not only been imposing violations of human rights through Europe and within their areas but even within their own country.

The OSCE is the premier organization that casts a standard on human rights. As the permanent representative, you can be sure I will be vigorous in these matters.

Senator MERKLEY. Thank you, I appreciate that, and I do feel that our voice will be much more influential if we pay attention to human rights in places we have not been paying attention to it in the last couple of years. Thank you.

Senator YOUNG. Senator Kaine?

Senator KAINE. Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Thanks for the indulgence to allow us to go.

Mr. Swendiman, you were giving congratulations about UVA. There are four UVA grads in the United States Senate, but neither of the Virginia senators had the talent and/or judgment to get a degree from the University of Virginia. So Governor Gilmore can accept congratulations, and Roxanne can, who has a UVA degree, and Jay also has a UVA degree and can take congratulations, but the Virginia senators sadly were lacking, at least at that point in their life. We have tried to compensate for it in years since.

Governor Gilmore, I want to ask you, OSCE plays an important role in a fairly challenging time in Europe. There are 29 nations in the EU right now, but the EU challenges, especially with Brexit still being so much up in the air, have sort of paralyzed some European politics for the last few years.

There are 29 nations in NATO in the North Atlantic. The OSCE is much larger, as your testimony points out, 57 nations. So, many

that are not members of the EU or that are not members of NATO nevertheless have come together under the OSCE banner.

Talk a little bit about how you would attempt, should you be confirmed, to use the breadth of the coalition to promote some stability and unity in what seems, at least from this side of the Atlantic, to be a pretty difficult time right now.

Mr. GILMORE. Senator Kaine, the advantage of OSCE is its size, and it contains not just merely our allies and traditional friends but also people that are just emerging out of authoritarian regimes and people who are still developing. It not only handles Europe, but it also goes into Central Asia, many of the former Soviet republics that are independent now but somewhat authoritarian that benefit from OSCE and are asking for help from the OSCE.

In addition to that, the organization has offices throughout many of its member countries, particularly in the Balkans, but in other places. There is American leadership heading those offices in Serbia, Kosovo, Bosnia and Herzegovina.

There are systems that have been put into place to deal with some of the thornier problems. Chechnya, for example, there is a Moscow mission mechanism to send OSCE people to investigate into the human rights violations there.

There are problems with Georgia and the other countries that are there.

The point is this, that even with Moldavia, there is a 5.2 process where America plays a significant role. The reason I am saying these things is because the OSCE is working very hard to have processes in place to advance the interests of human rights but also national security, mostly in Europe and beyond, and that favors, of course, the United States.

Maybe the most important thing is the special monitoring mission to Ukraine. As an ongoing conflict, an American was killed there last year. As a matter of fact, his name is Joseph Stone. The anniversary of his death is coming up. There are over a thousand people in place at the special monitoring mission in the Ukraine. So this is a serious opportunity to have eyes and ears on the ground. OSCE gives the opportunity to cast a light on what is going on throughout Europe and throughout these conflicts, and in that way to advance the interests of peace and security.

Senator KAINE. I appreciate that answer.

I want to ask you, Mr. Eberhardt, to follow up on something that Senator Merkley was asking you about. He was talking about nuclear proliferation issues in the Middle East, and you addressed those in your testimony as well. Just a quote from your written testimony, which you did also present orally here. "There is also the longstanding problem of how to advance toward a Middle East weapons of mass destruction freeze zone," an issue that dates to the Treaty's indefinite extension in 1995.

Some of the issues that we might deal with in terms of weapons of mass distraction in the Middle East will be in your portfolio. Some might not, but I gather what you would want us to do as members of the Foreign Relations Committee—I am also on the Armed Services Committee—is to be very focused on this issue. Anything dealing with nuclear proliferation or proliferation of missile programs in the Middle East are things that we need to take

very seriously because, obviously, if we can have that part of the world be weapons of mass destruction free, that would be a huge weight off not only our shoulders but the shoulders of the entire world from a security standpoint. Would you not agree?

Mr. EBERHARDT. Thank you, Senator. I would. In NPT circles, this issue has been around for many years, and all too often it has tried to be cast in terms of Israel needs to join the NPT.

There are a range of issues that are in the way of a Middle East weapons of mass destruction free zone, Syria's joining and then violating the CWC, its use of chemical weapons against its own people, what Iran is doing with its missile program, what Iran is—potentially with its breakout capability, what it can do with its nuclear program.

Now, the President made a decision that the JCPOA was defective in that it did not take a complete approach to the problem of Iran and the Middle East, and that is what we are about now. We need to look at the full range of problems that are in the Middle East today, and only then, by addressing these problems, can you actually start to have a conversation about a weapons of mass destruction free zone. But that is going to take the participation of all states in the region taking a clear-eyed look at all the problems in the region and then working collectively to solve them.

Senator KAINE. You would agree with me, though, as I conclude, you mentioned Iran, Syria, Israel just by name, but we ought to be concerned about any nation in the Middle East that is expanding a missile program or any nation that is expanding a nuclear program. All of those things need to be carefully, carefully monitored by Congress; would you not agree?

Mr. EBERHARDT. Yes, Senator, I would.

Senator KAINE. Thank you.

Thank you, Mr. Chair.

Senator YOUNG. Mr. Eberhardt, in my opening statement, I referenced some of the significant headwinds to our nonproliferation efforts around the globe. If you just look at a map—I mean, Iran, North Korea, Russia, Pakistan, India, there are questions about China from many. So with respect to nonproliferation, is there a particular country or region that we should really be most focused on right now? I know the recent news has certainly had a number of us on tenterhooks with respect to India and Pakistan. But what do you consider the region of greatest concern to you as you consider stepping into this position that you have been nominated for?

Mr. EBERHARDT. Thank you, Senator. That is a difficult question. Judging between the problem of North Korea's nuclear program and the path that Iran is potentially on, both are extremely difficult challenges that need to be addressed, and they require different tools to address them.

But if there is one thing in common, it is going to require collective activity on the part of the broader international community. I do not believe the United States can solve the North Korean problem alone. I do not think we can solve the Iran problem alone. We can lead in the solution to those problems by bringing pressure to bear on both of those regimes to end the nuclear program in North Korea and ensure that Iran never acquires a nuclear weapon.

Senator YOUNG. So by way of follow-up, what do you consider the most effective international organization or multilateral organization to deal with the threat of nonproliferation? We have had challenges in the Security Council, of course. So how do we combat proliferation?

Mr. EBERHARDT. Senator, I think we need to use all the tools in the toolbox. There are times when the U.N. can be of use. There are times when agencies such as the International Atomic Energy Agency can be useful. There are times when a group of nations working with the leadership of the United States can be the most effective tool. So I would not point to any one tool that is sort of the key to the solution of the problem. I think you need to look at each problem on its own basis and then craft a strategy to deal with it.

Senator YOUNG. Some have expressed concerns about a continuing qualitative and quantitative improvement in Chinese, Indian, and Pakistani nuclear arsenals that might destabilize the strategic relationship among those three countries, and in recent days we have had this standoff between India and Pakistan continue even though it seems the risk of conflict has diminished. It is obviously a significant concern if tensions were to again rise between nuclear powers. So if confirmed, what policies would you continue or would you initiate to increase strategic stability among these three countries?

Mr. EBERHARDT. Thank you, Senator. So, within the realm of the responsibility of the office that I would have, if confirmed, I think focusing on the nuclear issues is going to be key. I think one of the initiatives that we have tried to press is to expand the group of countries that have declared a moratorium on the production of fissile material. Four of the five of the P5 have done so. China, notably amongst the P5, has not, and of course neither have India and Pakistan. There have been efforts over the years to negotiate a treaty that would ban the production of fissile material for use in nuclear weapons. Those efforts have failed largely due to the opposition of both China and Pakistan, but there may be an interim step where you can get them to at least join the broader community in halting the production of fissile material.

I do think we also need to look at how we have a conversation that includes India and Pakistan. Too often in NPT circles, they look at the world through only NPT states' parties and talk about a world free of nuclear weapons as if you could do so only with NPT state parties. Well, of course, one does need to deal with India and Pakistan if one imagines the achievement of such a world, so we do need to find a way to engage with them in appropriate fora to bring them into the conversation to talk about how responsible nuclear powers act, most notably by halting arms racing and beginning to look at how you can bring your numbers down.

Senator YOUNG. Thank you.

Mr. Gilmore, I want to note something that my colleague, Senator Kaine, also mentioned. There is some overlapping membership between different entities, the NATO and EU, United Nations I would add, and OSCE. You mentioned as I think a unique value proposition of OSCE as you have dozens more members. Sixty-seven, I believe, is the number. Fifty-seven. All right. And then you

also mentioned security and rule of law being points of emphasis, and then human rights really looms largest.

How would you characterize the future of the OSCE? Will that really be the distinguishing factor and the defining facet of its mission as compared to these other entities, human rights?

Mr. GILMORE. Senator, I think that the OSCE, because it is so broad-based and it has everybody in it, really transatlantic and all the way into central Asia, it is a wonderful opportunity to communicate and to advocate and to pursue American national interests, as well as the interests of our allies in a broad-based way.

If you look at the higher profile of the multilateral organizations, the European Union is a basic economic type of organization seeking to try to emerge as some kind of nation, but it does not include a lot of people that are in the OSCE, all the way into Asia.

NATO is our allies, and they are, of course, on a potential confrontation mode militarily. The OSCE is an opportunity to get out here and talk about all these other issues, issues of anti-Semitism, the ideas of religious freedom, which, by the way, members of Congress have been very forthright in leading on those kinds of issues, as well as security issues. It is the OSCE that deals with the Vienna document that talks about the transparency of the conventional forces in Europe and the challenges that are being faced with that right now.

But Open Skies, which is ongoing right now, these confidence-building measures to prevent war. And then, of course, the third basket is the economic basket, as well.

So there are a lot of different—it is a broader-based agenda than you see in most of the other multilateral organizations, and the American mission there punches above its weight. Considering the contributions financially that are given to OSCE from the United States, and especially to the American mission, it does an awful lot and deals with an awful lot of issues that are matters of war and peace. And that is why, if confirmed, I will try to pursue all these multi-areas, together with the mission at my command.

Senator YOUNG. You mentioned the multifaceted missions—anti-Semitism, religious freedom, Open Skies, conflict prevention—being some of the current issues. Do you foresee challenges for the organization moving forward? And if so, how would you characterize those challenges?

Mr. GILMORE. I think that the countries that are in this organization perceive the value of it, and they understand how valuable it is to be a part of this. Even the Russians are trying to use the organization to their advantage. It is up to us to make sure that they cannot misuse the OSCE.

The other countries—for example, Uzbekistan has now said that they want to work with the OSCE to begin to promote democratic values. You are not going to see that in conjunction with the other organizations to which you are referring.

You have asked me a direct question, what is the future of the OSCE. I believe with senatorial and congressional support in support of the Secretary and the President, that this organization can be a central organization for the advancement not only of American interests but of multilateral interests, and will be, I believe. I be-

lieve there is confidence of the members in the organization going forward.

Senator YOUNG. Thank you, sir.

Mr. Swendiman, as you know, in the 1961 Peace Corps Act, the Peace Corps was established as both a development organization to help meet the needs for trained manpower in the poorest areas of countries, and as a public diplomacy organization to help promote a better understanding of the American people.

How would you assess the job the Peace Corps is doing as a development organization today?

Mr. SWENDIMAN. Senator, that is a very good question. I think the fact that Peace Corps has continued these many years—we are now 57 years, 58 years in existence—demonstrates its effectiveness. I think the fact that Peace Corps has sought to, in its country portfolio review process, to demonstrate and to assess its effectiveness using evidence-based data has shown that they have been effective. The personal stories that are received that come back to the agency about what the volunteers have done, the fact that a number of the projects that were started by volunteers still continue in existence when very easily they could have terminated, I think demonstrates the effectiveness of Peace Corps.

And the fact that, although I cannot tell you specifically because I have not been briefed on everything, but that there are some countries that made a request to Peace Corps and, as you know, Senator, that is what starts a process—in other words, the country has to request that Peace Corps has the first step before the following process goes, the Peace Corps does not simply impose the fact that they want to be there, the country wants to have them there, I think demonstrates the effectiveness of the Peace Corps and the desire to have the Peace Corps present.

Senator YOUNG. Very good. I appreciate the response. And with respect to the evidence-based policies that they attempt to implement and iteratively improve, should you be confirmed, I look forward to working with you on seeing how we might enhance those moving forward.

I thought you quite appropriately, Mr. Swendiman, discussed at some length the safety of volunteers, your concern about the safety of volunteers. I know there are a number of Hoosiers who I encounter who were either former Peace Corps volunteers or are looking to join the Peace Corps. We had a number of them that joined from Indiana University. We want our volunteers to be safe.

In your view, what are some of the most important and effective steps taken by the Peace Corps in recent years to enhance the safety of volunteers?

Mr. SWENDIMAN. I think, Senator, there have been a number of steps with regard to that. First of all, as you pointed out, the health, safety, and security of the volunteers is the number-one priority of the agency. Through the Kate Puzey Act, which the agency implemented, policies in terms of sexual assault, for example, have been implemented. Training of the volunteers has been implemented. There is an Office of Victim Advocacy that has been established. There has been the sexual assault risk reduction liaisons that have been provided with regard to those that are subject to sexual assault.

So the agency has done this, and what is interesting that has come back to me is that the Peace Corps is now becoming the gold standard with regard to the issue of sexual assault. There are other agencies that are looking to Peace Corps in terms of what they do.

Now, the key thing for Peace Corps will be continuing to monitor and evaluate its policies, its training, its programs in that regard. It is much like our first responders or our men and women who serve in uniform, our diplomats abroad. It is constantly looking at what we are doing and vowing to make sure that we are effective and efficient.

Senator YOUNG. Thank you for that fulsome response. I am impressed by the many successes ongoing in the Peace Corps on that front.

Currently, the Peace Corps has a presence in 65 countries. In the last decade, more than 20 countries have asked for a Peace Corps program to be established. You did indicate early on that you did not have eyeballs on that list of requested countries, if I recall, sir. Sri Lanka is one that you think may be on the list, you speculated.

But can you give me some sense—and I think you also indicated you do not have committed to memory or access to the specific criteria for establishing a new program; is that correct? Or can you speak to that?

Mr. SWENDIMAN. Well, I think I can give you, Mr. Chairman, generally.

Senator YOUNG. Please.

Mr. SWENDIMAN. I mentioned, first of all, that the country, as you pointed out, has to request. After that, the Peace Corps has to assess a number of factors, approximately six, with regard to the feasibility of Peace Corps volunteers. They look at safety. They look at health. They look at effectiveness in terms of what is the need that the country is expressing. So, there are factors.

Now, in the country portfolio review process, as I understand it, the process involves about 133 or so indicators. And the reason why they have gone to, as I understand it, have gone to evidence-based, first of all, people are looking, such as yourself, members of Congress are looking for evidence-based decisions. But they are looking at—the reason why it was implemented, among other things, was consistency, transparency, maintaining that there is no favoritism with regard to that.

And by looking at a number of factors, Peace Corps is able to look at where is the best place for Peace Corps volunteers to be, and what country, if requested, can they work with in terms of the resources that are provided to Peace Corps.

Senator YOUNG. Relatedly and lastly, perhaps you could explain what the process is to close an existing program, if any.

Mr. SWENDIMAN. Well, I think, again, I am going to have to pause a moment, Mr. Chairman, because, as mentioned previously, I am not on staff, so I do not work intimately with the agency and with the people who make those decisions, and cannot be briefed.

Senator YOUNG. I understand. If confirmed——

Mr. SWENDIMAN. But if confirmed, I certainly would get back to you as to that. But I believe that the country review process, the portfolio review process is part of that. Certainly, there are external factors that are going to come into play with anything. For ex-

ample, in terms of threats and the like, and under the law, current statute, the agency has to notify Congress in terms of opening, closing, suspending programs in a particular country.

Senator YOUNG. But I imagine there would be guideposts or different factors we follow.

Mr. SWENDIMAN. Correct.

Senator YOUNG. But, of course, this is an instrument of diplomacy, so we do need to consider external factors.

Mr. SWENDIMAN. Correct.

Senator YOUNG. Yes, sir.

Well, that is all I have in terms of questioning, and I do not see any other members around waiting to ask questions, so congratulations to each of you for surviving this part of the process.

Thank you again to all of our nominees for providing us with the benefit of your testimony earlier, your presence here today, and for bringing your family members along, as well.

For the information of members who may be watching these proceedings, the record will remain open until the close of business on Thursday, including for members to submit questions for the record.

Thanks again to members of this committee, our nominees and their families.

This hearing is now adjourned.

[Whereupon, at 4:05 p.m., the hearing was adjourned.]

Additional Material Submitted for the Record

RESPONSES TO ADDITIONAL QUESTIONS FOR THE RECORD SUBMITTED TO JEFFREY L. EBERHARDT BY SENATOR ROBERT MENENDEZ

Question. What are the most important actions you have taken in your career to date to support democracy and human rights?

Answer. I believe my greatest contribution to promoting human rights and democracy was my twenty-three years of service in the United States Army. That service included postings in West Germany from 1983 to 1990, witnessing the fall of the Soviet Union from my post on what was the Inner-German Border. Later, I deployed to the Persian Gulf for Operations Desert Thunder II and Desert Fox.

Question. What has been the impact of your actions?

Answer. I had the privilege of leading and mentoring the finest men and women of our nation, and many of them continue to serve our nation in positions of leadership today.

Question. If confirmed, do you commit to meet with civil society members, human rights and other non-governmental organizations, to the extent the issues they raise have a bearing on your duties?

Answer. Yes. In the course of my current duties, including dealing with issues related to the Treaty on the Nonproliferation of Nuclear Weapons, two Nuclear Posture Reviews, and other issues of concern to Civil Society, I have frequently met with such groups to hear their concerns and explain U.S. policies. If confirmed, I will continue to do so.

Question. Will you advocate for access and inclusivity for women and minorities?

Answer. Yes. Throughout my career, both military and civil, I have supported access and inclusivity for women and minorities. If confirmed, I will continue to do so.

Question. Will you commit to using your position, if confirmed, to defend the human rights and dignity of all people, no matter their sexual orientation or gender identity?

Answer. Yes. If confirmed, I will continue to defend the human rights and dignity of all people, no matter their sexual orientation or gender identity.

Question. Do you agree that any targeting of or retaliation against career employees based on their perceived political beliefs, prior work on policy, or affiliation with a previous administration, is wholly inappropriate and has no place in the federal government?

Answer. Yes. As both a career military officer and career civil servant, I fully believe that any targeting of, or retaliation against, career employees based on their perceived political beliefs, prior work on policy, or affiliation with a previous administration, is wholly inappropriate and has no place in the federal government.

Question. If confirmed, what will you do to ensure that all employees under your leadership understand that any retaliation, blacklisting, or other prohibited personnel practices will not be tolerated?

Has anyone ever made a formal or informal complaint or allegation of sexual harassment, discrimination (e.g., racial, ethnic, religious, etc.), or inappropriate conduct against you, in a workplace or any other setting?

Answer. If confirmed, I will strive to set the example in fostering an environment that is diverse and inclusive. That will of course include making clear that any retaliation, blacklisting, or other prohibited personnel practices will not be tolerated. In doing so, I will apply the leadership lessons I learned in my twenty-three years in the Army.I have not received any formal or informal complaint or allegation of sexual harassment, discrimination (e.g., racial, ethnic, religious, etc.), or inappropriate conduct against me, in a workplace or any other setting. I take issues of sexual harassment, discrimination (e.g., racial, ethnic, religious, etc.), and inappropriate conduct very seriously. I do not tolerate any types of behavior that could be considered discriminatory. I would be happy to meet with you to discuss these important issues further and my belief that everyone should be treated with respect and fairness.

Question. If so, please describe the nature of the complaint or allegation, your response, and any resolution, including any settlements.

Answer. Not applicable.

Question. Have you ever addressed concerns or allegations of sexual harassment, discrimination (e.g., racial, ethnic, religious, etc.), or inappropriate conduct made against any employee over whom you had supervisory authority?

Answer. I am committed to ensuring that harassment, discrimination, and inappropriate conduct are not tolerated and any allegations are handled appropriately. I have, over the course of both my military career and my service in the State Department, had to deal with issues of inappropriate conduct by individuals under my command/supervision.

Question. If so, please describe the outcome and actions taken.

Answer. In every case, I took the appropriate counseling and/or disciplinary steps in accordance with Army/Department policies.

Question. What are the most important actions you have taken in your career to date to promote human rights and democracy? What has been the impact of your actions?

Answer. I believe my greatest contribution to promoting human rights and democracy was my twenty-three years of service in the United States Army. That service included postings in West Germany from 1983 to 1990, witnessing the fall of the Soviet Union from my post on what was the Inner-German Border. Later, I deployed to the Persian Gulf for Operations Desert Thunder II and Desert Fox.

I had the privilege of leading the finest men and women of our nation, and many of them continue to serve our nation in positions of leadership today.

Question. What will you do to promote, mentor and support your staff that come from diverse backgrounds and underrepresented groups in the Foreign Service?

Answer. While the position to which I've been nominated does not include a staff, if confirmed, I will seek to have diverse representation on all delegations I am assigned to lead. As Head of Delegation, I will strive to mentor all with whom I work in order to build the next generation of arms control specialists.

RESPONSES TO ADDITIONAL QUESTIONS FOR THE RECORD
SUBMITTED TO JEFFREY L. EBERHARDT BY SENATOR BENJAMIN L. CARDIN

Question. What steps will you take to ensure each of the supervisors in the Foreign Service are fostering an environment that is diverse and inclusive?

Answer. While the position to which I've been nominated does not include a staff, if confirmed, I will strive to set the example for other senior leaders in fostering an environment that is diverse and inclusive for all delegations I lead. In doing so, I will apply the leadership lessons I learned in my twenty-three years in the Army, one of the most diverse organizations in the country.

Question. Do you commit to bring to the committee's attention (and the Inspector General of the State Department and Foreign Service) any change in policy or U.S. actions that you suspect may be influenced by any of the President's business or financial interests, or the business or financial interests of any senior White House staff?

Answer. Yes.

Question. Do you commit to inform the committee if you have any reason to suspect that a foreign government, head of state, or foreign-controlled entity is taking any action in order to benefit any of the President's business or financial interests, or the interests of senior White House staff?

Answer. Yes.

Question. Do you or do any members of your immediate family have any financial interests in any country abroad?

Answer. No.

Question. Is the bargain of the NPT still relevant over fifty years later? How do you assess the effectiveness of the treaty for U.S. nonproliferation policy?

Answer. Yes, the NPT is just as relevant now as it was fifty years ago. The NPT has provided the essential foundation for international efforts to stem the looming threat—then and now—that nuclear weapons would spread across the planet. It remains the accepted international basis for responses to efforts by specific countries to acquire nuclear weapons. The success of the NPT has been a boon to U.S. national security and to the security of all nations.

Question. What is your interpretation of the United States' nuclear disarmament obligations under the NPT, according to which, each of the states-parties "undertakes to pursue negotiations in good faith on effective measures relating to cessation of the nuclear arms race at an early date and to nuclear disarmament, and on a treaty on general and complete disarmament under strict and effective international control"?

Answer. Of the three obligations in NPT Article VI, the first—"to pursue negotiations in good faith on effective measures relating to the cessation of the nuclear arms race at an early date"—has essentially been achieved through the end and reversal of the Cold War nuclear arms race. The second—"to pursue negotiations in good faith on effective measures relating to nuclear disarmament"—has seen significant progress, including an 88 percent reduction in the U.S. nuclear stockpile since its Cold War peak. This, and the obligation—"to pursue negotiations . on a treaty on general and complete disarmament under strict and effective international control"—can only feasibly be addressed in the context of the overall security environment.

Question. Describing the Trump administration's "conditions-based" approach to nuclear disarmament in a March 2018 speech, Christopher Ford, Assistant Secretary for International Security and Nonproliferation, argued that "[w]e should thus not expect that any given articulation of 'practical steps' needed for progress toward disarmament will necessarily remain valid over time." However, the NPT states-parties have adopted and reaffirmed practical steps toward nuclear disarmament in the past. What are the U.S. goals for the 2020 Review Conference and the 2019 NPT Preparatory Committee meeting?

Answer. We seek a positive outcome at the 2020 Review Conference that reflects broad-based consensus. We will emphasize that preventing the proliferation of nuclear weapons is a direct and fundamental benefit of the NPT to all its Parties, which also facilitates progress on nuclear disarmament and cooperation on peaceful uses of nuclear energy. The central provisions of the NPT—nonproliferation, disarmament, and peaceful uses of nuclear energy—are shared interests of all NPT Parties, not competing priorities. The NPT's 50th anniversary provides an opportunity

for all NPT Parties to reaffirm their commitment to the NPT, reflect on how much has been accomplished to achieve its goals, and rededicate ourselves to those shared goals.

Question. How might the dynamics of the Review Conference change in light of a potential slow-down in U.S.-Russian strategic arms control? Should the New START Treaty be extended?

Answer. During the 50-year history of the Nuclear Non-Proliferation (NPT) Treaty there have been highs and lows in U.S.-Soviet and then U.S.-Russian bilateral strategic arms control, but that has not prevented our two governments from working with others toward common interests at prior NPT Review Conferences. If confirmed, I will work toward keeping that dynamic as much as possible for the 2020 Review Conference.

The New START Treaty is scheduled to expire February 5, 2021, and the administration is reviewing whether to seek an extension of the Treaty with the Russian Federation. Central to that review is evaluating whether extension is in the U.S. national interest and how the Treaty's expiration would impact U.S. national security in the evolving security environment, including Russia's ongoing development of new strategic offensive arms and serial noncompliance with its arms control obligations, as well as China's continuing nuclear modernization.

Question. How does the signing of the 2017 Treaty on the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons (the "nuclear ban" treaty) by 69 states impact the NPT?

Answer. The United States opposes the Treaty on the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons (TPNW) and argues against its ratification. No state possessing nuclear weapons supports the TPNW, and the treaty will not result in the elimination of a single nuclear weapon, nor will it enhance the security of any state. The TPNW risks reinforcing divisions in the existing nonproliferation and disarmament bodies that could hinder the ability of the United States to work with others to address the pressing proliferation and security challenges faced today.

The United States understands and appreciates states' desires to make more and faster progress on nuclear disarmament. However, the TPNW does not take into account the international security challenges that continue to make nuclear deterrence necessary to preserve U.S. national security and to ensure the security of our allies and partners.

Question. How should the United States ensure that current NPT non-nuclear weapon states will not pursue these weapons in the future?

Answer. The NPT has been successful, and will continue to be successful, because NPT Parties recognize that it is in their mutual self-interest not to acquire nuclear weapons. The nuclear nonproliferation regime must adapt in response to past and emerging proliferation challenges. This includes strengthening IAEA safeguards through universal adherence to the Additional Protocol, which gives the IAEA additional tools to respond to clandestine nuclear programs. Beyond that, the international community needs to make clear that states must comply with their nonproliferation obligations, including their obligations under relevant U.N. Security Council resolutions.

Question. Several prominent commissions have recently argued that the IAEA lacks adequate resources to execute its missions. How would you work to support the mission of the IAEA, particularly in the realm of verification and nuclear security?

Answer. Although the IAEA would not be one of my direct responsibilities, it does play a critical role in implementation of the Non-Proliferation Treaty, which would be my primary responsibility if confirmed. The IAEA's regular budget has not kept pace with the steadily growing demands placed upon the Agency by Member States, leading to a growing gap between its activities and its limited resources. As Director General Amano said during his April 2 briefing to the U.N. "The steady increase in the amount of nuclear material and the number of nuclear facilities under IAEA safeguards, and continuing pressure on our regular budget, are among the key challenges facing the Agency today." We continue to encourage the IAEA to make a strong case for itself in describing what activities may be omitted if the budget does not keep pace with the Agency's growing responsibilities. Because of constraints on the IAEA regular budget, the annual U.S. Voluntary Contribution provides us the necessary resources to support the critical missions of the IAEA across the board. The IAEA's nuclear security program is particularly reliant on voluntary contributions, and we will continue to press for greater funding through the regular budget within existing budget constraints. A strong IAEA is in U.S. national security inter-

ests, not only for its important verification role in safeguards, but also its work in nuclear safety and security, and in promoting peaceful uses of nuclear energy.

Question. What should the IAEA's role be in global efforts to secure nuclear and radiological materials? How should the United States support this?

Answer. The IAEA is well-positioned to serve its unique role as a central coordinator for strengthening nuclear and radiological security globally. The IAEA develops guidance on nuclear security and provides advice, training, and other assistance to Member States to prevent, detect, and respond to nuclear security incidents. The IAEA can also play a direct role in funding or facilitating projects to secure high-risk nuclear and radiological materials and in promoting alternatives to those materials. The IAEA's nuclear security programs are a vital component in advancing U.S. goals and objectives in nuclear security, and we will continue to support these efforts through political, technical, and financial assistance.

Question. How should the United States balance the goals of increasing non-nuclear weapon states' access to the peaceful use of nuclear energy with the nonproliferation goals of preventing the further spread of weapons technology?

Answer. The United States supports and commits to high nonproliferation standards in the export of nuclear material, equipment, and technology and encourages other supplier states to do the same. Exercising responsible supply policy through the application of export controls—and the insistence upon high nuclear safeguards standards in nuclear cooperation agreements, including the recipient state's conclusion of an IAEA Additional Protocol—facilitates legitimate trade and gives confidence that items and technologies transferred will be used as intended in peaceful applications.

Question. Should the United States be promoting nuclear energy in new countries?

Answer. The United States encourages all countries that are considering pursing a nuclear energy program to do so under the highest standards for safeguards, nuclear security, and nuclear safety.

Question. As Special Representative, how would you advance efforts to develop multilateral efforts to prevent the spread of enrichment and reprocessing technologies?

Answer. Within the context of the Nuclear Nonproliferation Treaty Review Conference process, if confirmed, I would work to complement our efforts in the Nuclear Suppliers Group and elsewhere to maintain and strengthen international norms that limit the spread of enrichment and reprocessing technologies and international mechanisms that reduce the need for such capabilities.

Question. The State Department leads negotiations on new (and renewed) civilian nuclear cooperation agreements (section 123 agreements) with other countries. Will the Trump administration continue the past U.S. policy of encouraging states to pledge to refrain from building enrichment or reprocessing facilities as part of 123 agreement negotiations?

Answer. Negotiating 123 Agreements would not be one of my responsibilities, however, all 123 agreements include, at a minimum, the requirements listed in Section 123 of the Atomic Energy Act, as amended. Beyond these requirements, the United States has a longstanding policy of limiting the spread of enrichment and reprocessing capabilities around the world and will continue to seek the highest nonproliferation standards possible in all future 123 agreements, including restrictions on enrichment and reprocessing.

Question. Should the United States conclude a nuclear cooperation agreement with Saudi Arabia?

Answer. Although negotiating 123 Agreements would not be one of my responsibilities, I note that the United States has significant strategic, commercial, and nonproliferation incentives to conclude a 123 agreement with Saudi Arabia. Bringing into force such an agreement would provide substantial economic opportunities for U.S. firms and ensure the Saudi nuclear power program is subject to the highest nonproliferation, safety, and security standards required by any nuclear supplier in the world. In the absence of a 123 agreement, U.S. firms will lose the opportunity to compete and will likely be replaced by state-owned enterprises from other countries with lower nonproliferation standards.

Question. What conditions, if any, should apply to a 123 agreement with Saudi Arabia?

Answer. Negotiating 123 Agreements would not be one of my responsibilities, however, all 123 agreements include, at a minimum, the legal requirements listed in Section 123 of the Atomic Energy Act, as amended. On their own, these requirements represent the strongest nonproliferation, safety, and security standards required by any nuclear supplier in the world. As Secretary Pompeo has reaffirmed, the administration will pursue the strongest nonproliferation standards that are achievable in all 123 agreement negotiations, including negotiations with Saudi Arabia. Additionally, United States policy is to encourage all states, particularly those with civil nuclear programs, to bring into force an Additional Protocol to their safeguards agreements with the International Atomic Energy Agency.

Question. Assistant Secretary Christopher Ford stated in April 2018 that the United States "will continue to support the commencement of negotiations" on a Fissile Material Cutoff Treaty (FMCT). How would you propose to include the non-NPT nuclear weapons states (i.e., India, Pakistan, Israel) in such a treaty?Could such a treaty help address North Korean fissile material production?

Answer. The United States supports the commencement of negotiations on a Fissile Material Cutoff Treaty in the Conference on Disarmament (CD). The CD's membership includes all states relevant to an FMCT, including India, Pakistan, and Israel.

The United States seeks the final, fully verified denuclearization of the DPRK and its return to the Treaty on the Nonproliferation of Nuclear Weapons and IAEA safeguards. Simply obtaining the DPRK's adherence to an FMCT would fall short of this goal.

Question. Should an FMCT verification regime apply to pre-existing fissile material stocks or just to the future production of weapons-applicable nuclear material?

Answer. The United States supports the commencement of negotiations on a Fissile Material Cutoff Treaty (FMCT) that bans the production of fissile material for use in nuclear weapons. The verification regime should therefore be focused on this basic obligation, which is future production. The long-standing U.S. position is that we do not support including legal obligations on pre-existing stocks of fissile material in an FMCT.

Question. Following its May 2018 decision to cease implementing U.S. commitments under the 2015 JCPOA, the administration has consistently attempted to build international support for U.S. efforts to pressure Iran. The other powers that negotiated the accord with Iran-Russia, China, France, Britain, and Germany-assert that the JCPOA is succeeding in its core objectives and that its implementation should not be jeopardized. On February 14, at an international conference in Warsaw, Poland, Secretary of State Pompeo denounced the EU's creation of a Special-Purpose Vehicle (SPV), designated to facilitate trade with Iran, calling it "an effort to break American sanctions against Iran's murderous revolutionary regime. It's an ill-advised step that will only strengthen Iran, weaken the EU, and create still more distance between Europe and the United States." What are the prospects for Iran and the other parties to succeed in implementing the JCPOA without U.S. participation?

Answer. President Trump ended U.S. participation in the JCPOA because it failed to permanently deny Iran a pathway to a nuclear weapon and did not address the full range of threats posed by Iran's destabilizing activities. The President did not believe it was in our national security interests to continue to provide sanctions relief to the Iranian regime while its threats continued to grow. The administration is now working with our international partners to bring maximum pressure on Iran to achieve a new deal that comprehensively addresses the full range of threats posed by Iran—including its support to terrorism, destabilizing regional activities, its development and proliferation of ballistic missiles, and its nuclear program.

Question. How likely is it that the United States will be able to compel other parties to the JCPOA to re-impose all sanctions that were lifted?

Answer. The Trump administration has imposed the toughest sanctions ever on the Iranian regime, including designating over 970 Iranian entities and individuals. While we differ with our European allies on the nuclear deal, we share a common assessment of the threat posed by Iran and have been successful in convincing other partners to join the pressure campaign.

All U.N. Member States continue to be bound by the provisions of UNSCR 2231 that place restrictions on transfers of certain nuclear, missile, and conventional arms-related items to/from Iran. The United States is working to strictly implement these provisions, as well as the asset freeze and travel ban provisions on the entities and individuals that continue to be subject to U.N. sanctions.

Question. How do you recommend the Trump administration proceed moving forward?

Answer. As President Trump and Secretary Pompeo have made clear, the United States is committed to working with our partners to bring maximum pressure on Iran to achieve a new deal that addresses the full range of threats posed by Iran—including its destabilizing regional activities, its development and proliferation of ballistic missiles, and its nuclear program. We are offering Iran the possibility of full normalization of relations with the international community. However, to achieve that goal, Iran must be willing to operate like a normal country, change its malign behavior, and take lasting steps to demonstrate that its nuclear program will forever remain exclusively peaceful.

Question. How do you view the importance of the NPT, Comprehensive Nuclear-Test Ban Treaty (CTBT) and IAEA verification in any denuclearization agreement with North Korea?

Answer. Ideally, a fully denuclearized North Korea will eventually return to the NPT as a non-nuclear weapons state. A robust IAEA verification regime would almost certainly be a part of this process. The International Monitoring System of the CTBT Organization Preparatory Commission's Provisional Technical Secretariat has proven its value in monitoring North Korean nuclear testing and its current moratorium.

Question. Would you have an advisory role in these negotiations and how would you advocate bringing North Korea into compliance with the international nonproliferation regime?

Answer. Special Representative for North Korea Steve Biegun leads our negotiations. I am prepared to play whatever constructive role the administration sees fit for me to play, including advising in these negotiations when appropriate and helpful to the denuclearization process. In such a role, bringing North Korea into compliance with the international nonproliferation regime would be my top priority in order to ensure that through this process the international nonproliferation regime is strengthened and that in the future the denuclearization of North Korea can provide a useful example should another country be in a similar position.

Question. What are the best options for the U.S. and our partners to bring these programs to an end and create a nuclear weapons free Korean Peninsula?

Answer. We continue to work towards a comprehensive agreement with the DPRK, and towards its final, fully verified denuclearization. The President remains confident that, despite challenges, Chairman Kim understands that only an agreement to fully denuclearize will bring true security for the North Korean People. We are committed to pursuing this path.

Question. How would you support the administration's efforts to address the possibility of nuclear conflict between India and Pakistan?

Answer. The administration is deeply concerned about the possibility that conflict between India and Pakistan could escalate to include the use of nuclear weapons. As such, the administration reached out to both sides during the rise in tensions following the February 14 terrorist attack in Kashmir that killed 40 Indian members of the Central Reserve Police Force. We were in regular contact with both sides during the situation, urging restraint from both sides and calling on Pakistan to take immediate, irreversible actions to crack down on terrorist groups. The administration encourages dialogue between both sides to keep lines of communication open and tensions as low as possible. Furthermore, we hold regular discussions with India and Pakistan on matters concerning regional stability and nonproliferation.

Question. What steps, if any, would you take to persuade India and Pakistan to accede to the NPT or to reduce and /or constrain their nuclear arsenals?

Answer. The United States continues to support the long-term goal of NPT universality, and we remain committed to efforts to strengthen and uphold the Treaty. We continue to encourage all states that have not yet done so to declare and maintain moratoria on the production of fissile material for use in nuclear weapons.

We remain concerned by the growth of nuclear stockpiles and capabilities in Asia, and continue to encourage all states with nuclear weapons to exercise restraint regarding nuclear and missile capabilities. We welcome the steps that states have taken to bolster global nonproliferation efforts, including by harmonizing with, adhering to, and joining export control regimes and supporting efforts to prevent the acquisition and use of weapons of mass destruction by non-state actors.

RESPONSES TO ADDITIONAL QUESTIONS FOR THE RECORD
SUBMITTED TO JEFFREY L. EBERHARDT BY SENATOR TED CRUZ

Question. Do you consider Iran's past possession of the Nuclear Archive seized by Israel last year, including the materials in the Archive relevant to the development of nuclear weapons, to constitute non-compliance by Iran of its obligations under the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT). If yes, please explain why. If no, please explain why.

Answer. The intelligence community currently assesses that Iran is not currently undertaking the key nuclear weapons-related development activities judged necessary to produce a nuclear device. However, Iran's retention of documents and files from its pre-2004 nuclear weapons program raises serious questions regarding whether it intended to preserve the option to resume elements of a nuclear weapons program in the future. The legal question of Iran's compliance with its obligations under the NPT will be addressed in this year's Compliance Report, which is forthcoming.

Question. Do you consider Iran's past concealment of the Nuclear Archive seized by Israel last year, including the materials in the Archive relevant to the development of nuclear weapons, to constitute non-compliance by Iran of its obligations under the NPT. f yes, please explain why. If no, please explain why.

Answer. The intelligence community currently assesses that Iran is not currently undertaking the key nuclear weapons-related development activities judged necessary to produce a nuclear device. However, Iran's retention of documents and files from its pre-2004 nuclear weapons program raises serious questions regarding whether it intended to preserve the option to resume elements of a nuclear weapons program in the future. The legal question of Iran's compliance with its obligations under the NPT will be addressed in this year's Compliance Report, which is forthcoming.

Question. Do you consider Iran a member in good standing of the NPT? If yes, please explain why. If no, please explain why.

Answer. The legal question of Iran's compliance with its obligations under the NPT will be addressed in this year's Compliance Report, which is forthcoming.

Question. Do you consider Iran to be entitled to benefit from nuclear technology pursuant to Article IV the NPT? If yes, please explain why. If no, please explain why.

Answer. Article IV of the NPT recognizes the right of all the Parties to the Treaty to develop research, production and use of nuclear energy for peaceful purposes without discrimination and in conformity with Articles I and II of the Treaty. While Secretary Pompeo stated in his May 21, 2018 speech that Iran must stop uranium enrichment and never pursue plutonium reprocessing, the administration has not stated that Iran cannot enjoy the benefits of other peaceful applications of nuclear technology, for example, nuclear medicine.

Question. Do you consider Iran to be entitled to benefit from nuclear technology for any reason? If yes, please explain why. If no, please explain why.

Answer. In his speech on May 21, 2018, Secretary Pompeo stated that Iran must stop uranium enrichment and never pursue plutonium reprocessing. However, the administration has not stated that Iran cannot enjoy the benefits of other peaceful applications of nuclear technology, for example, nuclear medicine.

RESPONSES TO ADDITIONAL QUESTIONS FOR THE RECORD
SUBMITTED TO JAMES S. GILMORE BY SENATOR ROBERT MENENDEZ

Question. The OSCE does a lot of good work, but it does not receive much attention in part because its deliberations in Vienna are not open to public observation, either physically or by being live-streamed on the internet. Will you continue, if not strengthen, U.S. advocacy of a more visible OSCE by seeking to make Permanent Council sessions open to public observation?

Answer. If confirmed, I would support opening more OSCE meetings to the public and to the media in order to increase transparency and accountability and help counter disinformation and malign influence. The United States publicly releases its statements—in English and Russian—at the Permanent Council and many other OSCE fora, and I would continue this practice.

I agree the OSCE's excellent work is not as widely known or appreciated as it should be. If confirmed, I would make it a priority to find and create opportunities to make the OSCE's contributions to human rights, prosperity, and security better known and understood at home and abroad. By improving public awareness of the OSCE's work, we can better hold all participating States accountable for meeting their commitments under the Helsinki Final Act.

Question. Turkey has been at the forefront of efforts to restrict civil society participation in the Human Dimension Implementation Meeting organized by the OSCE- with Russia and several other countries encouraging a more restrictive approach.Will you ensure that civil society participation in Human Dimension Implementation Meeting is protected and maintained?

Answer. If confirmed, I would oppose any attempts to restrict unduly NGO access and participation at OSCE events. The OSCE benefits from civil society's contributions to its discussions. I believe it would send the wrong signal to restrict NGO access and participation at a time when civil society is under increasing pressure in many countries in the OSCE region. Such restrictions would send the wrong signal to civil society, whose role we strongly support, and to repressive governments, which seek to obstruct their activities.

Question. While the OSCE must remain focused on Russian aggression against its neighbors, particularly Ukraine, and growing restrictions on human rights and democratic development in the region, the OSCE has the bandwidth to focus on the whole scope of issues confronting Europe today. We hope the United States will support continued work to address xenophobia, anti-Semitism, Islamophobia, racism and intolerance in Europe. We also hope the OSCE will maintain an active presence in the Western Balkans and keep some attention focused on potential instabilities in the region, in particularly between Serbia and Kosovo but also within Bosnia and Herzegovina.How will you maintain focus on these issues?

Answer. The OSCE provides a venue where the United States can address a broad range of issues throughout the OSCE region. If confirmed, I will continue to support U.S. officials speaking out publicly in OSCE fora to condemn and combat all forms of intolerance, including hate crimes, against members of ethnic, racial, and religious groups, LGBTI individuals, persons with disabilities, and members of other vulnerable populations. I will also support a strong OSCE presence in the Western Balkans, including through budgetary support and the secondment of U.S. personnel to these missions.

Question. The United States can only be credible in raising human rights concerns in other countries if it is honest about the shortcomings it has at home. Rather than take a defensive approach to this issues, it is to our advantage to be proactive in raising them and acknowledging that current U.S. policies and practices are heavily debated. This includes our policy on immigration, the use of the death penalty, the continued operations of the detention center at Guantanamo Bay and, the conduct of elections. The U.S. Mission has also regularly reported on investigations of incidents involving law enforcement when civilians, particularly minorities, have been shot or injured.What will your approach be with respect to these concerns in the United States? Will you continue to share U.S. insights with OSCE Participating States via U.S. experts on these policy and social justice issues?

Answer. If confirmed, I look forward to highlighting the United States' proud support of human rights, democracy, and rule of law at home and abroad, including our OSCE commitments. This includes promoting freedom of expression, including for members of the media, and encouraging public debate, even on sometimes controversial issues. I will support the continued participation of U.S. experts in OSCE events related to these policy and social justice issues.

Question. For several years, Hungary has actively used the OSCE as forum for attacking Ukraine: reinforcing Moscow's misrepresentations of Ukraine's education law, complaining that Ukrainian troop movements are a threat to Hungary, parroting Russian Foreign Minister Lavrov's ministerial statements, and holding unprecedented public "side events" where Lavrov and the Hungarian foreign minister (Szijjarto) jointly hold court for the press.

- Will you work closely with Amb. Cornstein in Budapest, Amb. Yovanovitch in Kyiv, and Amb. Hutchison at NATO to ensure that the U.S. is speaking with one voice on these issues and managing, to the extent possible, this dynamic with Hungary?

Answer. If confirmed, I will work closely with our Ambassadors throughout the OSCE space. The United States values our relationship with Hungary and has attempted to set a new, positive tone for the U.S.-Hungary relationship. If confirmed,

I will not be shy, however, about raising concerns with our Allies, including about Russian malign influence. U.S. officials regularly speak with their Hungarian counterparts about the importance of upholding democracy and promoting human rights and fundamental freedoms. At the OSCE, the United States has raised these issues, including at the annual Human Dimension Implementation Meeting.

The United States encourages all Allies, including Hungary, to refrain from bringing bilateral disputes into multilateral fora. If confirmed, I will work closely with Ambassadors Cornstein, Yovanovitch, and Hutchison to encourage Hungary to remove its block of Ukraine's participation at high-level events at NATO and underscore to Hungarian authorities the strategic importance of the NATO-Ukraine relationship as well as the important role that the OSCE plays in Ukraine. At the same time, I would encourage Ukraine to take into account the concerns of the Hungarian minority community.

Question. What are the most important actions you have taken in your career to date to support democracy and human rights? What has been the impact of your actions?

Answer. Throughout my career in public service, I have promoted human rights and democracy. After a series of heinous bombings of African American churches swept the United States in the early 1990s, I convened a summit of eight Southern Attorneys General, held at Howard University on July 2, 1996. I recruited L. Douglas Wilder, Virginia's first African American governor, and Elaine Jones, president of the NAACP Legal Defense and Educational Fund, to deliver the keynote speeches. During the summit, we heard from pastors and church members about their experiences and suggestions for solving the crimes. After the summit, the attacks stopped. In 1999, I proposed and signed into law Virginia's first stand-alone Martin Luther King Holiday. Until that date, Virginia had observed a combined Lee-Jackson-King Day that recognized Robert E. Lee, Stonewall Jackson, and Martin Luther King on the same day each year. But there was no doubt in my mind that Martin Luther King merited his own holiday to recognize his leadership as one of the United States' most important and influential advocates for civil rights. Later, my wife Roxane and I hosted a historic reception (2001) in the Governor's Mansion for Coretta Scott King and announced a technology partnership between Virginia and the King Center for Nonviolence. As governor, I also increased funding for two of Virginia's historically black universities, Norfolk State University and Virginia State University. I also proposed and funded a new African-American History Trail in Virginia and called upon the State Board of Education to include a more diverse range of historical figures in Virginia's Social Studies curriculum.

If confirmed, I look forward to working with my colleagues across the administration, as well as Members of Congress, the Helsinki Commission, likeminded governments, and civil society, to advance human rights, fundamental freedoms, and democratic principles of government throughout the OSCE region.

Question. If confirmed, do you commit to meet with civil society members, human rights and other non-governmental organizations?

Answer. Absolutely. U.S. officials meet regularly with members of civil society, human rights organizations, and other non-governmental organizations at OSCE events. If confirmed, I would continue this practice.

Question. Will you advocate for access and inclusivity for women and minorities?

Answer. The United States advocates for access and inclusivity for women and minorities within the OSCE organization and OSCE participating States. This commitment is reflected in U.S. statements at OSCE events, including the Ministerial Council, Permanent Council, and Human Dimension Implementation Meetings. If confirmed, I will continue this practice.

Question. Will you actively engage with governments on freedom of the press and address any government efforts designed to control or undermine press freedom through legal, regulatory or other measures?

Answer. If confirmed, I will support OSCE efforts on media freedom and safety of journalists. The United States regularly promotes these goals publicly and privately at the OSCE and through support for the OSCE's Representative on Freedom of the Media. The United States championed the adoption of the 2018 OSCE Ministerial Council Decision on Safety of Journalists, which calls on participating States to "take effective measures to end impunity for crimes committed against journalists." I also recognize that violence is often targeted at women journalists.

If confirmed, I will press participating States to implement their international legal obligations and OSCE commitments to uphold freedom of expression, whether it is exercised online or offline, including those relating to media freedom. I will call

out governments for imposing undue restrictions on media freedom and for failing to hold accountable those responsible for crimes against journalists.

Question. Will you actively engage with civil society and government counterparts on countering disinformation and propaganda disseminated by foreign state or non-state actors?

Answer. If confirmed, I will support OSCE efforts to help expose and counter disinformation and malign propaganda from foreign state or non-state actors, including Russian malign influence efforts. The OSCE works with participating States to develop rule of law, independent media, democratic institutions, civil society, respect for human rights, energy security, and accountable governance. This work contributes to more secure, stable, and resilient societies that are better able to recognize and resist malign external influence and violent extremist voices.

The OSCE is a forum for participating States to have a frank dialogue on the full range of security issues, including malign influence efforts they are experiencing. Exposure and frank discussion can help counter these campaigns that thrive on secrecy and disinformation. USOSCE regularly cooperates with U.S. embassies throughout the OSCE region and with Allies and partners to identify Russia's and others' malign influence efforts, counter disinformation, and refute Russian attempts to undermine democratic governments and transatlantic unity.

Question. Will you commit to using your position, if confirmed, to defend the human rights and dignity of all people, no matter their sexual orientation or gender identity?

Answer. If confirmed, I will defend the human rights and dignity of all individuals, no matter their sexual orientation or gender identity. This includes having U.S. officials speaking out publicly in OSCE fora to condemn and combat intolerance, including intolerance against LGBTI individuals.

Question. Do you agree that any targeting of or retaliation against career employees based on their perceived political beliefs, prior work on policy, or affiliation with a previous administration, is wholly inappropriate and has no place in the federal government?

Answer. Yes, I agree with that statement. As Virginia's Attorney General and then Governor, I worked with people from both parties and all walks of life. My record reflects that. When I became Virginia's first Republican Attorney General in twelve years, I met with all employees to emphasize that they should continue serving the Commonwealth of Virginia. I valued their institutional knowledge, and I told them so. As Governor, I recruited a diverse group of people to serve in my Cabinet and as my advisors. Their diverse perspectives and backgrounds enhanced our effectiveness as we worked together to govern Virginia.If confirmed, I will work to prevent any attempts to target or retaliate against career employees on the basis of their perceived political beliefs, prior work on policy, or affiliation with a previous administration. I will also take allegations of such practices seriously and ensure they are referred to the Department's Inspector General. As a leader, I value the unique perspectives and ideas that people from diverse backgrounds contribute, and I commit to promoting inclusion at the U.S. Mission to the OSCE.

Question. If confirmed, what will you do to ensure that all employees under your leadership understand that any retaliation, blacklisting, or other prohibited personnel practices will not be tolerated?

Answer. I commit to comply with all relevant federal laws, regulations, and rules, and to raise concerns that I may have through appropriate channels. If confirmed, I will make it clear to the entire team at the U.S. Mission to the OSCE that I am committed to promoting a diverse and inclusive work environment. I will emphasize that retaliation, blacklisting, or other prohibited personnel practices will not be tolerated. I value the depth of knowledge and experience within the Foreign Service, the Department of State, and the U.S. government. I know that we will be most successful if people from diverse backgrounds are represented throughout the ranks of the mission. I will encourage supervisors to recruit, mentor, and support employees that reflect these values.

Question. Has anyone ever made a formal or informal complaint or allegation of sexual harassment, discrimination (e.g., racial, ethnic, religious, etc.), or inappropriate conduct against you, in a workplace or any other setting?

- If so, please describe the nature of the complaint or allegation, your response, and any resolution, including any settlements.

Answer. I have never been subject to a formal or informal complaint or allegation of sexual harassment, discrimination, or inappropriate conduct in a workplace or

any other setting. I commit to comply with all relevant federal laws, regulations, and rules, and to raise concerns that I may have through appropriate channels.

RESPONSES TO ADDITIONAL QUESTIONS FOR THE RECORD
SUBMITTED TO JAMES S. GILMORE BY SENATOR BENJAMIN L. CARDIN

Question. Have you ever addressed concerns or allegations of sexual harassment, discrimination (e.g., racial, ethnic, religious, etc.), or inappropriate conduct made against any employee over whom you had supervisory authority? If so, please describe the outcome and actions taken.

Answer. I have never had to address concerns or allegations of sexual harassment, discrimination, or inappropriate conduct made against any employee over whom I had supervisory authority. I commit to comply with all relevant federal laws, regulations, and rules, and to raise concerns that I may have through appropriate channels.

Question. What are the most important actions you have taken in your career to date to promote human rights and democracy? What has been the impact of your actions?

Answer. Throughout my career in public service, I have promoted human rights and democratic principles. After a series of heinous bombings of African-American churches swept the United States in the early 1990s, I convened a summit of eight Southern Attorneys General, held at Howard University on July 2, 1996. I recruited L. Douglas Wilder, Virginia's first African-American governor, and Elaine Jones, president of the NAACP Legal Defense and Educational Fund, to deliver the keynote speeches. During the summit, we heard from pastors and church members about their experiences and suggestions for solving the crimes. After the summit, the attacks stopped. In 1999, I proposed and signed into law Virginia's first standalone Martin Luther King Holiday. Until that date, Virginia had observed a combined Lee-Jackson-King Day that recognized Robert E. Lee, Stonewall Jackson, and Martin Luther King on the same day each year. But there was no doubt in my mind that Martin Luther King merited his own holiday to recognize his leadership as one of the United States' most important and influential advocates for civil rights. Later, my wife Roxane and I hosted a historic reception (2001) in the Governor's Mansion for Coretta Scott King and announced a technology partnership between Virginia and the King Center for Nonviolence. As governor, I also increased funding for two of Virginia's historically black universities, Norfolk State University and Virginia State University. I also proposed and funded a new African-American History Trail in Virginia and called upon the State Board of Education to include a more diverse range of historical figures in Virginia's Social Studies curriculum.

If confirmed, I look forward to working with my colleagues across the administration, as well as Members of Congress, the Helsinki Commission, like-minded governments, and civil society, to advance human rights, fundamental freedoms, and democratic principles of government throughout the OSCE region.

Question. To counter the perception that this administration does not actively and consistently consider human rights and rarely speaks of democracy in its foreign policy, will you maintain the long-held U.S. view that human rights in other countries is a legitimate concern of our country and that we consider human rights and democracy part of a comprehensive definition of security?

Answer. The promotion and defense of human rights and democracy overseas are key elements of U.S. foreign policy. As the U.S. representative to the OSCE, I would maintain this long-held position and would support the organization's comprehensive approach to security, which includes respect for human rights and fundamental freedoms as an essential component.

Question. What will you do to promote, mentor and support your staff that come from diverse backgrounds and underrepresented groups in the Foreign Service?

Answer. As Virginia's Attorney General and then Governor, I worked with people from both parties and all walks of life. If confirmed, I commit to recruit, promote, mentor, and support staff that come from diverse backgrounds in the Foreign Service. As a leader, I value the unique perspectives and ideas that people from diverse backgrounds contribute, and I commit to promoting inclusion at the U.S. Mission to the OSCE.

Question. What steps will you take to ensure each of the supervisors in the Foreign Service are fostering an environment that is diverse and inclusive?

Answer. If confirmed, I will make it clear to the entire team at the U.S. Mission to the OSCE that I am committed to promoting a diverse and inclusive work environment. I value the depth of knowledge and experience within the Foreign Service, and I know that we will be most successful if people from diverse backgrounds are represented throughout the ranks of the mission. I will encourage Foreign Service supervisors to recruit, mentor, and support employees that reflect these values.

Question. Do you commit to bring to the committee's attention (and the Inspector General of the State Department and Foreign Service) any change in policy or U.S. actions that you suspect may be influenced by any of the President's business or financial interests, or the business or financial interests of any senior White House staff?

Answer. I commit to comply with all relevant federal ethics laws, regulations, and rules, and to raise concerns that I may have through appropriate channels.

Question. Do you commit to inform the committee if you have any reason to suspect that a foreign government, head of state, or foreign-controlled entity is taking any action in order to benefit any of the President's business or financial interests, or the interests of senior White House staff?

Answer. I commit to comply with all relevant federal ethics laws, regulations, and rules, and to raise concerns that I may have through appropriate channels.

Question. Do you or do any members of your immediate family have any financial interests in any country abroad?

Answer. My investment portfolio includes diversified exchange-traded funds and diversified mutual funds, which may hold interests in companies with a presence abroad, but which are exempt from the conflict of interest laws. My investment portfolio also includes sector funds, which hold interests in companies with a presence abroad, as well as financial interests in companies that maintain a presence abroad. I am committed to ensuring that my official actions will not give rise to a conflict of interest. I will divest all investments the State Department Ethics Office deems necessary to avoid a conflict of interest, and I have committed to seek a waiver under the conflict-of-interest statute with respect to an investment fund that I am unable to divest. I will remain vigilant with regard to my ethics obligations.

Question. Can you commit to working with me on supporting the United States' continued work at the OSCE to address anti-Semitism, racism, and intolerance, including supporting extra-budgetary projects for Jewish, Muslim, Roma, Afro-Europeans, migrants, refugees, and other vulnerable communities and women?

Answer. If confirmed, I look forward to working closely with you and other members of Congress to continue the United States' efforts to address anti-Semitism, racism, and other forms of intolerance through the OSCE. This includes, resource permitting, support of extra-budgetary projects in these areas as well as our participation in OSCE events such as the Ministerial Council, Permanent Council, and Human Dimension Implementation Meetings.

Question. Would you work with me on a joint event in the U.S. that focuses on all forms of intolerance in my capacity as OSCE PA Special Representative on Antisemitism, Racism, and Intolerance?

Answer. If confirmed, I would support U.S. efforts to address anti-Semitism, racism, and intolerance through the OSCE and would welcome the opportunity to work with you on a joint event in the United States on these issues.

Question. If confirmed, will you be proactive regarding questions of the U.S. record of compliance with OSCE norms, by noting not only the administration position on these matters, but also issues heavily debated by Americans, such as official investigations and judicial proceedings regarding disproportionate police shootings of African-Americans, Guantanamo bay, the death penalty, etc?

Answer. If confirmed, I look forward to highlighting the United States' proud support of human rights, democracy, and rule of law at home and abroad, including our OSCE commitments. This includes promoting freedom of expression, including for members of the media, and encouraging public debate, even on sometimes controversial issues.

Question. The OSCE does a lot of good work, but it does not receive much attention in part because its deliberations in Vienna are not open to public observation, either physically or by being live-streamed on the internet. Will you continue, if not strengthen, U.S. advocacy of a more visible OSCE by seeking to make Permanent Council sessions open to public observation?

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Question. For several years, Hungary has actively used the OSCE as forum for attacking Ukraine: reinforcing Moscow's misrepresentations of Ukraine's education law, complaining that Ukrainian troop movements are a threat to Hungary, parroting Russian Foreign Minister Lavrov's ministerial statements, and holding unprecedented public "side events" where Lavrov and the Hungarian foreign minister (Szijjarto) jointly hold court for the press. Will you work closely with Ambassador Cornstein in Budapest, Ambassador Yovanovitch in Kyiv, and Ambassador Hutchison at NATO to ensure that the United States manages, to the extent possible, the Hungarian Trojan Horse within the alliance?

Answer. If confirmed, I will work closely with our Ambassadors throughout the OSCE space. The United States values our relationship with Hungary and has attempted to set a new, positive tone for the U.S.-Hungary relationship. If confirmed, I will not be shy, however, about raising concerns with our Allies, including about Russian malign influence. U.S. officials regularly speak with their Hungarian counterparts about the importance of upholding democracy and promoting human rights and fundamental freedoms. At the OSCE, the United States has raised these issues, including at the annual Human Dimension Implementation Meeting.

The United States encourages all Allies, including Hungary, to refrain from bringing bilateral disputes into multilateral fora. If confirmed, I will work closely with Ambassadors Cornstein, Yovanovitch, and Hutchison to encourage Hungary to remove its block of Ukraine's participation in high-level events at NATO and underscore to Hungarian authorities the strategic importance of the NATO-Ukraine relationship as well as the important role that the OSCE plays in Ukraine. At the same time, I would encourage Ukraine to take into account the concerns of the Hungarian minority community.

RESPONSES TO ADDITIONAL QUESTIONS FOR THE RECORD SUBMITTED TO ALAN R. SWENDIMAN BY SENATOR ROBERT MENENDEZ

Sexual Assault

Question. What additional work is necessary to advance Peace Corps' Sexual Assault Risk-Reduction and Response Program?

Answer. As the dynamics of sexual assault prevention and response continues to evolve, the Peace Corps remains committed to staying aware of developments and leading the field in developing and incorporating best practices wherever possible. The agency appreciates the ongoing guidance received from the Sexual Assault Advisory Council as well as the Peace Corps' own internal subject matter experts and other partners. The Peace Corps is committed to the continuous evaluation of Volunteer- and staff-facing trainings, an on-going review of policies and response protocols, and the continued strengthening of risk reduction strategies.

Question. How will you approach redefining the Peace Corps culture to be a trauma-informed organization, specifically as it relates to sexual assault?

Answer. All Peace Corps staff, both domestic and overseas, receive training on sexual assault response, including a focus on trauma informed care. Additionally, all staff who work directly with Volunteers who report sexual assault receive ongoing specialized training on trauma informed support. This fall, the Peace Corps will formally train select staff in Forensic Experiential Trauma Interview (FETI) methodologies. In addition, Peace Corps actively networks with other federal and nongovernment agencies to discuss best practices in applying trauma informed principles to the organizational and systems levels. The agency will continue to review and refine its policies, trainings, and protocols to ensure incorporation of these principles.

Question. Understanding that you are committed to establishing a culture of safety within the Peace Corps, how should the Peace Corps respond to Peace Corps Volunteer reports of living or working in hostile environments where they are experiencing physical, mental, or sexual abuse or harassment?

Answer. First, and foremost, the Peace Corps treats all incidents reported by Volunteers as serious, by providing robust responses to such incidents. Responding to incidents, however, is only part of the agency's efforts. The Peace Corps begins with thorough risk assessments of proposed operational areas where Volunteers are placed, screens and reviews host families and counterparts, selects Volunteer housing and work sites based on established safety and security standards, and regularly reaches out to Volunteers with regard to their well-being. When incidents do occur, the Peace Corps responds immediately to reported incidents, prioritizing the immediate safety of Volunteers, invoking all necessary safety, security and medical protocols. Immediate responses are followed up with site specific security assessments to identify any residual risks to the well-being of Volunteers. When the Peace Corps identifies risks to a Volunteer's well being that cannot be mitigated, it will remove them from a site and seek a more suitable location for them to continue their service. And, finally, problematic sites are documented through the agency's site-history files, to prevent future placements in unsafe environments. Throughout this process, the Volunteer's voice is a significant driver in how the agency responds.

Diversity

Question. While the Peace Corps has done an admirable job to improve the diversity of its recruits, including increasing recruitment at Historically Black Colleges and Universities, what steps do you think the Peace Corps must take to reduce attrition among the recruits who are accepted who ultimately decide not to take their Peace Corps assignment?

Answer. The Peace Corps' Diversity Recruitment team understands the value and need of engaging and supporting candidates from Historically Black Colleges and Universities (HBCUs) throughout the application process. Peace Corps Office of Volunteer Recruitment and Selection (VRS) regularly connects with candidates on HBCU campuses, and notes opportunities to combat attrition. Most HBCU candidates, after being invited to serve in the Peace Corps, begin to inquire about the experiences they may encounter in service related to their identity. This is an important part of the evaluation process for students of color. A continued investment in Peace Corps' University Programs at HBCUs and additional recruitment resources could enable the agency to better support candidates as they move through the application process. VRS in collaboration with the Office of Third Goal, may also seek to create more formal networks or systems to connect with and support the inquiries of diverse applicants/invitees. However, it should be noted that a recent analysis of our latest survey data did not show a measurable increase in the dropout rate for diverse recruits.

Question. What do you believe are the barriers most accepted volunteers who opt out of accepting a volunteer assignment, or drop out somewhere along the application and acceptance process, and what should the Peace Corps do to alleviate these barriers of entry into the Peace Corps?

Answer. In many communities in America, the Peace Corps' brand and value are still being established. While the messaging of altruism resonates, the landscape for local and global service opportunities have changed. Churches, multicultural fraternities and sororities, and campus groups now offer short-term global service experiences. These short term, low opportunity cost options can seem more attainable in comparison to the approximate two-year Peace Corps commitment. Uncertainty surrounding the value of service as it relates to career development or job placement is also a barrier. VRS could work closer with other Peace Corps entities to determine how best to address these and other barriers to Peace Corps service.

Healthcare

Question. Will you commit to working with the Department of Labor to improve the handling and dispensation of healthcare benefits to return volunteers, especially to those return volunteers who become disabled as a result of their service?

Answer. Yes. The Peace Corps has increased its collaboration with the Department of Labor (DOL), Office of Workers' Compensation Programs (OWCP) to improve access to and delivery of Federal Employees' Compensation Act (FECA) benefits to Returned Peace Corps Volunteers (RPCV). In addition, the Farr-Castle Peace Corps Reform Act of 2018 states that the Department of Labor (DOL) shall authorize the Director of the Peace Corps to furnish medical benefits to a Volunteer, who

is injured during the Volunteer's period of service, for a period of 120 days following the termination of such service if the Director certifies that the Volunteer's injury probably meets the requirements listed in the Act. The agency's Post Service Unit in the Office of Health Services has been proactively working with DOL to ensure this requirement is met and to put in place a smoother transition to FECA for Volunteers who have left service.

Question. Many returned Volunteers with service-related illnesses or injuries that are not caused by violence or criminal activity have stated that they don't have an advocate or network from the agency to speak on their behalf and ensure they get the health care and support they deserve. How can the Peace Corps improve this situation?

Answer. The Peace Corps has conducted extensive analysis of post-service Volunteer healthcare issues, and collaborated with DOL to create solutions to address concerns of RPCVs' claims under FECA. The Peace Corps has established a strong working relationship with DOL to improve FECA communication and streamline processes. The Peace Corps Office of Health Services, Manager, Post-Service Unit has been provided a specific DOL liaison to contact for unresolved medical issues impacting returned Volunteers.

Question. What do you envision to be the next key steps to ensuring Peace Corps' commitment to volunteer, and return volunteer, health and safety?

Answer. Key steps include continued collaboration with DOL to develop and fine tune processes for the implementation of the Sam Farr and Nick Castle Peace Corps Reform Act of 2018.

Human Rights

Question. What would you do to strengthen Peace Corps' influence and ability to advance Human Rights?

Answer. The mission of the Peace Corps is to promote world peace and friendship through its statutorily mandated three goals:

- To help peoples of countries where Volunteers serve in meeting their needs for trained manpower, particularly the basic needs of those living in the poorest areas of such countries;
- To promote a better understanding of the American people on the part of the peoples served; and
- To promote a better understanding of other peoples on the part of the American people.

Peace Corps pursues its mission and goals through a wide variety of programs across various sectors including education, health, youth, environment, agriculture, and community economic development. In the context of these sector focuses, the Peace Corps Act further directs the administration of its programs to give particular attention to integrating women and persons with disabilities into the economies of developing countries.

As Deputy Director, I will work vigorously to advance the agency's mission and goals, thereby contributing to human dignity and the rights of peoples served.

Question. What will you do to expand basic human rights for LGBT people?

Answer. The Peace Corps assigns LGBT Volunteers overseas and assigns same-sex couples where legal, security and other relevant factors permit. As Deputy Director, I will support and advance these efforts. In addition, the Peace Corps has strong non-discrimination policies in place for LGBT staff in the workforce. LGBT employees also have an Employee Resource Group at the agency. As Deputy Director, I will ensure that the rights of LGBT staff at the Peace Corps continue to be enjoyed and protected.

Question. As a possible official of the Trump administration, will you condemn and oppose policies and practices that are derogatory and discriminatory on the basis of race, religion, nationality, gender, sexual orientation, or gender identity?

Answer. As Deputy Director, I will work to ensure that all laws and policies affording protections to protected classes of individuals are upheld and enforced, and I will work to condemn and oppose any policies or practices that are discriminatory.

Question. What will you do to ensure that statements by the Trump campaign and transition teams that are racist, xenophobic, misogynistic, or otherwise denigrate human rights and support abuses, will not become government policy?

Answer. As Deputy Director, I will be committed to carrying out and enforcing all applicable laws and policies extending protections to protected classes of persons.

I will work to ensure that diversity at the Peace Corps continues to advance and is protected.

Question. Will you uphold the rights of all persons to equality and freedom from discrimination, and call on Americans to refrain from discrimination of any sort?

Answer. As Deputy Director, I will uphold and seek to enforce all applicable laws and policies promoting equality and protecting persons from discrimination and, in carrying out the mission and authorities of the Peace Corps, I will voice support for such laws and policies.

Five-Year Rule

Question. The Peace Corps' five-year rule has its positive and negative aspects. One negative is the cost attributed to high turnover. According to the 2017 CRS' "The Peace Corps: Current Issues," "Negative features of the five-year rule largely derive from the higher turnover and short tenure of staff. Instead of a turnover of 20 percent each year, implied by the five-year rule, the actual rate is much higher-25 percent to 33 percent each year since 2004 according to the OIG, quadruple that of the rest of the federal government. The average length of service is three years." A 2012 report by the agency's OIG noted that "costs strictly attributable to five-year rule turnover estimated by the OIG to be between $12.6 million and $15.5 million in the period 2005 through 2009."

- Considering the steep costs attributed to the five-year rule, do you think the Peace Corps should pursue eliminating it, or extending to other personnel those exempt from it, in order to save costs, especially in the face of level or decreased funding?

Answer. I am aware that the Sam Farr and Nick Castle Peace Corps Reform Act of 2018 authorizes the Director to designate positions as critical management or management support positions that require specialized technical and professional skills and knowledge of Peace Corps operations. Positions so designated would be eligible for renewable five year term appointments beyond standard time limits imposed by the Peace Corps Act. As Deputy Director, I would work closely with the Director, the Chief Human Capital Officer, the Chief of Staff, and other relevant offices and stakeholders to assess the impact of the five-year rule and possible options under this new authority.

The 2017 CRS link referenced above was updated on October 12, 2018, just three days after the Sam Farr and Nick Castle Peace Corps Reform Act of 2018 was signed into law. This Act gives the Director authority to designate positions as critical management or management support positions that require specialized technical or professional skills and knowledge of Peace Corps operations. Once designated, these positions are eligible for renewable five year appointments. Due to this language, I do not think the Peace Corps should pursue eliminating the five-year rule, rather it should take a thoughtful approach to implementing this new authority.

Question. How might the Peace Corps mitigate the negative impacts of the five-year rule?

Answer. As Deputy Director, I would work closely with the Director, the Chief Human Capital Officer, Chief of Staff, and other relevant officers and stakeholders to assess and understand the impacts of the five-year rule and possible options under available authorities to mitigate any such impacts.

Let Girls Learn

Question. There is a lack of clarity as to the administration's stance on Let Girls Learn. Last year the Peace Corps stated: "We have not received any guidance from the administration about the future of the [Let Girls Learn] program. We continue our focus on girls' education and empowerment, as we always have."

- Can you describe the work you believe Peace Corps can and should be doing to promote girls' education in host countries where Peace Corps has missions?

Answer. Since 1961, the Peace Corps has had a strong focus on girls' education and empowerment and will continue to do so going forward. The agency's work across six sectors, Agriculture, Community Economic Development, Education, Environment, Health, and Youth Development integrates and embeds considerations aimed at maximizing opportunities for girls and young women that includes meaningful participation and leadership in the classroom as well as in the broader community. It is through this approach that the agency will continue to build on its historic commitment to girls' empowerment and leverage the work done during LGL.

Question. Will you commit to making girls' education a priority among Peace Corps' youth and child education missions?

Answer. Girls' and youth education have been and will remain a priority for the Peace Corps. As Deputy Director, I will support the agency's exceptional work in this space, including the agency's participation in the READ Act passed by Congress in 2017

Democracy

Question. What are the most important actions you have taken in your career to date to support democracy and human rights? What has been the impact of your actions?

Answer. As General Counsel of the U.S. Agency for International Development (USAID), I was engaged in matters of civil society in Ukraine which included working with groups such as the American Bar Association on issues of rule of law, judicial ethics and accreditation of law institutions. I was a member of the U.S. delegation to a world HIV/AIDS conference in Kampala, Uganda assessing the effectiveness of the President's Emergency Plan for AIDS Relief (PEPFAR). This work continues to have an impact.

Question. If confirmed, do you commit to meet with civil society members, human rights and other non-governmental organizations in the U.S. and with local human rights NGOs, and other members of civil society?

Answer. As a continuation of the work I undertook at USAID, I will meet with civil society members, human rights and other non-governmental organizations (NGOs).

Question. Will you advocate for access and inclusivity for women and minorities?

Answer. The Peace Corps supports a culture of inclusion that builds on the strengths of the diversity of this country and of the countries where Volunteers serve. In support of the Director's priorities, I will work to ensure that the Peace Corps continues to reflect the diverse population of the United States.

Question. Will you commit to using your position, if confirmed, to defend the human rights and dignity of all people, no matter their sexual orientation or gender identity?

Answer. I am committed to upholding and supporting all anti-discrimination laws, regulations and policies.

Administrative

Question. Do you agree that any targeting of or retaliation against career employees based on their perceived political beliefs, prior work on policy, or affiliation with a previous administration, is wholly inappropriate and has no place in the federal government? If confirmed, what will you do to ensure that all employees under your leadership understand that any retaliation, blacklisting, or other prohibited personnel practices will not be tolerated?

Answer. I am committed to upholding and enforcing in the workplace all of the laws to prevent prohibited personnel practices set forth in 5 USC Sec. 2302. The Peace Corps Office of General Counsel works annually with the U.S. Office of Special Counsel (OSC) to provide all employee notifications and training required by law including annual supervisory training on prohibited personnel practices and how to respond to complaints involving whistleblowers consistent with 5 U.S.C. Sec. 2302(c), the Dr. Chris Kirkpatrick Whistleblower Protection Act, and the Office of Special Counsel Reauthorization Act of 2017. The OSC provided its annual supervisory training to the agency on April 1.

Question. Has anyone ever made a formal or informal complaint or allegation of sexual harassment, discrimination (e.g., racial, ethnic, religious, etc.), or inappropriate conduct against you, in a workplace or any other setting? If so, please describe the nature of the complaint or allegation, your response, and any resolution, including any settlements.

Answer. During my tenure as a career employee at the Department of Homeland Security/Immigration and Customs Enforcement, I submitted witness affidavits in three EEO cases that were filed against the agency. I do not know the disposition of the claims.

Question. Have you ever addressed concerns or allegations of sexual harassment, discrimination (e.g., racial, ethnic, religious, etc.), or inappropriate conduct made against any employee over whom you had supervisory authority? If so, please describe the outcome and actions taken.

Answer. During my tenure as a career employee at the Department of Homeland Security/Immigration and Customs Enforcement, I submitted witness affidavits in three EEO cases that were filed against the agency. I do not know the disposition of the claims.

RESPONSES TO ADDITIONAL QUESTIONS FOR THE RECORD
SUBMITTED TO ALAN R. SWENDIMAN BY SENATOR BENJAMIN L. CARDIN

Human Rights

Question. What are the most important actions you have taken in your career to date to promote human rights and democracy? What has been the impact of your actions?

Answer. As General Counsel of the U.S. Agency for International Development (USAID), I was engaged in matters of civil society in Ukraine, which included working with groups such as the American Bar Association on issues of rule of law, judicial ethics and accreditation of law institutions. I was also a member of the U.S. delegation to a global HIV/AIDS implementers' conference in Kampala, Uganda, assessing the effectiveness of the President's Emergency Plan for AIDS Relief (PEPFAR). This work has had a lasting impact.

Diversity

Question. What will you do to promote, mentor and support your staff that come from diverse backgrounds and underrepresented groups in the Foreign Service?

Answer. As the Peace Corps' Deputy Director, I will work closely with the Director and the Office of Human Resources to assist the agency in recruiting the best and brightest U.S. citizens from all walks of life to serve as Peace Corps employees. I previously served as Chief Human Capital Officer with the Department of Homeland Security and understand the importance of recruiting and retaining a diverse workforce that represents the American public. I will also work closely with the agency's more than 10 individual Employee Resource Groups (ERGs), which include African Americans, Asian Americans, Hispanic Americans, Women, and LGBTQ employees.

Question. What steps will you take to ensure each of the supervisors in the Foreign Service are fostering an environment that is diverse and inclusive?

Answer. I plan to work with the Director to continue the work she started this year to elevate among supervisors and staff the importance of diversity and inclusion in the workplace and will support all efforts to expand training and professional development activities, such as Unconscious Bias training for Hiring Managers and enhanced training for supervisors, to ensure the managers of the agency understand the responsibility of creating a fair and equitable workplace for all employees.

Conflicts of Interest

Question. Do you commit to bring to the committee's attention (and the Inspector General of the State Department and Foreign Service) any change in policy or U.S. actions that you suspect may be influenced by any of the President's business or financial interests, or the business or financial interests of any senior White House staff?

Answer. The Peace Corps is an independent agency within the federal government with its own Office of Inspector General. If confirmed as Deputy Director of the Peace Corps, I commit to reporting to appropriate authorities any possible violations of law or policy falling within the jurisdiction of the Deputy Director's office and authority and to upholding the statutory oath of the office.

Question. Do you commit to inform the committee if you have any reason to suspect that a foreign government, head of state, or foreign-controlled entity is taking any action in order to benefit any of the President's business or financial interests, or the interests of senior White House staff?

Answer. If confirmed as Deputy Director of the Peace Corps, I commit to reporting to appropriate authorities any possible violations of law or policy falling within the jurisdiction of the Deputy Director's office and authority and to upholding the statutory oath of the office.

Question. Do you or do any members of your immediate family have any financial interests in any country abroad?

Answer. I own some publicly traded mutual funds that have a small holding in foreign companies. They have been reported, as required, on the nominee public financial disclosure report.

Comprehensive Assessment and Peace Corps Reform

Question. The 2010 Comprehensive Assessment Report provided the blueprint for a series of reforms that were implemented over the following six years. How would you judge the success of those reforms?

Answer. As a result of the 2010 Comprehensive Agency Assessment, the Peace Corps established systems and processes that have become institutionalized. The reforms and changes have been a success. The agency continues to build on the recommendations from the 2010 assessment, and many of them formed the foundation for new business processes in both domestic and overseas operations.

Examples include:

- The Country Portfolio Review process that has become the cornerstone of the assessment and review process for overseas posts.
- A streamlined application portal that provides prospective Volunteers with more information, a shorter application process, and more choice in assignments. This has resulted in record application numbers and an applicant pool that reflects the diversity of the American public.

Question. Would you support the undertaking of a new comprehensive assessment of Peace Corps operations?

Answer. The Peace Corps undertakes a strategic planning process every four years to lay out long-term goals and objectives designed to advance the Peace Corps mission. The annual performance plan identifies the strategies to accomplish these goals and objectives, as well as the specific results the agency expects to achieve. I fully support this process.

Health and Safety

Question. In the past decade, the safety of volunteers has become an issue of significant congressional concern. What are the most important and effective steps taken by the Peace Corps in recent years to enhance the safety of volunteers?

Answer. The effort of the Peace Corps to improve its ability to identify and mitigate risk to its Volunteers and general operations are ongoing. The agency can point to three distinct developments in the last five years that it believes have significantly improved Volunteer safety and security:

- The agency has recalibrated its approach to training Volunteers in safety and security. Through guided development of individual, personal safety plans, maintained throughout their service, the Peace Corps prepares and empowers its Volunteers to identify and mitigate risks.
- The agency has prioritized the training of its safety and security professionals. Over the past three years, the agency has invested in high-quality training in areas such as risk assessment and management and conducting investigations. The next series of security trainings for security personnel will occur this fall.
- The Peace Corps has developed new and more sophisticated tools that have enhanced its ability to identify and manage risk at the country level. In 2018, the agency overhauled its country assessment tool and associated procedures, which provide country teams with a more nuanced view of potential risk.

Question. Are the provisions in the 2018 Peace Corps Reform Act aimed at improving volunteer access to health care sufficient?

Answer. Yes. The provisions of the 2018 Peace Corps Reform Act are aimed at improving access to Volunteer health care through recruitment and retention of well-qualified medical staff, routine clinical oversight to ensure and maintain compliance with all relevant Peace Corps policies, practices and guidelines, and to expedite eligibility for coverage following service. These statutory requirements are now in the process of being implemented.

Question. How does Peace Corps respond to criminal acts perpetrated on volunteers?

Answer. The Peace Corps' response to criminal acts perpetrated against Volunteers has three distinct phases: notification, response, and follow-up support. Through in-country staff emergency contact lists, duty officer systems, emergency numbers for local authorities and members of their communities, Volunteers have multiple ways to reach out for help. Once notified, Peace Corps country team members mobilize the necessary resources to attend to any immediate threats to the safety or health of a Volunteer—from deployment of Peace Corps safety and security

managers and medical officers to local police and U.S. Embassy Regional Security Officers, the country team mobilizes all necessary personnel. With guidance and support from Peace Corps security experts in investigations and legal counsel, country teams will also work with Volunteers to navigate the local legal system should they wish to pursue charges against their alleged assailants.

Country Presence

Question. Currently, the Peace Corps has a presence in 65 countries. In the last decade, more than 20 countries have asked for a Peace Corps program to be established. Do you believe that the Peace Corps should open programs in all of these countries?

Answer. The Peace Corps conducts an annual Country Portfolio Review process that includes a comprehensive review of potential new country entries or reentries. I fully support this process.

Question. What would be your criteria for establishing new programs?

Answer. Through the annual Country Portfolio Review process the Peace Corps undertakes a comprehensive review of internal and external data points in six major priority areas to determine whether or not to open new programs in countries that invite the agency:

- Safety and security,
- Medical care,
- Host country need and U.S. strategic interest,
- Host country commitment and engagement,
- Programmatic impact, and
- Post management and costs.

Answer. I fully support the review process, which is evidence-based, rigorous, and transparent.

Question. What should be the principal criteria for a decision to close existing programs?

Answer. The agency reviews the criteria mentioned above for non-emergency closures of programs, which are very rare. In other cases, circumstances beyond the Peace Corps' control, such as political unrest, natural disasters, or an insecure work environment, warrant the closing of a country program.

Returned Peace Corps Volunteers

Question. Do you believe that returned volunteers receive sufficient post-service benefits, such as student loan forgiveness, career assistance, and educational support?

Answer. Yes. The Peace Corps Office of Third Goal initiates a program a few months prior to the end of Peace Corps Volunteer's service, which begins to increase awareness about the types of assistance available and what steps a Volunteer can take in preparation for leaving service. This includes a series of email notifications that the Peace Corps sends to each Volunteer, which is complemented and reinforced at a Close of Service (COS) Conference. The COS Conference is provided for each Volunteer approximately three months prior to finishing service. Some of the topics covered include non-competitive eligibility within the federal government and the Paul D. Coverdell Fellows program-a graduate degree program available at more than 100 colleges or universities across the United States offering professional internships and some financial assistance.

Question. Are returned volunteers well-utilized by the Peace Corps for promoting its third goal programs?

Answer. The Peace Corps has numerous Returned Peace Corps Volunteers (RPCVs) working as staff at all levels of the agency. In addition, the Peace Corps Office of Third Goal and other Peace Corps offices work in conjunction with the National Peace Corps Association (NPCA) and many of their 200 affiliate groups around the country. The Peace Corps Director has also made a priority of collecting and publicly amplifying examples of RPCV engagement in the U.S. and abroad.

NOMINATIONS

THURSDAY, APRIL 11, 2019

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

The committee met, pursuant to notice, at 2:33 p.m. in Room SD–419, Dirksen Senate Office Building, Hon. Ron Johnson, presiding.

Present: Senators Johnson [presiding], Gardner, Portman, Young, Menendez, Shaheen, and Kaine.

OPENING STATEMENT OF HON. RON JOHNSON, U.S. SENATOR FROM WISCONSIN

Senator JOHNSON. Good afternoon. This hearing will come to order.

I want to welcome the nominees. Thank you for your past service, for your willingness to serve in the future representing our nation to North Macedonia, Ireland, and to Turkey, three, from my standpoint, pretty important posts at this point in time.

I know you have family and friends. I want to encourage you all in your opening statement to recognize and introduce your family and friends.

We have two distinguished Senators from Ohio that are here to introduce Mr. Crawford. So I think without any further ado, why do we not do that so you can move on with your day as well. So I will start with Senator Portman.

STATEMENT OF HON. ROB PORTMAN, U.S. SENATOR FROM OHIO

Senator PORTMAN. Well, thank you, Chairman Johnson and Ranking Member Shaheen, and Senator Menendez, for holding the hearing today. And as you say, we have got some vitally important roles to be filled, and one is Ireland.

Along with my colleague, Senator Brown, it is my honor to introduce Ed Crawford as the nominee to serve as Ambassador to Ireland. I am happy to see that Mary is with us today too, his wife and his son and daughter-in-law and grandchildren.

I know Ed from his business work and civic participation from many years of interacting with him, but when I really got to know him well was in 2014 when I was asked to introduce him at a Mayo Society event. Every year, they choose a person of the year, and it is always somebody from the County of Mayo. In this case, they made a slight exception because of Ed Crawford's incredible commitment to Ireland, and that was special.

And at that event, which was well attended by the Irish American community in Cleveland, I had the honor of co-introducing Ed Crawford along with a young man named Colin, who is his grandson who is with us today. He was about 3 feet shorter then, but he was the same Colin. So I am glad that Colin Crawford is with us here today too.

Mr. Chairman, you look at Ed's biography. He has been President, CEO, or Director of so many successful companies, philanthropic organizations. He has worked tirelessly to improve his community not just by building his business from the ground up, but also being very involved in the community and again providing great jobs for the people of Cleveland.

He is very proud of his Irish American heritage, as you might imagine, having gotten the Mayo Society award. He has been involved with that. It was said in 2016 that there were about 32 million Americans who claimed Irish heritage. I think half of them are in Cleveland, Ohio, and I think Ed knows most of them. He is really active in Irish American civic groups, was the driving force behind the Irish Garden Club of Cleveland, which is dedicated to preserving the magnificent Irish Cultural Garden, which some of you may have seen when you visited Cleveland. Ed was a founding member and served as its President. These affiliations represent just a small portion of his charitable work. So he has been so involved in the betterment of Cleveland and the people of Ohio and has a track record to prove it.

He is highly qualified. I am confident he is the right person to serve as our Ambassador to Ireland. But even more importantly, the Irish want him and they are eager to get him there.

In addition to his deep love of the country, he has got a keen business background I think that will be helpful in maintaining and deepening our economic relationships with Ireland in what could be some challenging times ahead. Brexit or no Brexit, it is going to be challenging, but if there is Brexit, Ireland will play a bigger and bigger role for the United States in so many respects, including in our economic relationship with Europe. It has got a dynamic, diverse economy already. We are their number one source of foreign direct investment, the United States of America. We are second in terms of our export goods. So Ireland and the United States have so many close economic ties, and as we navigate the challenges again associated with the future, I am glad that someone of his acumen and relationship with the President has the opportunity to be in that ambassadorial role, should he be confirmed.

There is a great deal to be said about the role of personal relationships in international diplomacy. I have certainly seen that in my experience, and I will tell you Ed Crawford also has the natural Irish gift of gab, maybe I should say. He gets along with people, having kissed the Blarney Stone a time or two in his travels. He will be instantly respected by the Irish both for his background and intellect but also his love of the country and embracing the Irish, as he does.

So, again, I urge my colleagues to support this nomination here in the committee and on the Senate floor. And I am pleased that he is willing to step up and serve his country.

Senator JOHNSON. Thank you, Senator Portman.

Senator Brown?

STATEMENT OF HON. SHERROD BROWN, U.S. SENATOR FROM OHIO

Senator BROWN. Thank you, Chairman Johnson, Ranking Member Shaheen, and Senator Menendez. Thank you. It is my pleasure to join my friend Rob Portman today to introduce a fellow Clevelander, Ed Crawford, and also Mary and Matt at today's hearing to discuss his nomination to be Ambassador to the Republic of Ireland.

For 200 years, Irish Americans have been an integral part of the fabric of my home city of Cleveland. Ed's grandparents came from County Cork to the United States. Like so many immigrants, the Irish came for freedom, for safety from political oppression and from hunger. They came for opportunity for themselves, for their children, for their children's children. We should remember that some resented and opposed the arrival of Irish immigrants. Some politicians proclaimed that our country was full. Those naysayers were wrong then. Those naysayers are wrong today.

Cleveland and the State of Ohio and our nation benefited and prospered because of the industry, the initiative, and the faith brought by Irish immigrants. Mr. Crawford's life makes clear the Irish in Cleveland often succeeded beyond their wildest dreams. The first Irish immigrants who came to the city were mostly men who worked on the Erie Canal. They found work on the city's docks and on the canals traveling between Cleveland and Akron. They built families and prosperous lives on the east and west sides of Cleveland. They established civic organizations that fostered a sense of civic purpose and of community.

Ed carried on that proud tradition. He has been an integral part of Cleveland's Irish American community in founding the Irish Garden Club and devoting time and energy towards the Irish Cultural Garden, one of the great places to visit in our great city.

It is fitting we are holding Ed's hearing today, the day after the 20th anniversary of the Good Friday Agreement. Everyone in this room knows how important that agreement was and is to the peace and prosperity of everyone in Northern Ireland and Ireland. Today it is more important than ever that we have a thoughtful, skilled Ambassador in Dublin to negotiate the intricacies of our two countries' relationship, especially with the UK poised to leave the European Union.

We appreciate, Ed, your willingness to serve. Thank you. I am always glad when a Clevelander steps up and answers the call to service.

Thank you.

Senator JOHNSON. Thank you, Senator Brown and Senator Portman.

As our former chairman used to say, you are welcome to stay but just not sitting there.

[Laughter.]

Senator JOHNSON. With that, I will turn it over to Ranking Member Senator Shaheen.

STATEMENT OF HON. JEANNE SHAHEEN, U.S. SENATOR FROM NEW HAMPSHIRE

Senator SHAHEEN. Well, thank you, Mr. Chairman.

In the interest of time, I will also submit my opening statement for the record.

But I would like to echo your comments about the importance of the three countries that these ambassadorial nominees have been asked to serve, not just Ireland and Turkey, which have been allies of the United States, but certainly North Macedonia, given the recent agreement with Greece, is on a trajectory which we hope will bring an end to both NATO and the European Union.

So thank you all very much. Welcome to you and your families. And I look forward to hearing your statements.

[Senator Shaheen's prepared statement follows:]

PREPARED STATEMENT OF HON. JEANNE SHAHEEN

Thank you, Mr. Chairman, and thank you to the nominees before us today.

Ms. Byrnes, Mr. Crawford, Mr. Satterfield, each of the respective countries you have been nominated to serve in are at the helm of crucial U.S. foreign policy priorities.

Ms. Byrnes, given your previous experience in Greece, you are well aware of the strategic relevance of incorporating North Macedonia into NATO and the EU and the hard-fought path that both Greece and now, North Macedonia, have traveled to get to where we are today.

In addition to my role as the Ranking Member of this subcommittee, I am also the Senate NATO Observer Group Co-Chair. In that capacity, I am pleased that Greece and North Macedonia were able to overcome their name dispute and that North Macedonia continues to make the right moves on defense reforms to ensure its membership in NATO and to help better integrate the Balkans region.

Mr. Crawford, Ireland has also traveled a hard-fought road, particularly with the UK, to ensure Europe's integration.

Unfortunately, tensions long-buried by close economic ties and the peace process in Northern Ireland have the potential to rise to the surface, once again, with the Brexit negotiations. I look forward to hearing more from you on this matter.

And, Mr. Satterfield, Turkey seems to lie at the center of a host of political, economic and security issues-all with the potential to spill over into NATO, Syria, the Balkans and even, Venezuela.

As we discussed, I am worried that President Erdogan has played directly into Vladimir Putin's hands as well as his own worst demons. I look forward to discussing how the U.S. can work with the remaining democratic elements of Turkish society to ensure that Turkey's once-western, rules-based trajectory is not gone for good.

Again, welcome and congratulations to all of the nominees today.

Senator JOHNSON. Thank you, Senator Shaheen.

I think we will start with Mr. Crawford. I do not think any further introduction is really necessary. I think Senator Brown and Senator Portman did a pretty good job.

I am glad to see—I think when we met, you were wearing an orange tie, and I was a little disappointed. I see you have got the Irish green on there. So you look good in it.

But Mr. Crawford.

STATEMENT OF EDWARD F. CRAWFORD, OF OHIO, TO BE AMBASSADOR EXTRAORDINARY AND PLENIPOTENTIARY OF THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA TO IRELAND

Mr. CRAWFORD. Well, good afternoon, Senator Johnson, Senator Shaheen, Senator Menendez. Good afternoon members of the Foreign Relations Committee.

I am honored to appear here before you today as President Trump's nominee to be the next U.S. Ambassador to the Republic of Ireland. I am grateful to the President for his nomination and Secretary Pompeo for his trust and confidence. If confirmed by the Senate, I will pledge to work closely with the members of the Foreign Relations Committee to advance U.S. interests and values in Ireland.

At this time, I would like to take an opportunity to thank my wife Mary from high school, as well as my son Matthew, my daughter Debbie, my grandchildren Colin, Catherine, and Claire, better known in the family as the three bears.

A few thoughts on Ireland.

The connection between the people of the United States and the people of Ireland is undeniable. Over 30 million Americans identify themselves as having Irish heritage, more than 10 percent of the U.S. population.

The United States has built on hard work and sacrifice of immigrants, like the Irish who made significant contributions to the country and continue to serve as an example for all of us today. From the time of the nation's founding, thousands of Irish men and women had come to America and have had a lasting impact on the history and development of our country.

Ireland is also one of our most reliable trading partners. More than $138 billion and growing in two-way trade in goods and services pass between the United States and Ireland each year.

While adhering to a longstanding policy of military neutrality, Ireland continues to be a valuable partner in maintaining global security and protecting American interests abroad. I applaud our cooperation with the Irish government on strengthening Ireland's cybersecurity capacity to help safeguard U.S. companies and citizens located in Ireland. If confirmed, I will do everything I can to continue making progress in this area.

The United States and Ireland have worked together through history to resolve conflicts and peace accord and prosperity. The United States views proudly its role in the events leading up to the Good Friday Agreement in 1998, ending years of strife and bloodshed in Northern Ireland. If confirmed, I would maintain the United States' firm commitment to the Northern Ireland peace process.

A few thoughts or comments on Ed Crawford.

In 1960, while I was attending John Carroll University night school, I started my first commercial effort, a company called Cleveland Steel Container, which manufactured 5-gallon steel pails. The continuation of that enterprise today has grown the revenues to approximately $9 billion.

Park-Ohio currently operates manufacturing facilities in North America, Canada, Mexico, the Euro Zone, China, India, and other countries.

We employ over 7,500 individuals. This is not a high-tech business we are talking about. We manufacture products for trucks, autos, washing machines, aerospace, and many other production line components. We are very proud of our relationships with our factory employees.

For example, in City of Conneaut, Ohio, we employ 300 factory workers. Conneaut has one McDonald's, no movie, just a race track, but there are 8,200 people living in Conneaut, Ohio. And the average time in service in those employees—we employ 300 people and the average time of service in that facility is 15 years. We are very, very, very positive and feel great about the partnership we have as owners of the company and our employees. It is very important to us. It has been in the past and will be in the future. The mere fact that they leave work each day—I can only say this with my heart. These 300 people come every single day and punch a time clock at 6:30 in the morning. They leave at 3:30 in the afternoon. And they have families, and they need those jobs. They depend on those jobs. So they go home to their families.

What we are as a family—our family loves feeling commitment on both sides. It is important to us, and I think we did a great job with it. And why? Because they need us and we need them. It is a good thing. I employed a lot of hourly employees for a very long time. I enjoy it. I like the factories. I am an operating guy. I am in the buildings.

During my 58 years of building this company, I learned a great deal about people, problems, and opportunities. If I am confirmed, I will bring this experience, knowledge, and enthusiasm to the post of the U.S. Ambassador to Ireland to strengthen the Irish relationship.

Senators, my mother left Ireland in 1927, my father in 1925. Both came through Ellis Island as Irish immigrants. They would be very proud of what we have accomplished as a family and our need to serve America.

Thank you.

[Mr. Crawford's prepared statement follows:]

PREPARED STATEMENT OF EDWARD F. CRAWFORD

Good morning Senator Johnson, Good morning Senator Shaheen and other Members of the Foreign Relations Committee:

I am honored to appear before you today as President Trump's nominee to be the next U.S. Ambassador to the Republic of Ireland. I am grateful to the President for his nomination and to Secretary Pompeo for his trust and confidence. If confirmed by the Senate, I pledge to work closely with the members of the Foreign Relations Committee to advance U.S. interests and values in Ireland.

At this time, I would like to take this opportunity to thank my wife, Mary (from high school), as well as my son, Matthew, my daughter, Debbie, and my grandchildren, Colin, Catherine, and Claire (better known as the three bears) for their love and support.

A few thoughts on Ireland.

The connection between the people of the United States and the people of Ireland is undeniable. Over 30 million Americans identify themselves as having Irish heritage, more than 10 percent of the U.S. population.

The United States was built on the hard work and sacrifice of immigrants, like the Irish, who have made significant contributions to this country and continue to serve as an example for all of us today. From the time of our nation's founding, thousands of Irish men and women have come to America, and have had a lasting impact on the history and development of our country.

Ireland is also one of our most reliable trading partners. More than $138 Billion (and growing) in two-way trade in goods and services passes between the United States and Ireland each year.

While adhering to its long-standing policy of military neutrality, Ireland continues to be a valuable partner in maintaining global security and protecting American interests abroad. I applaud our cooperation with the Irish government on strengthening Ireland's cybersecurity capacity to help safeguard U.S. companies and citizens

located in Ireland. If confirmed, I will do everything I can to continue making progress in this area.

The United States and Ireland have worked together throughout our histories to resolve conflicts and promote peace and prosperity. The United States views proudly its role in the events leading to the Good Friday Agreement of 1998, ending years of strife and bloodshed in Northern Ireland. If confirmed, I would maintain the United States' firm commitment to the Northern Ireland Peace Process.

In the 1960's while attending John Carroll University night school, I started my first commercial effort, a company called Cleveland Steel Container which manufactured five-gallon steel pails. The continuation of that enterprise today has grown in revenues to approximately $1.9 billion annually.

Park-Ohio currently operates manufacturing facilities in North America, Canada, Mexico, the Euro Zone, China, India and other countries.

We employ over 7,500 individuals. This is not a high-tech business. We manufacture products for trucks, autos, washing machines, aero-space and many other production line components. We are very proud of our relationships with our factory employees.

For example, in Conneaut, Ohio, we employ 300 factory workers. Conneaut has one McDonald's, no movie theater and a dirt track for auto racing. The population of Conneaut is approximately 8,200. The average time in service for our production line employees is over 15 years. This is a partnership with families. They come to the plant each day and punch a time clock. They leave work each day and go home to their families. Our family loves the feeling of commitment on both sides.

During the 58 years of building the company I learned a great deal about people, problems and opportunities. If I am confirmed, I will bring this experience, knowledge and enthusiasm to the Post of the U.S. Ambassador to Ireland to strengthen the U.S.-Irish relationship.

Senators, my mother left Ireland for America in 1927 and my father in 1925. Both came through Ellis Island as Irish immigrants. They would be very proud of what we have accomplished as a family and our need to serve America.

Senator JOHNSON. Thank you, Mr. Crawford. As a fellow manufacturer and entrepreneur, I have nothing but respect for what you have accomplished in your life. And, again, thank you for your willingness to serve.

Our next nominee is Ms. Kate Marie Byrnes. Ms. Byrnes is the President's nominee to be Ambassador to North Macedonia. Ms. Byrnes is a career member of the State Department's Senior Foreign Service and currently serves as the Deputy Chief of Mission at the U.S. embassy in Athens.

Her previous service includes Deputy Permanent Representative to the U.S. Mission to the OSCE, as well as postings in Madrid, Afghanistan, and to NATO headquarters in Belgium.

Ms. Byrnes is the recipient of the Secretary's Expeditionary Service Award and the United States Army Meritorious Civilian Service Award.

She speaks Spanish, Hungarian, and Turkish.

Ms. Byrnes?

STATEMENT OF KATE MARIE BYRNES, OF FLORIDA, A CAREER MEMBER OF THE SENIOR FOREIGN SERVICE, CLASS OF MINISTER–COUNSELOR, TO BE AMBASSADOR EXTRAORDINARY AND PLENIPOTENTIARY OF THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA TO THE REPUBLIC OF NORTH MACEDONIA

Ms. BYRNES. Mr. Chairman, Ranking Member Shaheen, and distinguished members of the committee, I am honored to appear before you today as President Trump's nominee for U.S. Ambassador to the Republic of North Macedonia. I deeply appreciate the trust and confidence the President and the Secretary of State have placed in me to represent the American people, and I hope to earn

your trust as well. If confirmed, I pledge to work closely with you to advance our nation's interests in North Macedonia.

Thank you for the opportunity to introduce my husband, retired U.S. Navy Captain Scott Gage, who is here with me today, and to thank him for his love and partnership. I would also like to thank all my family, beginning with my parents, Paul and Hope Byrnes. My father, a retired Foreign Service officer, with my mother's support, introduced my brothers, Paul Jr., Sean, and me to the rewards and challenges of this path of service. And their support continues to inspire my commitment.

Over my 26-year career, I have worked in Washington and in Europe to build strong partners for the United States. As the Deputy Chief of Mission in Athens, I supported U.S.-Greece efforts to deepen regional stability and cooperation and encouraged Greece's leadership in its engagement with the Western Balkans, including North Macedonia.

North Macedonia is on its chosen path to NATO and the European Union. Through the Prespa Agreement, the political leaders of North Macedonia and Greece overcame difficult historical issues by focusing on a future of progress. The United States supported the leaders on both sides who drove this process. Full implementation of the agreement is crucial to the region. External actors with malign intent are working against this progress in an effort to undermine the country and the confidence the people of North Macedonia have in their future.

If confirmed, I will focus the work of the embassy on three priorities.

First, we will promote stability through strong institutions. North Macedonia has made significant progress on updating its laws to advance reforms, including in the areas of judicial independence, rule of law, and accountability. Its political leaders need to ensure these laws are thoroughly implemented, making real change to meet the standards of membership in both NATO and the EU, as well as the expectations of its citizens.

Congress has made a lasting impact on North Macedonia's democratic reforms and economic development. If confirmed, I will ensure that this U.S. government collaboration continues and that U.S. resources are spent effectively in support of U.S. goals and priorities.

Second, we will enhance security through partnership. As a future NATO ally, North Macedonia must meet its commitments. If confirmed, I will work with members of this committee to ensure that North Macedonia continues to be a strong and steadfast contributor to the security of the North Atlantic area.

North Macedonia has contributed to international operations since 2002, deploying almost 4,000 soldiers. As our strong partner in the Coalition to Defeat ISIS, it set an important example for all members of the coalition in repatriating, prosecuting, and sentencing foreign terrorist fighters. Our soldiers also courageously fought alongside each other in Iraq and still do so today in Afghanistan. This year, over 1,000 U.S. troops will participate in exercises alongside North Macedonia's troops at the Krivolak Training Area. If confirmed, I will look to expand our partnership efforts in order

to counter threats from terrorism, as well as malign actors who seek to disrupt and destabilize democratic systems.

Third, we will foster prosperity through positive influence. North Macedonia will prosper by advancing human rights, diversity, inclusion, free media, and open markets. The United States will partner in building new opportunities for future generations through our Peace Corps, USAID, and other assistance programs, and through robust public diplomacy and people-to-people exchanges. There are prospects for U.S. firms to partner with North Macedonia. If confirmed, I will commit the U.S. embassy in Skopje to help make these deals happen.

Expanding ties between the United States and North Macedonia will foster a positive vision of a more prosperous and secure future and is our strongest weapon against global competitors.

The outstanding embassy team in Skopje is dedicated to helping North Macedonia secure a positive future. I am eager to join them, if confirmed, to lead their efforts moving forward.

I pledge to the committee that I will protect American interests, ensure the fair treatment of American citizens, and promote American values with every engagement I have with the government of North Macedonia and its people.

Thank you for your time. I welcome your questions.

[The prepared statement of Ms. Byrnes follows:]

PREPARED STATEMENT OF KATE MARIE BYRNES

Mr. Chairman, Ranking Member Shaheen, and distinguished members of the committee, I am honored to appear before you today as President Trump's nominee for U.S. Ambassador to the Republic of North Macedonia. I deeply appreciate the trust and confidence the President and the Secretary of State have placed in me to represent the American people, and I hope to earn your trust as well. If confirmed, I pledge to work closely with you to advance our nation's interests in North Macedonia.

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Thank you for your time today. I would be pleased to take your questions.

Senator JOHNSON. Thank you, Ms. Byrnes.

Our final nominee is the Honorable David Michael Satterfield. Mr. Satterfield is the President's nominee to be Ambassador to Turkey.

Ambassador Satterfield is a career member of the State Department's Senior Foreign Service who has been the Acting Assistant Secretary of State for Near Eastern Affairs since 2017.

Previously he served as Director-General of the Multinational Force and Observers in Rome, as Special Advisor to the Secretary of State for Libya, as Deputy Chief of Mission in Baghdad, as Ambassador to Lebanon.

Ambassador Satterfield is the recipient of the Presidential Distinguished Executive Rank Award, the Secretary of State's Distinguished Service Award, and the United States Department of the Army Outstanding Civilian Service Award.

He speaks Arabic, French, and Italian.

Ambassador Satterfield?

STATEMENT OF HON. DAVID MICHAEL SATTERFIELD, OF MISSOURI, A CAREER MEMBER OF THE SENIOR FOREIGN SERVICE, CLASS OF CAREER MINISTER, TO BE AMBASSADOR EXTRAORDINARY AND PLENIPOTENTIARY OF THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA TO THE REPUBLIC OF TURKEY

Ambassador SATTERFIELD. Chairman Johnson, Ranking Member Shaheen, Senators Menendez and Portman, thank you for the opportunity to come before you today as the President's nominee for Turkey. I am grateful to the President, to Secretary Pompeo for the confidence they have placed in me. If confirmed, I look forward to

continuing the close consultative relationship I have had for many years with this committee.

With your permission, I will submit my full testimony for the record.

Next month will mark 40 years of service for me with the U.S. government, almost entirely as a career Foreign Service officer. My focus has been the Middle East. That has meant my overseas assignments have largely been in unaccompanied critical threat posts, Beirut, Baghdad, Tripoli, Libya, the Sinai. I am profoundly aware of the importance of family in today's Foreign Service and separations that the requirements of that service entail for most of my colleagues. In this regard, I want to thank my spouse, Foreign Service Officer Elizabeth Fritschle, for her love, understanding and support through many separated assignments. She and our daughter, Mary Parker, are at post in Tel Aviv today, but they are with me always in spirit.

If confirmed, I will be going to Ankara at a complex and challenging moment. Today, Turkey fulfills key NATO rolls in Afghanistan and Iraq, stands firm in support of Ukraine's territorial integrity, and its critical efforts to bring about a political solution to the Syrian conflict and the enduring defeat of ISIS.

The Turkish people also merit recognition for their hosting of nearly 4 million Syrian refugees.

Our interests extend beyond U.S. national security priorities. Turkey hosts more than 1,700 American companies, particularly in the aerospace, pharmaceutical, financial, and insurance services industry. Bilateral trade topped $20 billion in 2018, and Presidents Trump and Erdogan have pledged to significantly increase that trade relationship.

Nevertheless, as this committee knows very well, the relationship faces profound challenges. By moving ahead with its purchase of the Russian S–400 missile defense system and as Secretary Pompeo told this committee yesterday, Turkey puts its participation in the F–35 program at profound risk and faces sanctions under CAATSA. As Vice President Pence said on the occasion of NATO's 70th anniversary, Turkey must choose. Does it want to remain a critical partner in the most successful military alliance in history, or does it want to risk the security of that partnership by making such reckless decisions that undermine our Alliance? If confirmed, I will press Turkey to make the right strategic choice.

Mr. Chairman, Ranking Member, members of the committee, if confirmed, my highest priority, of course, will be the safety and security of American citizens in Turkey.

Let me express in that regard the administration's appreciation to Congress and to this committee for your sustained efforts to help us achieve the release of Pastor Andrew Brunson. If confirmed, I will not rest until all of our people, including NASA physicist Dr. Serkan Golge, and Mission Turkey local employees are at home with their families and free.

More broadly, the United States is troubled by the state of Turkish democracy and respect for individual freedoms in Turkey. Rebuilding confidence in the rule of law would go far towards expanding the potential, which Turkey very much has, for economic investment and partnership. If confirmed, I will work to challenge

Turkey to uphold its domestic and international human rights commitments while pushing Turkey to live up in full to its status as a NATO ally.

Mr. Chairman, Ranking Member, members of the committee, thank you again for the opportunity to testify today. I look forward to taking your questions.

[The prepared statement of Ambassador Satterfield follows:]

PREPARED STATEMENT OF HON. DAVID M. SATTERFIELD

Chairman Johnson, Ranking Member, members of the committee, thank you for the opportunity to come before you today as the President's nominee to Turkey. I am grateful to President Trump and Secretary Pompeo for the confidence they have placed in me. If confirmed I look forward to continuing a close, consultative relationship with the committee.

Next month will mark forty years of my service with the U.S. government, almost entirely as a career Foreign Service Officer with focus upon the Middle East. My overseas assignments have been largely in unaccompanied critical threat assignments—Beirut, Baghdad, Tripoli, the Sinai—and I am profoundly aware of the importance of family as such service and the separations it entails have become routine for all in the Foreign Service. In this regard, I want to thank my spouse, Elizabeth Fritschle, also a career Foreign Service Officer with her own three decades of service, including in those same posts I noted, for her love, understanding and support in what has been a rewarding but very challenging life. She and our daughter Mary Parker are at post in Tel Aviv today, but they are with me always in spirit.

If confirmed, I will be going to Ankara at a particularly complex and challenging moment in U.S.-Turkey relations. As this committee is aware, in the 66 years since Turkey became a NATO Ally, we have worked closely with the Turks to advance key national security interests, from Korea to Kosovo and beyond. Our partnership with Turkey—which has the second largest standing military in NATO and is a G-20 economy—enables us to defend NATO's eastern flank and project U.S. power in the region.

Today, Turkey hosts the NATO Land Component Command in Izmir, serves as one of four Framework Nations for Operation Resolute Support in Afghanistan, and fills the deputy commander position in NATO's new training mission in Iraq. Turkey has stood firm in support of Ukraine's sovereignty and territorial integrity, refusing to recognize Russia's attempted annexation of Crimea. We have worked together to counter terrorism. Turkey has been integral to our efforts to bring about a political solution to the Syrian conflict and achieve the lasting defeat of ISIS, not least because of our access to Turkish air bases. Meanwhile, the Turkish people merit recognition for their generosity in hosting nearly four million Syrian refugees. As the President has made clear, as we draw down U.S. forces in Syria, we are determined to ensure that those who fought with us will not come to harm. At the same time, we will continue to work with Turkey to address its legitimate security concerns.

Our interests extend beyond U.S. security priorities. Turkey is an important economic partner hosting more than 1,700 U.S. companies, particularly in the aerospace, pharmaceutical, and financial and insurance services industries. Bilateral trade topped $20 billion in 2018. Presidents Trump and Erdogan have pledged to significantly increase our trade.

As this committee is all too aware, the relationship faces profound challenges.The administration has worked tirelessly with Congress to address Turkey's legitimate security needs. However, by moving ahead with its purchase of the Russian S-400 missile defense system, Turkey puts its participation in the F-35 program at risk and faces potential sanctions under CAATSA. As Vice President Pence said April 4 on the occasion of NATO's 70th anniversary, "Turkey must choose. Does it want to remain a critical partner in the most successful military alliance in history, or does it want to risk the security of that partnership by making such reckless decisions that undermine our Alliance?" If confirmed, I will ensure we continue to press Turkey to make the right strategic choice by procuring NATO interoperable military equipment.

Chairman Johnson, Ranking Member, if confirmed my highest priority will be the safety and security of American citizens in Turkey.

The Trump administration has worked tirelessly to achieve the release of our staff and U.S. citizens. Let me express our appreciation to Congress and to this committee for your sustained efforts. While we are grateful that Pastor Andrew

Brunson and one local employee are out of jail and reunited with their families, the United States cannot accept Turkey's continued detention and prosecution of other U.S. citizens—including NASA physicist Dr. Serkan Golge—and Mission Turkey local employees. If confirmed, you have my assurance that I will be clear that this is unacceptable and will urge a swift and fair resolution to these cases.

The United States, along with many others in the international community, is troubled by the negative trajectory of democracy and respect for freedom of expression, association, and peaceful assembly in Turkey. Turkey currently incarcerates more journalists than any other country in the world. No democracy can flourish without a vibrant, diversely-owned, and free press. Accountable and responsive government, an independent judiciary, and respect for individual rights are pillars of established democracies. Turkey should protect freedom of expression, especially for those voices that are critical of the government, and release journalists imprisoned for their work.

Rebuilding confidence in the rule of law in Turkey would go far towards expanding the potential for economic investment and partnership. The U.S.-Turkish partnership is strongest when Turkish democracy is thriving. If confirmed, I will work to challenge Turkey to uphold its domestic and international human rights commitments while pushing Turkey to live up to its status as a NATO Ally and EU aspirant.

Despite the very real challenges in U.S.-Turkish relations, Turkey remains an essential partner in a complicated geostrategic position, presenting both opportunities and challenges. There is no alternative to an 80-million strong Ally on the edge of a region in constant flux. The United States and Turkey must work together to confront the very real threats to global peace and security that emanate from Russia, Iran, and elsewhere in the region. If confirmed, I am committed to working to advance our national security interests.

Chairman Johnson, Ranking Member, members of the committee, thank you again for the opportunity to testify before you. I look forward to taking your questions.

Senator JOHNSON. Thank you, Ambassador Satterfield.

I am going to be here for the duration of the hearing. So out of respect for my colleagues' time—and I do appreciate people showing up for the hearings—I will defer to Senator Shaheen.

Senator SHAHEEN. Well, thank you, Mr. Chairman.

I want to begin with you, Mr. Crawford, because as I am sure all of us have been following, the outcome of Brexit will have a direct impact on what happens with Ireland and whether there needs to be a hardened border between Ireland and Northern Ireland. I visited there when I was Governor, and we visited both Ireland and Northern Ireland. And I can remember going across that border at the time. And there were actually checkpoints. So you knew that you were going across.

So can you talk about how we should engage in the cross-border efforts to ensure continued peace and trade relations between Ireland and whatever happens with the outcome of Brexit?

Mr. CRAWFORD. Senator, it is unfortunate we have two of our closest allies, EU and UK, in this situation. It has been going on well over a year, results that were not anticipated. What is very important about this is also it has affected Ireland in very strange ways.

But this is something I believe has to be settled by the two parties most concerned, and that is the EU and the UK. Westminster—they have to work to solve this problem. I think our involvement in it is, from my viewpoint, steadfast that we should let them work this problem out themselves.

Senator SHAHEEN. Do you not think we should weigh in publicly in a way that suggests that we hope they will work it out and urge them to do that so that they understand clearly that we think that is in everyone's best interest?

Mr. CRAWFORD. Well, I think they realize it is in their best interests because we have made it very clear that we are behind the agreement. We have said that is where we stand. I think that is representative. I am not a diplomat. I am only a person that has limited information.

Senator SHAHEEN. You are about to be a diplomat if you get confirmed. So it will be very important to——

Mr. CRAWFORD. Yes. But have I answered your question?

Senator SHAHEEN. I think I would say I hope that if you are confirmed, that you will make it very clear that we support the Good Friday Agreements and that that should be maintained as part of any Brexit deal.

Mr. CRAWFORD. Yes, I will do that.

Senator SHAHEEN. Thank you.

Ms. Byrnes, you mentioned in your opening statement forces that are trying to continue to sow dissent within the Republic of North Macedonia in its efforts to look West towards the EU and NATO.

One of those countries that we have heard from, of course, is Russia. They tried to engineer a coup in Montenegro before it joined NATO. They have continued to sow dissent in other parts of the Western Balkans.

So can you talk about what efforts you could encourage as Ambassador that could help address those concerns?

Ms. BYRNES. Thank you, Senator, for that question.

As you note, Russia does not share the same vision of Western integration that we hold and is one held by the people of North Macedonia. They do seek to create divisions and distrust. They were actively opposing the Prespa Agreement. They have been vocal in their opposition to North Macedonia's accession to NATO, often misrepresenting the facts. The embassy in Skopje worked very hard to present the truth, to present those facts, to work closely with the media, that it would be free and fair in reporting on that.

If confirmed, I would like to continue those efforts to make sure that we speak the truth, that we support independent media and civil society voices that speak the truth, and also that we make very clear that our aspirations match those of the people of North Macedonia, that we are in alignment in that respect, and that what we are seeking is not only in U.S. strategic interests but in the strategic interests of the country and the region.

Thank you.

Senator SHAHEEN. Well, thank you.

And I would like to applaud Prime Minister Zaev and Prime Minister Tsipras for their willingness to take stands that were difficult for them to reach an agreement. I think in the long term, it is going to be in the best interests of both countries.

Mr. Satterfield, obviously, Turkey has been an important ally but one where we have seen backsliding with respect to democracy. As we discussed when you were in my office, they have the highest number of reporters imprisoned of any country in the world. They have just had recent elections that are now being contested by President Erdogan's party.

So what should be the response of the United States and the embassy if President Erdogan is allowed to manipulate Istanbul's elec-

tion results and is able to get an entirely new election? How do you think we should respond?

Ambassador SATTERFIELD. Senator, I will not comment, of course, on the hypothetical. But I will tell you what our position is right now and will continue be.

Senator SHAHEEN. Good.

Ambassador SATTERFIELD. A free, fair, and transparent electoral process is a fundamental pillar of any democracy. Turkey is a democracy. We look to that pillar. We look to that transparent process to be fully respected by all involved so that the will of those who went to the polls is acknowledged in terms of the results. We will be watching this as it unfolds over the days ahead very closely.

Senator SHAHEEN. Thank you.

I was pleased to hear in your opening statement that you mentioned not just Pastor Brunson, who I think was released because of the whole-of-government approach, the bipartisan effort that involved both Congress and the administration to try and pressure and urge Turkey to release him. And I was pleased to hear you talk about the other American citizens and the diplomatic officials who are currently in jail.

Can you talk about what more you might be able to do as Ambassador to urge Turkey to release those citizens and also any Turkish citizens that are being improperly jailed?

Ambassador SATTERFIELD. Senator, we made very clear by our physical presence in the court proceedings for those who are part of our mission in Turkey and for our public engagement—indeed, the public engagement, not just the administration, executive branch, but also of this body and of the House—in registering that this is an important relationship for us with Turkey. But it is a relationship that can only flourish as it might if there is full respect, not just for democratic principles and practices in Turkey with respect to Turkish citizens, but also, of course, with respect to American citizens.

Senator SHAHEEN. Thank you.

Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Senator JOHNSON. Senator Portman?

Senator PORTMAN. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

So, Mr. Crawford, sometimes we have nominees come before us and they have not had much opportunity to visit the countries they are being selected for and, therefore, do not have familiarity with the people and the customs of those countries.

Can you just talk briefly about any trips you have made to Ireland and any familiarity you have with Ireland?

Mr. CRAWFORD. I have been to Ireland many, many times. Again, my mother and father were both born there, and I have lots of first cousins.

I have been active there in the past in a small business down in Cork City. It employs 17 people. It is a distribution business. So I have had some contact with the working persons or people. Again, my experience in building our company has given me the tools I believe to understand really the Irish, and if there is any change in this Brexit situation, I think I am able and will be able to contact and get along with the Irish leadership, as well as the Irish people. And I think I can be a very positive, positive force for the goal,

which is to make the relationship stronger between Ireland and America.

I have an industrial background and a manufacturing background, but I also have a business background. And it is very important to Ireland and to America that we increase the trade to make this thing a better relationship between the two countries. And I think some of the background I have—but I love Ireland. It is a great place, and I think I can play an important role there because of my background but my ability to bring some things to the table that will help enhance the relationship between America and Ireland.

Senator PORTMAN. Excellent. Well, thank you. I think you are right. I said earlier the Irish want you too. I mean, the Irish were looking for an ambassador, and they have been very pleased to have you step up.

So, Ms. Byrnes, first of all, thank you to you and to your husband, a Navy fighter pilot, who is hanging out behind you there, for your service to our country.

And you have had some really interesting roles. You are going to a fascinating country at a time when it is, although a small country, really a microcosm of what is happening all throughout Eastern and Central Europe with regard to Russia. And specifically the two issues that I want to talk to about briefly are the dependency that they have on natural gas from Russia, and second is the referendum and what might happen with regard to the NATO ascendancy.

With regard to the first question, it seems to me you have an opportunity while you are there to be sure that Russia does not do to Northern Macedonia what they have done to other countries in Eastern and Central Europe, which is to use their leverage by withholding access to natural gas unless certain other priorities of Russia were met and therefore enhancing their opportunity to receive other supplies.

Have you thought about that, and specifically what would you do as Ambassador to encourage them to look to the West and maybe even to the United States for LNG?

Ms. BYRNES. Thank you, Senator.

As you note, North Macedonia does need to diversify its energy sources and routes. It also needs to develop a competitive, efficient, and transparent energy market and then to integrate its energy market into the region.

Right now, there is only one pipeline for gas, and the gas comes from Russia, as you note. There is a projected project to build an interconnector with Greece that would allow North Macedonia not only to diversify its supplies but also to perhaps gasify other parts of the country that do not have that situation right now.

Another opportunity is in the energy sector as a result of a new energy law. With USAID assistance, the government passed a new energy law that will bring it in line with EU directives, including the common third energy package.

We are also looking to support efforts to reform the energy market through an incentive scheme, and if confirmed, I would like to continue that work not only to create opportunities for the private sector to fully engage there but, in fact, to engage some U.S. com-

panies hopefully in bidding on some of those renewable energy projects.

Senator PORTMAN. That is terrific. And I think that is an appropriate role for an ambassador to try to encourage them to look to the West.

On the Prespa Agreement and the referendum on it last year, the Russians did what they have done in so many elections, including our own, and that is attempt, through disinformation and propaganda, to try to change the result. They were not successful. But it was certainly an eye-opener for a lot of smaller countries in the region.

Are you aware of the Global Engagement Center at the State Department?

Ms. BYRNES. Yes, Senator, I am aware of the Global Engagement Center. And in my current capacity in Greece, we have worked on some proposals with them.

Senator PORTMAN. Excellent. I am glad to hear that. We have been promoting this for the last several years, and we think it is part of the answer to provide a pushback and have the U.S. government help countries like North Macedonia be able to respond. So I assume you would be looking to them for some guidance as to how you could push back against that disinformation coming from Russia.

Ms. BYRNES. Senator, yes. Thank you.

I have already looked into possibilities for North Macedonia so that, if I were confirmed, I would be able to continue those projects, as well as projects that would help the broader region, so have the countries in the Western Balkans, including in Southeast Europe, working together to combat Russian misinformation and develop media that can provide an alternative source of information.

Senator PORTMAN. Thank you.

Mr. Satterfield, you are going into also a very interesting situation. Turkey persists in acquiring this Russian S–400 system. I think it is impossible for us to continue with the F–35 contract. I hate to see us begin to distance ourselves further from Turkey because it is such a critical country and in the past it has been such a critical ally.

How do you approach that issue? How would you effectively try to get the Turks to see that it is in their interests to align not just with us, with NATO and with NATO compatibility?

Ambassador SATTERFIELD. Senator, what we do is what the President, the Vice President, the Secretary of State Acting Secretary Shanahan, what all of you here in the Congress have done, which is to message the Turkish government at the highest levels in public and privately in the clearest possible terms that if they proceed with the acquisition of the S–400, then they will not be able to participate in the F–35 program, the program itself or receipt of the F–35 platforms, that there will be no Patriot sale if they acquire the S–400. That message has been reinforced as clearly as it can be. It needs to continue to be reinforced. This would be a very unwise step from the immediate and a long-term perspective were the Turks, indeed, to go ahead with this decision. But we are doing everything in our power at every level available to us to make quite clear what the consequences are but also what the al-

ternative is, which is an extraordinarily attractive proposal for the Patriot sale.

Senator PORTMAN. And broader compatibility with NATO. Correct?

Ambassador SATTERFIELD. And, of course, absolute compatibility with NATO.

Senator PORTMAN. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Senator JOHNSON. Senator Menendez?

Senator MENENDEZ. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Congratulations to all of the nominees and your families.

Ambassador Satterfield, I was disappointed that you had to cancel your meeting with me, which I would have looked forward to going through a series of things. So I came to the hearing to ask you them.

Let me start off with do you acknowledge that from 1915 to 1923, nearly 1.5 million Armenian men, women, and children were killed by the Ottoman Empire?

Ambassador SATTERFIELD. We are certainly aware, Senator, of the facts of that atrocity.

Senator MENENDEZ. So you acknowledge it. Is that correct?

Ambassador SATTERFIELD. Yes, sir.

Senator MENENDEZ. And do you acknowledge it as a genocide?

Ambassador SATTERFIELD. Senator, the President has stated this is one of the most horrific atrocities in the 20th century, and I will abide by those remarks.

Senator MENENDEZ. It undoubtedly is an atrocity. The question is, is it a genocide?

Ambassador SATTERFIELD. Those remarks stand as a reflection of the U.S. government's position, sir.

Senator MENENDEZ. All right. So you will not tell me it is a genocide.

Let me ask you this. Do you acknowledge that in 1915, the allied powers of England, France, and Russia jointly issued a statement explicitly charging for the first time ever another government of committing crimes against humanity and civilization?

Ambassador SATTERFIELD. I am a historian, sir, and well aware of the events at that time.

Senator MENENDEZ. So you acknowledge that fact.

Do you acknowledge that Henry Morgenthau, the United States Ambassador to the Ottoman Empire at the time, said that the Turkish government's deportation order for the Armenians was, quote, a death warrant to a whole race and in a way in which they made no particular attempt to conceal their discussions with him?

Ambassador SATTERFIELD. I am aware of that quote, sir.

Senator MENENDEZ. So this is an inartful dance that we do as a nation in which we do not recognize the historical fact that even the U.S. Holocaust Museum, which is a quasi-governmental entity, acknowledges the facts of the Armenian genocide, but we are incapable of mouthing the comments of an Armenian genocide. And we cannot ultimately move to the future if we cannot recognize the past as a simple reality.

And so I just bring to your attention that Senator Cruz, a member of this committee, and I, along with others, have introduced a resolution to ensure the foreign policy of the United States reflects

appropriately the understanding and sensitivity and the reality of what was an Armenian genocide. And I commend it to your attention.

Let me turn to the S–400. You spoke about this quite a bit. I appreciate your comments, but it is my hope—and, Mr. Chairman, I would like to include in the record an op-ed that the chair and ranking member of this committee, myself, and Senator Risch, along with the chair and the ranking member of the Senate Armed Services Committee wrote together, Senator Inhofe and Senator Reed, in which basically we say Turkey must choose. I would like it to be included in the record at this time.

Senator JOHNSON. Without objection.

[The material referred to above follows:]

The New York Times—April 9, 2019

A U.S. FIGHTER JET OR A RUSSIAN MISSLE SYSTEM, NOT BOTH

BY JIM INHOFE, JACK REED, JIM RISCH, AND BOB MENENDEZ[1]

If Turkey accepts delivery of a Russian S-400 missle system, sanctions will be required by American Law.

By the end of the year, Turkey will have either F-35 advanced fighter aircraft on its soil or a Russian S-400 surface-to-air missile defense system. It will not have both.

The choice made by President Recep Tayyip Erdogan of Turkey will have profound consequences for his country's place in the world, its relationship with the United States and its standing in NATO.

The F-35 program is the world's largest fifth-generation fighter aircraft program, with more than a trillion dollars in investment from a dozen international partners, including Turkey, and customers. In large part, the ability of the United States and its allies to maintain a military advantage in the skies is riding on the program.

In July 2017, Turkey announced that it would purchase the S-400 surface-to-air missile defense system from Russia. The S-400 is the most advanced system produced to date in Russia's quest to defeat stealth technology—the system Russia built to shoot down the F-35 fighters.

Turkey's purchase of the S-400 would be incompatible with its commitments to NATO and reduce its interoperability with allies. Purchasing the S-400 would create an unacceptable risk because its radar system could enable the Russian military to figure out how the F-35 operates. That threat compelled the Pentagon to suspend some activities associated with Turkey's F-35s last week.

Turkey has legitimate air defense needs. The United States, since 2012, has offered the Patriot air defense system as an alternative to the S-400, but Turkey has rejected that offer. With the S-400 scheduled to arrive in Turkey in July and the F-35s scheduled to arrive in November, it is time for President Erdogan to choose. It is our hope he will choose to abandon the S-400, defend Turkish skies with the Patriot system and save the F-35 arrangement.

If President Erdogan fails to make this choice and accepts delivery of the S-400, sanctions will be imposed as required by United States law under the Countering America's Adversaries Through Sanctions Act. Sanctions will hit Turkey's economy hard—rattling international markets, scaring away foreign direct investment and crippling Turkey's aerospace and defense industry.

Further, no F-35s will ever reach Turkish soil. And Turkish participation in the F-35 program, including manufacturing parts, repairing and servicing the fighters, will be terminated, taking Turkish companies out of the manufacturing and supply chain for the program.

[1] Mr. Inhofe and Mr. Reed are the chairman and ranking member of the Senate Armed Services Committee. Mr. Risch and Mr. Menendez are the chairman and ranking member of the Senate Foreign Relations Committee.

We are committed to taking all necessary legislative action to ensure this is the case. Turkey is an important partner in the F-35 program, but it is not irreplaceable.

Abandoning the F-35 will have severe consequences for Ankara. Turkey has already invested more than $1.25 billion in the F-35 program, and that will be squandered. It will not receive the more than 100 F-35s it planned to purchase, and it will be forced to settle for a less-capable fighter aircraft that will not arrive for many years.

Turkish companies that produce parts for the F-35 will see their orders dry up completely. The country's F-35 engine maintenance, repair, overhaul and upgrade facility will see all its work go to other facilities in Europe. President Erdogan's hope to make the Turkish defense industry a pillar of economic growth for the future will be dashed.

We do not seek to harm our Turkish friends. Indeed, we hope it will be possible to enhance American-Turkish cooperation on Syria, the Black Sea, counterterrorism and other issues of mutual concern. We seek only to protect the F-35 program and the capabilities of the NATO alliance, including allies like Turkey.

We understand that Turkey has a relationship of necessity with Russia—on Syria, energy, agriculture, tourism and more. If President Erdogan walks away from the S-400, Mr. Putin may retaliate in one or more of these areas. In that unfortunate event, we commit to do all we can to assist Turkey as it weathers the storm.

Paying tribute to the Kremlin with the purchase of the S-400 is not in Turkey's interests. Mr. Putin is not an ally of Turkey any more than the Soviets or the czars. His aggression in Georgia, Ukraine and Syria has made Turkey less safe. Now Mr. Putin is trying to divide Turkey from the West with the S-400s.

If he succeeds, what little regard he has for Turkey's interests will shrink further. The more isolated Turkey is from its allies, the more power Mr. Putin will have in the relationship: Russia does what it can, Turkey suffers what it must.

Mr. Putin fears and respects a Turkey strategically anchored in the West and committed to NATO. We hope President Erdogan will choose that future for Turkey by rejecting Mr. Putin's divisive S-400 ploy, meeting its air defense requirement with the Patriot system and moving forward as a critical partner in the F-35 program.

Senator MENENDEZ. I hope that President Erdogan clearly understands that the U.S. is not bluffing. I helped write CAATSA. It is not a question of if. It is a question that it will face sanctions. And if it does, which I do not seek, it is going to hit the Turkish economy hard. It is going to rattle international markets. It is going to scare away foreign direct investment. It is going to cripple Turkey's aerospace and defense industry. So I expect that I can rely upon you, if you are confirmed, to make it very sure to President Erdogan that he understands the risks and the implication of this deal in an unvarnished way.

Ambassador SATTERFIELD. Without question, sir.

Senator MENENDEZ. Let me turn to the question of democratic backsliding in Turkey. I am alarmed by the rapid and sharp decline of human rights in Turkey. It is leading the world in the most jailed journalists. Recently Human Rights Watch reported Turkey is arbitrarily jailing hundreds of lawyers. Now that is something that I expect from oppressive regimes like Tajikistan. I do not expect it from a NATO ally.

Your written testimony makes note of this trajectory, which is a good starting point. But what will you do specifically to engage the government of Turkey to reverse this trend, if confirmed?

Ambassador SATTERFIELD. Senator, the U.S. mission in Turkey—all of our posts—have, in their average in their contacts and their physical presence at certain proceedings, registered very clearly the

United States supports a very different vision of how rights and liberties should be practiced in any democracy, including in Turkey. We have not hesitated to speak directly about our concerns to the most senior members of the Turkish government, and I assure you, if confirmed, I will continue to do so, as will the mission in Turkey.

Senator MENENDEZ. This is a less of a question but more of a rejoinder to something you said that I agree with. Turkey continues to detain a U.S. citizen and embassy employees. And I appreciate in your written testimony that you underlined, if confirmed, you will be clear with the government of Turkey this is unacceptable and to urge swift and fair resolution. Bogus charges against an essentially hostage taking of a U.S. citizen and mission employs is not what we expect of a NATO ally. And they should be very clear in understanding that this is another irritant in our relationship. You do not take our people and arbitrarily and capriciously jail them at the end of the day and use them as hostages. It is just not acceptable anywhere in the world, and it is certainly not acceptable of a NATO ally.

Let me turn to Mr. Crawford. Mr. Crawford, Tom Quinn is a pain in the neck.

Mr. CRAWFORD. I agree.

Senator MENENDEZ. There we go.

[Laughter.]

Senator MENENDEZ. So we can agree on a little Irish humor there.

So if he came to me one more time about your nomination, you might have never had a hearing at the rate he was going. But I am glad you are here today.

And I just want to say I have been involved in Irish issues for a long time in the 27 years I have been in Congress. I was one of the leaders or the ad hoc Irish Caucus in the House of Representatives. We got Bill Clinton to give Gerry Adams his first visa to the United States to move away from the gun and the bomb and to follow a path of peace that ultimately led to the Good Friday Accords.

And so there is a lot at stake here beyond the economic realities that we have with Ireland. There is a lot at stake if in fact we do not have a resolution, a good resolution as it relates to Brexit. So I hope that you will be committed to making sure that we solidify, whatever happens, the resolution of the Good Friday Accords, the commitment to our efforts for peace and justice in Northern Ireland. Do I have that commitment from you?

Mr. CRAWFORD. Yes, I will.

Senator MENENDEZ. And I hope that you will commit to me that you will, in fact, meet before you leave to Ireland, if confirmed, with American civil society leadership here.

Mr. CRAWFORD. Yes, I will.

Senator MENENDEZ. And finally, I ask you to maintain a direct line with me as Ireland moves through this potentially tumultuous period of time. Do I have that commitment from you?

Mr. CRAWFORD. Yes. I would appreciate that opportunity.

Senator MENENDEZ. Thank you very much.

Ms. Byrnes, I have questions for you, but since I am going to see you in Greece, I will ask you there. But I will submit them for the

record. But primarily I want to know how you will be involved in following up on the accords that were reached in order to perform what we hope for Macedonia. I appreciate your career service.

Senator JOHNSON. Senator Kaine?

Senator KAINE. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

And thanks to the witnesses. Congratulations to Ambassador Satterfield and you, Ms. Byrnes, for a good longstanding careers of service in the State Department. And to you, Mr. Crawford, congratulations on the nomination. With your family background, I know your family is particularly proud of this and they ought to be.

My questions, Ambassador Satterfield, are mostly going to be for you. Other questions have been asked that I was going to. I really want to talk to you about the Kurds.

So I sort of want to understand—and you have such expertise—sort of the set of equities and issues between the Turkish government and the Kurds. So in Turkey, there is a sizable Kurdish population. Turkey has dealt with terrorist incidents by some Kurds, but there are massive amounts of the Kurdish population that is peaceful. There are Kurdish representatives in the Turkish national legislature. I worry that sometimes in the effort to go after terrorist activities, Kurds more generally have been targeted who are peaceful, who are exercising their right in a democracy to form their own political parties and have representation.

Then we get to the situation of the Kurds in northern Syria. The U.S. has partnered well with the Kurds to defeat ISIS. That has been incredibly important. That partnership has been a real flashpoint of tension between the United States and Turkey. I am on the Armed Services Committee as well. Every time we have hearings with either CENTCOM or EUCOM regional commands and we talk about Turkey and we talk about Syria, we are always told this is one of the toughest issues that they are trying to resolve, how to maintain a military alliance with Turkey, that NATO membership, the use of the air base in Adana that has been helpful to us in campaigning against ISIS. But the Turks have been very, very distraught over the relationships that we have had with the Kurds in northern Syria.

So I was wondering if you could talk a little bit about domestic Turkish politics and the Kurds and the way we should understand what Turkey's legitimate concerns are and then possibly illegitimate, and then what you might do on the diplomatic front to work with our military leadership over the issue of the U.S. alliance with Kurds in northern Syria.

Ambassador SATTERFIELD. Senator, with respect to the domestic Kurdish issue, Turkey does, indeed, have a legitimate concern over terror from the PKK. Like Turkey, we regard the PKK as a foreign terrorist organization. And we have partnered with Turkey. We continue to partner with Turkey at many different levels and in an operational sense against that terrorist organization and their targeting of innocent Turks throughout the country.

We have welcomed Turkish efforts to integrate their Kurdish community as a whole into Turkish society, to respect and regard Turkish culture as part of Turkey in a broad sense, and positive steps have, indeed, been taken in that regard.

But when it comes to the PKK and terror, we are in exactly the same position. There are quite legitimate Turkish concerns.

To pivot to the Syrian issue, the mission of Jim Jeffrey that has gone on now for the past several months is to try to achieve several objectives in northeast Syria, along the Turkish border, and in partnership with both the Turkish government and also in consultation with Syrian Democratic Forces, which are largely but not entirely Kurdish in their makeup.

The objectives of that mission are several, but one of them is the protection of those partners who fought and died with and for us in the campaign against the caliphate and continue to engage in what we might call the enduring campaign for the enduring defeat of ISIS in northeast Syria. Now, that is a critical objective, and it can only be established in conjunction with negotiations with the Turks over how their legitimate security needs along that border, that long fraught border can best be done.

And I would praise the Turkish government, its national security leadership because they have given the time and the space to Ambassador Jeffrey to proceed with these negotiations. And I will not in this forum go into greater detail, but I certainly think the ability to achieve a success, which meets all of the U.S. goals, protection of our partners in the SDF, the avoidance of a vacuum in northeast Syria into which, with certainty, Russia, Iran, and the Syrian regime would promptly move, the continuation of stabilization efforts and the enduring campaign against ISIS—all of those goals can be achieved. We hope they will be achieved in the near future.

Senator KAINE. Thank you for that. And I think that will be a significant part of your work because it is certainly a military effort, but it is probably more diplomatic than it is defense or military. And I think that will be an important part of your work.

One other question about Turkey. There has been reporting in the last few years that the administration has contemplated, possibly in connection with the return of Pastor Brunson or another instance just independently, the return of the cleric, Gulen, who is a U.S. resident to Turkey pursuant to the requests of the Turkish government. I am sure I know the answer to this question, the way you are going to answer.

My sense is we are a nation of laws not men. There are laws about extradition that if evidence is presented to the United States about anyone that is sufficient for them to be extradited somewhere because they need to face responsibility in a lawful manner for their actions, that we will follow extradition laws. But we are not in the business of handing people over if there has not been a demonstration that is sufficient for extradition. And that has been my understanding of the sort of legal position of this matter, the controversy with Cleric Gulen. And I just want to understand if you agree with it as I have stated it.

Ambassador SATTERFIELD. Senator, you have quite accurately stated our position. We have requirements to meet judicial sufficiency standards under U.S. law. We welcome the provision from the government of Turkey, as we would with any government with whom we have an extradition treaty, material that can contribute to a finding of that sufficiency. And we are continuing to engage the Turks and to ask for any additional information they may have.

Senator KAINE. Great. Thank you.

I have no further questions, Mr. Chair. Thanks.

Senator JOHNSON. Thank you, Senator Kaine.

Ambassador Satterfield, I want to kind of follow up again the situation in Syria. Again, I do not really want to ask a hypothetical, but what is your assessment in terms of the long-term commitment of some type of coalition force in that buffer zone in order to protect the PDF to provide the kind of stability? Is that going to require, I mean, years and years and years?

Ambassador SATTERFIELD. Senator, your question really breaks into two different parts. The first is the ability to have a coalition. We do have a coalition. There are other boots on the ground apart from U.S. boots. There are today and we very much believe there will be looking through the rest of this year and into the future. That coalition, that ability to sustain those other boots on the ground, is very much dependent on there being U.S. boots on the ground, not in large numbers. That is not a requirement. But a U.S. presence is an essential component as we hear from our coalition partners.

How long does this campaign go on? I spoke with Senator Kaine on the enduring character of the efforts to achieve the lasting defeat, the permanent defeat of ISIS. I would speak that way in terms of Iraq. I certainly would speak that way in terms of northeast Syria. And I cannot give you a time limit, a terminus ad quem, to that campaign. ISIS is powerful. Its physical caliphate has been defeated. I cannot color a map anymore and show you towns held by ISIS, but I assure you in northeast Syria, as well as in northern Iraq. ISIS as a brand, as a coherent entity with funding and with arms, continues to be a challenge and a threat, and that will require coherent strategically patient sustained engagement to defeat.

Senator JOHNSON. Those of us that were over at the Munich conference—we heard that loud and clear from coalition partners that it required a U.S. presence. And a bunch of us were rather vocal publicly in terms of supporting that U.S. presence.

Do you envision a point in time, though, where things stabilize to the point where other coalition partners can take that up and not necessarily have U.S. presence? Or do you really think it is going to require that long-term?

Ambassador SATTERFIELD. We would very much like to see exactly the goal you just described, Mr. Chairman, achieved. That is a situation where stabilization efforts could have proceeded to the point where it is not necessary to have U.S. boots on the ground, at least in a dwell status, and that others can take on this burden. That has been the whole thrust of our policy for the past year and a half.

Senator JOHNSON. It is good to hear that would be the goal.

Ms. Byrnes, because you are serving in Athens, you have seen—and now you are going over to North Macedonia. You have seen both sides of that really—you know, the Prespa Agreement—to those of us in America, if you take a look at that, and you go this is a dispute over a name? Can you talk about really how deep-seated that problem was and the political courage it took on the leaders on both sides of those to reach that agreement?

Ms. BYRNES. Thank you, Senator.

As you note, this was an extremely difficult process on both sides of the border for both countries. North Macedonia has been unable to pursue its path towards Euro-Atlantic integration for years because of the failure to reach an agreement on the name issue.

What the leaders in both Skopje and Athens did, in terms of coming together and working over a long period of time to come to an agreement, to show that kind of political courage and vision, and to focus on the future rather than on the past, was a tremendous diplomatic achievement. We encouraged that effort. We supported the leaders. Obviously, it was a U.N.-facilitated process, but it was really the leaders in both capitals that made that commitment and then were able to deliver on what has been the historic agreement and we think one that will bring great stability to the broader region.

Senator JOHNSON. It is my hope that success will breed success. We saw Kosovo and Montenegro resolve their border dispute, and now we have seen Greece and North Macedonia resolve that. Next up, Serbia, Kosovo, a far more difficult problem.

One of my concerns is we take a look at Brexit and the EU, the EU probably not anytime soon looking at adding membership. But as you are well aware, in North Macedonia, the ascension to, the aspiring to, be it NATO or be it EU, leads to all kinds of positive reforms. It is actually the desire of their population that actually provides the political support to do the tough reforms that otherwise would not be possible.

Can you just talk a little bit about another path? Obviously, I will do everything I can to make sure that North Macedonia—you know, we confirm that ascension here in the United States Senate. But just talk about other nations that aspire for this type of membership, what those paths could be.

Ms. BYRNES. Thank you.

What I would say—and I thank you, first of all, for your support in this process because North Macedonia will need our support as it moves forward in both processes.

With NATO accession, there are clear standards of membership that relate not only to the security contributions that North Macedonia would make as a future NATO ally, but the way that it organizes its security sector and its intelligence reform. So this has been a major focus not only of North Macedonia's government for some time, but of our U.S. assistance and support and coordination of that.

We look forward to, hopefully, a very positive decision in June from the EU to begin the accession negotiations with North Macedonia. That begins a process of opening and closing chapters that will help with the reform process both by providing the framework, but also the impetus for moving some of those reforms not just to passing the laws, but then to actually implementing them and seeing real change on the ground.

And it is important for the people in the country, to see positive benefits of that cooperation soon. So the sooner that they can get started on that process—and again, our assistance is intended to coordinate not only with the efforts of the government of North

Macedonia but our EU allies and NATO partners to make sure that we are all coordinating towards that effort.

Senator JOHNSON. Mr. Crawford, as a business person, you understand the importance of tax rates. And from my standpoint—I am sure this could be disputed, but I think one of the successes of the Ireland economy is they have recognized the fact that you want to keep business tax rates quite low. As a result, that has attracted an awful lot of investment. But that has also been an irritant to Ireland's trading partners.

Can you just comment on that a little bit?

Mr. CRAWFORD. Ireland's lower tax rate that is in place today—I do not really believe I have enough information available to me of quality to be able to give you an opinion on the currencies in that particular issue because it is very, very complicated. The currencies keep changing all around Europe. Brexit has put pressure on this whole situation. But clearly, if I am confirmed, I am going to support the current laws around it and support the business as it stands. And then people with more responsibility and more authority and more information will change the rules, and I will play by those rules.

Senator JOHNSON. Fair enough.

Any other member have further questions?

[No response.]

Senator JOHNSON. Well, then with that, again I want to congratulate the nominees for being nominated. Thank you for your past service. Thank you for your willingness to serve. I want to thank the families as well.

Ambassador Satterfield, Ms. Byrnes, I certainly recognize you have already experienced that sacrifice. Mr. Crawford, you might as well. These are important positions and it is a family level of service and sacrifice. So, again, thank you all very much for your service and for appearing before our committee today.

The hearing record will remain open for statements or questions until the close of business on Friday, April 12th.

The hearing is adjourned.

[Whereupon, at 3:36 p.m., the hearing was adjourned.]

Additional Material Submitted for the Record

RESPONSES TO ADDITIONAL QUESTIONS FOR THE RECORD
SUBMITTED TO EDWARD CRAWFORD BY SENATOR ROBERT MENENDEZ

Question. Do I have your commitment, if confirmed, to maintain a direct line with me as Ireland moves through this potentially tumultuous period?

Answer. Yes. If confirmed, I look forward to engaging with you and other members of the Senate and the House.

Question. If confirmed, do I have your commitment to meet with Irish American civil society leadership here before you leave for Dublin?

Answer. If confirmed, I plan to meet with Irish American civil society leadership.

Question. What are the top U.S. policy interests as it relates to Brexit?

Answer. The United States supports a Brexit outcome that maintains global economic and financial stability, minimizes disruption to Transatlantic commercial and

security ties, preserves the gains of the Good Friday Agreement in Northern Ireland, and allows sufficient British autonomy to negotiate an ambitious U.S.-UK trade agreement.

Question. In the event that the UK crashes out of the EU, what will your priorities be as Ambassador to Ireland, if confirmed, with respect to the fallout from Brexit?

Answer. If confirmed, I would work with the Irish government, as one of the coguarantors of the Good Friday Agreement, to ensure 21 years of gains in the peace process are safeguarded and to ensure that Transatlantic security, stability, and prosperity are maintained.

Question. What are the most important actions you have taken in your career to date to support democracy and human rights? What has been the impact of your actions?

Answer. A cornerstone of my business philosophy is building companies that are part of communities. Whether that company is in Cleveland or Japan, the companies I build create jobs and opportunities for communities. Employees of my companies are always treated with respect and dignity. I am proud of the relationships we have with our employees and their families and grateful to serve the communities where we operate.

Question. What issues are the most pressing challenges to democracy or democratic development in Ireland? These challenges might include obstacles to participatory and accountable governance and institutions, rule of law, authentic political competition, civil society, human rights and press freedom. Please be as specific as possible.

Answer. Ireland has strong democratic institutions. However, the 2018 U.S. Country Report on Human Rights Practices in Ireland noted societal discrimination and violence against immigrants and racial and ethnic minorities remained a problem. If confirmed, I will engage with Irish authorities and civil society to promote tolerance and nondiscrimination.

Question. What steps will you take—if confirmed—to support democracy in Ireland? What do you hope to accomplish through these actions? What are the potential impediments to addressing the specific obstacles you have identified?

Answer. If confirmed, my team at the Embassy in Dublin would continue to engage Irish officials at all levels of government in support of tolerance and nondiscrimination. Through the International Visitors Leadership Program and other exchange programs, Irish citizens with aspirations to serve in government and other elements of civil society travel to the United States and meet with Americans engaging in similar work to share best practices and develop relationships that will last throughout their careers. If confirmed, I would further these efforts with the goal of addressing the issues raised in the 2018 U.S. Country Report on Human Rights Practices in Ireland. This effort will need to involve engagement with both the Irish government as well as members of civil society.

Question. Do you agree that any targeting of or retaliation against career employees based on their perceived political beliefs, prior work on policy, or affiliation with a previous administration, is wholly inappropriate and has no place in the federal government? If confirmed, what will you do to ensure that all employees under your leadership understand that any retaliation, blacklisting, or other prohibited personnel practices will not be tolerated?

Answer. Yes. If confirmed, I would ensure my employees abide by U.S. law, as well as the Department's rules and regulations.

Question. Has anyone ever made a formal or informal complaint or allegation of sexual harassment, discrimination (e.g., racial, ethnic, religious, etc.), or inappropriate conduct against you, in a workplace or any other setting? If so, please describe the nature of the complaint or allegation, your response, and any resolution, including any settlements.

Answer. I have never had a formal or informal complaint or allegation of sexual harassment, discrimination, or inappropriate conduct raised against me.

Question. Have you ever addressed concerns or allegations of sexual harassment, discrimination (e.g., racial, ethnic, religious, etc.), or inappropriate conduct made against any employee over whom you had supervisory authority? If so, please describe the outcome and actions taken.

Answer. I am not aware of any formal or informal concerns or allegations of sexual harassment, discrimination, or inappropriate conduct made against any em-

ployee over whom I have had supervisory authority. Park-Ohio Holdings and its operating subsidiaries are engaged in heavy manufacturing around the world, employing over 6,000 people. The companies are involved in routine civil litigation and administrative proceedings involving employment matters. These routine matters are handled by other senior executives without my involvement.

RESPONSES TO ADDITIONAL QUESTIONS FOR THE RECORD SUBMITTED TO EDWARD CRAWFORD BY SENATOR BENJAMIN L. CARDIN

Question. What are your most meaningful achievements to date in your career to promote human rights and democracy? What has been the impact of your actions?

Answer. A cornerstone of my business philosophy is building companies that are part of communities. Whether that company is in Cleveland or Japan, the companies I build create jobs and opportunities for communities. Employees of my companies are always treated with respect and dignity. I am proud of the relationships we have with our employees and their families and grateful to serve the communities where we operate.

Question. What are the most pressing human rights issues in Ireland? What are the most important steps you expect to take—if confirmed—to promote human rights and democracy in Ireland? What do you hope to accomplish through these actions?

Answer. Ireland has a strong human rights record. However, the 2018 U.S. Country Report on Human Rights Practices in Ireland noted societal discrimination and violence against immigrants and racial and ethnic minorities remained a problem. If confirmed, I will engage with Irish authorities and civil society and encourage cooperation to promote tolerance and nondiscrimination.

Question. If confirmed, what are the potential obstacles to addressing the specific human rights issues you have identified in your previous response? What challenges will you face in Ireland in advancing human rights, civil society and democracy in general?

Answer. If confirmed, I and my team at the Embassy in Dublin would continue to engage Irish officials at all levels of government, as well as civil society to promote tolerance and nondiscrimination. Through the International Visitors Leadership Program and other exchange programs, Irish citizens with aspirations to serve in government and other elements of civil society travel to the United States and meet with Americans engaging in similar work to share best practices and develop relationships that will last throughout their careers. If confirmed, I would further these efforts with the goal of addressing the issues raised in the 2018 U.S. Country Report on Human Rights Practices in Ireland. This effort will need to involve engagement with both the Irish government as well as members of civil society.

Question. Are you committed to meeting with human rights, civil society and other non-governmental organizations in the U.S. and with local human rights NGOs in Ireland? If confirmed, what steps will you take to pro-actively support the Leahy Law and similar efforts, and ensure that provisions of U.S. security assistance and security cooperation activities reinforce human rights?

Answer. Yes. If confirmed, I will engage with civil society and non-governmental organizations both in the United States and in Ireland on a range of human rights and other issues of mutual interest. I will also ensure all the required vetting is carried out for any security assistance and security cooperation activities.

Question. Will you and your embassy team actively engage with Ireland to address cases of key political prisoners or persons otherwise unjustly targeted by Ireland?

Answer. Yes.

Question. Will you engage with Ireland on matters of human rights, civil rights and governance as part of your bilateral mission?

Answer. Yes.

Question. Do you commit to bring to the committee's attention (and the State Department Inspector General) any change in policy or U.S. actions that you suspect may be influenced by any of the President's business or financial interests, or the business or financial interests of any senior White House staff?

Answer. I commit to comply with all relevant federal ethics laws, regulations, and rules, and to raise any concerns that I may have through appropriate channels.

Question. Do you commit to inform the committee if you have any reason to suspect that a foreign government, head of state, or foreign-controlled entity is taking any action in order to benefit any of the President's business or financial interests, or the interests of senior White House staff?

Answer. I commit to comply with all relevant federal ethics laws, regulations, and rules, and to raise any concerns that I may have through appropriate channels.

Question. Do you or do any members of your immediate family have any financial interests in Ireland?

Answer. My and my spouse's investment portfolio includes interests in entities that have a presence in the Republic of Ireland. This includes a financial interest in Park-Ohio Holdings Corp, an entity I currently serve as President and Director. Through its subsidiaries, Park-Ohio Holdings Corporation conducts activities throughout the world, including in the Republic of Ireland. I am committed to ensuring that my official actions will not give rise to a conflict of interest. I will divest all investments the State Department Ethics Office deems necessary to avoid a conflict of interest, and I will remain vigilant with regard to my ethics obligations.

Question. Research from private industry demonstrates that, when managed well, diversity makes business teams better both in terms of creativity and in terms of productivity. What will you do to promote, mentor and support your staff that come from diverse backgrounds and underrepresented groups in the Foreign Service?

Answer. If confirmed, one of my first actions as ambassador will be to meet the entire team at our Embassy in Dublin. People are the foundation of my businesses. Diversity and inclusion on teams is very important to me. Diversity not only enhances our effectiveness but also promotes a workplace culture that values the efforts of all members and enhances the professional experience of our valued public servants. At my companies we employ a diverse worldwide workforce, and if confirmed, I commit to promoting the Department's goal of ensuring its workforce reflects the rich composition of the American people all over the world of different races, ethnicities, genders, and religions.

Question. What steps will you take to ensure each of the supervisors at the Embassy are fostering an environment that is diverse and inclusive?

Answer. If confirmed, I would lead by example and promote the highest standards from our management team. Any behavior that hinders an inclusive environment will not be tolerated.

Question. How do you believe political corruption impacts democratic governance and the rule of law generally, and in Ireland specifically?

Answer. Corruption erodes public trust and institutions. Ireland has strong democratic institutions, established rule of law, and a free press. The law provides criminal penalties for corruption, and the government generally implements the laws effectively.

Question. What is your assessment of corruption trends in Ireland and efforts to address and reduce it by that government?

Answer. Ireland has a strong record of combating corruption. Ireland enacted legislation in 2018 that overhauled Ireland's anticorruption laws. According to the 2018 Investment Climate Statement for Ireland, corruption is not a serious problem for foreign investors operating in Ireland.

Question. If confirmed, what steps will you take to strengthen good governance and anticorruption programming in Ireland?

Answer. If confirmed, I will work with my team at the Embassy in Dublin to engage Irish officials at all levels of government in support of good governance and anticorruption. Through the International Visitors Leadership Program and other exchange programs, Irish citizens with aspirations to serve in government and other elements of civil society travel to the United States and meet with Americans engaging in similar work to share best practices and develop relationships that will last throughout their careers. If confirmed, I would further these efforts.

Question. To what extent is the United States concerned about Brexit's potential political and economic repercussions on Ireland and Northern Ireland?

Answer. The United States is concerned with the impact Brexit will have on Ireland, and how in turn it could impact the broad and deep trade and investment ties the United States presently enjoys with the Republic of Ireland, Northern Ireland,

the United Kingdom, and of course the EU writ large. The U.S. government has urged both the UK and EU to pursue a path that will result in as minimal disruption as possible to the free flow of goods and services between the UK and Ireland. If confirmed, I will work with the government of Ireland in support of a Brexit outcome that maintains global economic and financial stability, minimizes disruption to Transatlantic commercial and security ties, and preserves the gains of the Good Friday Agreement in Northern Ireland.

Question. In your view, could a "hard" border on the island of Ireland inflame sectarian tensions and pose a security concern?

Answer. Brexit will impact Ireland, as well as Northern Ireland, and opportunistic extreme groups could take advantage of uncertainty to attempt to advance what they perceive as political agendas. If confirmed, I will work with the Irish government, as one of the co-guarantors of the Good Friday Agreement, to ensure 21 years of gains in the peace process are not jeopardized by the exit of the UK from the EU.

Question. Even if the UK parliament were to agree to the negotiated withdrawal agreement or other arrangements with the EU to help ensure the border remains invisible, to what extent might Brexit affect the economies of Northern Ireland and Ireland?

Answer. Brexit will have an impact on the economies of Ireland and Northern Ireland. While it is difficult to calculate the exact impact any disruption to trade will have following the UK's exit from the EU, it is in the UK and Ireland's interest that their economic ties remain strong. The U.S. government has urged both the UK and EU to pursue a path that will result in as minimal disruption as possible to the free flow of goods and services between the UK and Ireland. If confirmed, I will work with the government of Ireland in support of a Brexit outcome that maintains global economic and financial stability, minimizes disruption to Transatlantic commercial and security ties, and preserves the gains of the Good Friday Agreement in Northern Ireland.

Question. Some analysts suggest that Brexit has increased momentum and support for a united Ireland in Northern Ireland. How do you assess the degree of support for a united Ireland in the Republic of Ireland?

Answer. I think it will be important to first understand the impact Brexit will have on Northern Ireland. The immediate challenge that exists for Northern Ireland is returning devolved government to Stormont. It is important for people in Northern Ireland to be represented in this critical time.

Question. Some in the UK, especially those in favor of a "hard Brexit" or a "no deal Brexit," claim that the Good Friday Agreement and concerns about Northern Ireland are being exploited by Ireland and the EU to impede Brexit. Some of this view have suggested that it also might be time to reexamine the Good Friday Agreement. How do you respond to such suggestions?

Answer. The United States supports the Good Friday Agreement, and if confirmed, I will continue to work with the Irish government, as a co-guarantor of the Agreement to safeguard and build on the 21 years of stability, reconciliation, and economic development that the Good Friday Agreement facilitated.

Question. How might the United States and Ireland work together to minimize any possible future negative impacts of Brexit on Ireland and Northern Ireland?

Answer. If confirmed, I would work with Irish officials to support a Brexit that maintains global economic and financial stability, minimizes disruption to Transatlantic commercial and security ties, and preserves the gains of the Good Friday Agreement in Northern Ireland.

RESPONSES TO ADDITIONAL QUESTIONS FOR THE RECORD
SUBMITTED TO EDWARD CRAWFORD BY SENATOR JEANNE SHAHEEN

Question. Brexit is expected to impact Ireland more than any other EU member state due in large part to the land border shared with the UK. Given your experience as a businessman, what consequences could be expected from a sudden inability of goods and services to move freely between two communities and countries so reliant on the free-flow of trade?

Answer. I am concerned with the impact Brexit will have on Ireland, and how in turn it could impact the broad and deep trade and investment ties the United States

presently enjoys with the Republic of Ireland, Northern Ireland, the United Kingdom, and of course the EU writ large. The U.S. government has urged both the UK and EU to pursue a path that will result in as minimal disruption as possible to the free flow of goods and services between the UK and Ireland. While it is difficult to calculate the exact impact any disruption to trade will have on Ireland following the UK's exit from the EU, it is in the UK and Ireland's interest that their economic ties remain strong. If confirmed, I will work with the government of Ireland in support of a Brexit outcome that maintains global economic and financial stability, minimizes disruption to Transatlantic commercial and security ties, and preserves the gains of the Good Friday Agreement in Northern Ireland.

Question. The Irish government has expressed concern over trade tensions with the U.S. resulting from retaliatory sanctions and subsidy practices. If confirmed, how would you address Irish concerns about the impact of the Trump Administration's trade policies?

Answer. The United States and Ireland have a strong trading relationship, and it is in both countries' interest to maintain this. The Administration is committed to the ongoing U.S-EU trade discussions with the goal of concluding a comprehensive U.S.-EU trade agreement. If confirmed, I would listen to the Irish government's concerns, and convey the Administration's policy to promote free, fair, and reciprocal trade.

RESPONSES TO ADDITIONAL QUESTIONS FOR THE RECORD
SUBMITTED TO KATE MARIE BYRNES BY SENATOR ROBERT MENENDEZ

Question. As a future NATO ally, North Macedonia must meet its commitments. North Macedonia has not yet met its 2% of GDP goal, and of course the 20% threshold is as important, if not more:

- If confirmed, what steps will you take to ensure the government meets its commitments?

Answer. North Macedonia is a steadfast security partner of the United States. It sent troops to fight alongside ours in Iraq and Afghanistan. It plans to spend approximately 1.2 percent of its GDP on defense in 2019, has a clear and credible plan to reach 2 percent by 2024 in line with NATO's Wales Pledge, and is on track to meet its 20 percent commitment on capabilities spending even earlier. North Macedonia permits NATO Allies and Partners to use the Krivolak Training Area, which provides terrain for maneuver exercises not available elsewhere in Europe. In 2019, North Macedonia will host its largest joint multinational exercise ("Decisive Strike") since the breakup of Yugoslavia; over 1,000 U.S. troops will participate over the course of the exercise.

If confirmed, I will ensure that this remains at the top of our bilateral agenda. I will urge North Macedonia to meet all its commitments to the Alliance and contribute to our collective security. This will advance stability and security in the region.

Question. The Prespa Agreement signifies a historic moment in which the political leaders of North Macedonia and Greece overcame difficult historical issues by focusing on the future-including opening the door to NATO. This agreement is fragile, and steps need to be taken to implement provisions of the agreement: What do you envision your role, if confirmed, in ensuring this agreement is fully implemented?

Answer. The Prespa Agreement lays out a timeline for full implementation of the agreement and mechanisms for expanding bilateral cooperation, covering the technical and political phase-in of the name. A bilateral joint commission on historic and educational matters is already meeting. A group of experts will be established, within the context of the EU, to advise on commercial and trademark use.

North Macedonia and Greece are building on the Prespa Agreement to expand bilateral cooperation across a range of areas, both officially and between private businesses and organizations. If confirmed, I will remain committed to working with North Macedonia to guarantee the success and full implementation of the Prespa Agreement, including the implementation of continuing reforms, and to see that North Macedonia integrates fully into the Western community of nations.

Question. What are the most important actions you have taken in your career to date to support democracy and human rights? What has been the impact of your actions?

Answer. Promoting human rights and democracy has been central to every one of my Foreign Service assignments. In Turkey, Bolivia, Hungary and Spain, I engaged actively as a Public Diplomacy Officer to ensure that our Embassy programs, working with host country institutions and non-governmental organizations, strengthened rule of law and democratic processes and promoted freedom, democracy, individual liberty, and human dignity. I set guidelines to ensure our exchange programs emphasized diversity. In all my assignments, I engaged civil society representatives, the public and media to bring attention to minority groups, including Muslim and Roma minorities, refugees and migrants, LGBTQ, and disabled persons. Through outreach and joint programming, we amplified their voices and supported their inclusion, contributing to our partner countries' democracies.

At the OSCE, I led team efforts to underscore U.S. policy concerns and urge human rights violations and abuses that threaten stability in Europe were addressed. In the context of North Macedonia, as well as other OSCE participating states, I coordinated with EU counterparts to craft OSCE policy statements reiterating the importance of reform implementation to North Macedonia's future. I worked with the Department of State's Office of the Coordinator for U.S. Assistance to Europe and Eurasia to direct U.S. government resources to rule of law, electoral reform, and other programs at OSCE field missions that strengthened democratic institutions and advanced U.S. security interests. Our efforts protected the access to, and representation of, human rights organizations and other civil society groups at the OSCE/ODIHR Human Dimension Implementation Meeting and other OSCE meetings, in the face of opposition from some OSCE participating states. I helped establish the Democracy Defender Award in 2016 with a small group of like-minded OSCE delegations, which is now in its fourth year with 36 co-sponsors. Our delegation's strong voice brought international attention to abuses and human rights violations in Crimea and Chechnya and supported new efforts to combat trafficking in human beings, anti-Semitism, and discrimination across the OSCE region. We also worked to protect the OSCE's independent institutions, maintain focus on preserving and advancing the Helsinki principles, and ensure that U.S. resources, and to the greatest extent possible those of the OSCE, addressed U.S. national priorities.

Question. What issues are the most pressing challenges to democracy or democratic development in North Macedonia? These challenges might include obstacles to participatory and accountable governance and institutions, rule of law, authentic political competition, civil society, human rights and press freedom. Please be as specific as possible.

Answer. A lack of judicial independence and corruption are among the most pressing challenges facing North Macedonia. The State Department's 2018 Human Rights Report also noted other significant human rights concerns in North Macedonia included the Council of Europe's Committee for Prevention of Torture's assessment that prison conditions could be described as constituting cruel, inhuman, or degrading treatment, and allegations of discrimination against some minorities and LGBTQ persons. If confirmed, I will work to strengthen adherence to our shared values, and provide appropriate support to the government of North Macedonia's ongoing reform efforts, especially in rule of law, anti-corruption, and public administration. To this end, I will engage not only government officials and political parties, but also civil society and citizens in North Macedonia, utilizing the full range of our diplomatic, foreign assistance, and public diplomacy tools.

Question. What steps will you take—if confirmed—to support democracy in North Macedonia? What do you hope to accomplish through these actions? What are the potential impediments to addressing the specific obstacles you have identified?

Answer. If confirmed, I will support North Macedonia on its Western trajectory. The Administration strongly supports the historic Prespa Agreement with Greece, which unblocks the path for North Macedonia's integration into NATO and the European Union. Over the past year, the government of North Macedonia made significant progress in implementing reforms needed for the country to align with NATO and EU values. This included strengthening rule of law and judicial independence, media freedom, transparency, and government accountability. At the government's request, we are supporting these important reform efforts.

If confirmed, I will encourage the government of North Macedonia to increase accountability at all levels, break the cycle of corruption, and unleash the country's economic potential, thus advancing the country's strategic goals.

Question. Do you agree that any targeting of or retaliation against career employees based on their perceived political beliefs, prior work on policy, or affiliation with a previous administration, is wholly inappropriate and has no place in the federal government? If confirmed, what will you do to ensure that all employees under your

leadership understand that any retaliation, blacklisting, or other prohibited personnel practices will not be tolerated?

Answer. I agree with that statement. If confirmed, I will work to prevent any attempts to target or retaliate against career employees based on their perceived political beliefs, prior work on policy, or affiliation with a previous administration. If confirmed, I will ensure that each of the supervisors at the Embassy in North Macedonia fosters an environment that is diverse and inclusive, including by making my own commitment and my expectations clear from the very first country team and town hall meeting. I will not tolerate retaliation, blacklisting, or other prohibited personnel practices. I take allegations of such practices seriously and will ensure their referral to the Department's Inspector General, as appropriate.

Question. Has anyone ever made a formal or informal complaint or allegation of sexual harassment, discrimination (e.g., racial, ethnic, religious, etc.), or inappropriate conduct against you, in a workplace or any other setting? If so, please describe the nature of the complaint or allegation, your response, and any resolution, including any settlements.

Answer. I have never been subject to a formal or informal complaint or allegation of sexual harassment, discrimination, or inappropriate conduct in a workplace or any other setting. I commit to comply with all relevant federal laws, regulations, and rules, and to raise concerns that I may have through appropriate channels.

Question. Have you ever addressed concerns or allegations of sexual harassment, discrimination (e.g., racial, ethnic, religious, etc.), or inappropriate conduct made against any employee over whom you had supervisory authority? If so, please describe the outcome and actions taken.

Answer. As a Deputy Chief of Mission, I have had a role in supporting the Equal Employment Opportunity (EEO) process for employees under my overall supervision and have worked with the Department's Office of Civil Rights per its guidance to address those situations appropriately. If confirmed, I commit to continue complying with all relevant federal laws, regulations, and rules, and to raise concerns that I may have through appropriate channels.

RESPONSES TO ADDITIONAL QUESTIONS FOR THE RECORD
SUBMITTED TO KATE MARIE BYRNES BY SENATOR BENJAMIN L. CARDIN

Question. What are your most meaningful achievements to date in your career to promote human rights and democracy? What has been the impact of your actions?

Answer. Promoting human rights and democracy has been central to every one of my Foreign Service assignments. In Turkey, Bolivia, Hungary and Spain, I engaged actively as a Public Diplomacy Officer to ensure that our Embassy programs, working with host country institutions and non-governmental organizations, strengthened rule of law, democratic processes, and promoted freedom, democracy, individual liberty, and human dignity. I set guidelines to ensure our exchange programs emphasized diversity. In all my assignments, I engaged civil society representatives, the public, and media to bring attention to minority groups, including Muslim and Roma minorities, refugees and migrants, LGBTQ and disabled persons. Through outreach and joint programming, we amplified their voices and supported their inclusion, contributing to our partner countries' democracies.

At the OSCE, I led team efforts to underscore U.S. policy concerns and urge human rights violations and abuses that threaten stability in Europe were addressed. In the context of North Macedonia, as well as other OSCE participating states, I coordinated with EU counterparts to craft OSCE policy statements reiterating the importance of reform implementation to North Macedonia's future. I worked with the Department of State's Office of the Coordinator for U.S. Assistance to Europe and Eurasia to direct U.S. government resources to rule of law, electoral reform, and other programs at OSCE field missions that strengthened democratic institutions and advanced U.S. security interests. Our efforts protected the access to and representation of human rights organizations and other civil society groups at the OSCE/ODIHR Human Dimension Implementation Meeting and other OSCE meetings, in the face of opposition from other OSCE participating states. I helped establish the Democracy Defender Award in 2016 with a small group of like-minded OSCE delegations, which is now in its fourth year with 36 co-sponsors. Our delegation's strong voice brought international attention to abuses and human rights violations in Crimea and Chechnya, and supported new efforts to combat trafficking in

human beings, anti-Semitism, and discrimination across the OSCE region. We also worked diligently to protect the OSCE's independent institutions, maintain their focus on preserving and advancing the Helsinki principles, and ensure that U.S. resources, and to the greatest extent possible those of the OSCE, addressed U.S. national priorities.

Question. What are the most pressing human rights issues in North Macedonia? What are the most important steps you expect to take—if confirmed—to promote human rights and democracy in North Macedonia? What do you hope to accomplish through these actions?

Answer. The State Department's 2018 Human Rights Report noted that the most significant human rights concerns in North Macedonia included the Council of Europe's Committee for Prevention of Torture's assessment that prison conditions could be described as constituting cruel, inhuman, or degrading treatment; high-level corruption; and allegations of discrimination against some minorities and LGBTQ persons. If confirmed, I will support efforts to strengthen the rule of law in North Macedonia and combat intolerance and promote inclusivity for all, regardless of ethnicity, religion, or sexual orientation. I will utilize the full range of our diplomatic, assistance, and public diplomacy tools to continue supporting the office of the independent human rights ombudsman and advancing implementation of democratic reforms by the government, including those that strengthen the judiciary and rule of law, bolster media freedom, and increase the competence and accountability of the public administration. The United States has been vocal about increasing transparency and public involvement in governance in North Macedonia. If confirmed, I will continue my engagement with government, political parties, civil society, and ordinary citizens to raise awareness of, and promote adherence to, our shared values of democracy, human rights, and the rule of law.

Question. If confirmed, what are the potential obstacles to addressing the specific human rights issues you have identified in your previous response? What challenges will you face in North Macedonia in advancing human rights, civil society and democracy in general?

Answer. Since emerging in 2017 from a protracted political crisis, North Macedonia has made significant progress in implementing democratic reforms and increasing transparency and accountability. This progress was made by the government of North Macedonia, in close cooperation with the United States, the European Union, and other members of the international community. More work remains. The government must keep its focus on implementing reforms that deliver sustainable and concrete results in combating high-level corruption and impunity, restoring public trust in state institutions, and bolstering the fairness and integrity of the judiciary.

Challenges remain to address the causes of negative public perception of, and widespread societal discrimination against, minorities, LGBTQ persons, and persons with disabilities. It will require time and effort to overcome deep-seated biases common throughout the region. However, our encouragement and the support of civil society organizations, the government of North Macedonia is taking necessary steps to increase alignment with international human rights standards. This includes the March 11 adoption of an updated Law on Prevention and Protection Against Discrimination.

Question. Are you committed to meeting with human rights, civil society and other non-governmental organizations in the U.S. and with local human rights NGOs in North Macedonia? If confirmed, what steps will you take to pro-actively support the Leahy Law and similar efforts, and ensure that provisions of U.S. security assistance and security cooperation activities reinforce human rights?

Answer. Civil society plays an indispensable role in free and democratic societies by promoting respect for human rights, rule of law, and transparency. If confirmed, I am committed to deepening the Embassy's long-standing relationships with civil society and continuing to work with the non-governmental sector to promote support for democracy in North Macedonia. The Leahy law plays a pivotal role in ensuring that respect for human rights remains a core precept in our promotion of global security. If confirmed, I will reinforce this commitment to human rights by ensuring the Embassy continues to follow the Leahy law, including by thoroughly vetting all individuals and units nominated to receive U.S. security assistance and participate in U.S.-funded security cooperation activities.

Question. Will you and your embassy team actively engage with North Macedonia to address cases of key political prisoners or persons otherwise unjustly targeted by North Macedonia?

Answer. The U.S. Embassy in North Macedonia takes very seriously any allegation or instance where individuals may be prosecuted for the exercise of their human rights, such as freedom of opinion or belief and freedom of expression, and regularly engages to demand independent, accountable judicial action. In the event there were credible reports of prisoners of conscience, or indications that the government or its agents committed arbitrary or unlawful killings or caused "disappearances," if confirmed, I would utilize every resource at my disposal to engage with government and other officials to remedy the situation, as appropriate.

Question. Will you engage with North Macedonia on matters of human rights, civil rights and governance as part of your bilateral mission?

Answer. If confirmed, I will continue the work of the Embassy to work with the government of North Macedonia, political parties, ethnic and religious groups, members of civil society, and domestic and international organizations to advance North Macedonia's aspirations of joining the European Union and NATO as a country that upholds its obligations and commitments regarding human rights, including civil rights, and governance.

Question. Do you commit to bring to the committee's attention (and the State Department Inspector General) any change in policy or U.S. actions that you suspect may be influenced by any of the President's business or financial interests, or the business or financial interests of any senior White House staff?

Answer. I commit to comply with all relevant federal ethics laws, regulations, and rules, and to raise any concerns that I may have through appropriate channels.

Question. Do you commit to inform the committee if you have any reason to suspect that a foreign government, head of state, or foreign-controlled entity is taking any action in order to benefit any of the President's business or financial interests, or the interests of senior White House staff?

Answer. I commit to comply with all relevant federal ethics laws, regulations, and rules, and to raise any concerns that I may have through appropriate channels.

Question. Do you or do any members of your immediate family have any financial interests in North Macedonia?

Answer. My investment portfolio includes funds that may have or acquire investments in companies in North Macedonia; however, these funds are exempt from the conflicts of interest rules and have been reviewed by the State Department Ethics Office. I am committed to ensuring that my official actions will not give rise to a conflict of interest. I will divest my interests in any investments the State Department Ethics Office deems necessary in the future to avoid a conflict of interest, and I will remain vigilant with regard to my ethics obligations.

Question. Research from private industry demonstrates that, when managed well, diversity makes business teams better both in terms of creativity and in terms of productivity. What will you do to promote, mentor and support your staff that come from diverse backgrounds and underrepresented groups in the Foreign Service?

Answer. Today's Foreign Service is more diverse, more creative, and more effective than my father's Foreign Service, and I consider it a personal responsibility to ensure that it continues to grow in that direction, even more expeditiously, to better represent today's diverse America. The strongest message our overseas Missions or delegations to multilateral institutions can send to foreign counterparts is that we represent the full strength of the United States and the diversity of all its citizens. The Department's formal programs are a first step in recruiting talented, diverse individuals into the system; it is up to managers to ensure that diversity and inclusion become a part of their daily decision making and thought processes in the workplace.

In my formal and informal mentoring of officers and specialists I seek first to understand the perspectives of my colleagues. I ask about their background, why they chose this path of service, and what they hope to contribute, in order to support their career aspirations. There is no single path of success in the Foreign Service; there are many. I work with individuals under my supervision to ensure that in their current assignments they have opportunities to express their views, test their initiatives, and receive constructive feedback. I believe in the value of after-action discussions to ensure that team members understand how and why decisions are ultimately made, particularly when a diversity of views are expressed, to ensure transparency and promote professional learning.

If confirmed, I will ensure that staff members in my Mission rotate leadership responsibilities as control officers, project coordinators, reporting officers, and public outreach officers, to strengthen their tradecraft and expose them to different aspects

of our diplomatic world. I will continue to encourage the officers and specialists who work in my Mission, or who reach out to me from other assignments, to consider bidding strategies that open up new opportunities to expand their skill sets as well as their professional networks. Additionally, I will ensure that my Mission's professional development programs provide opportunities to personnel at every stage of their career as they move beyond the entry level.

Question. What steps will you take to ensure each of the supervisors at the Embassy are fostering an environment that is diverse and inclusive?

Answer. If confirmed, I will ensure that each of the supervisors at the Embassy in North Macedonia fosters an environment that is diverse and inclusive by making my own commitment and my expectations clear from the very first country team and town hall meeting. I will set a leadership example by seeking input from all members of the country team. I will encourage challenging questions and reflection and analysis among staff members. I will establish a "no-fault" policy for good ideas, tabling all issues and inviting collaboration.

I will demonstrate interest in how my country team members interact with their own teams and encourage my Deputy Chief of Mission to do the same, by encouraging them and their subordinates to structure meetings and other Mission processes to create an environment in which all staff members can express their views. I will ensure all supervisors are held to the same standards, working with them to broaden input into our policies and programs. During the Open Season and other assignment and hiring periods, I will work with them on their recruitment strategies and position choices. My commitment is to building a team that is diverse and representative of all of America and to fostering an environment that is inclusive, collaborative and an engine for the best ideas to further U.S. interests in North Macedonia.

Question. How do you believe political corruption impacts democratic governance and the rule of law generally, and in North Macedonia specifically?

Answer. As noted by the global anti-corruption watchdog organization Transparency International, when corruption seeps into the democratic system, corrupt leaders will seek to bypass democratic checks and balances to remain in power and thwart the public will. Weak anti-corruption mechanisms and an atmosphere of impunity lead to weak public institutions and weak rule of law, eroding public trust and confidence in their democratic institutions and the state. To fight corruption and strengthen democratic institutions and governance, we must champion democratic checks and balances, strong laws but also their strong implementation, judicial independence and integrity, and public accountability and media freedom.

With respect to North Macedonia, numerous international reports cite the country's failures to uphold the rule of law over the last decade. Political interference, inefficiency, favoritism, prolonged processes, and corruption weakened the country's judicial system and led to state capture under the previous government. The current government is taking steps to address these weaknesses. The United States is supporting these efforts as well as civil society initiatives that hold the government accountable for progress.

Question. What is your assessment of corruption trends in North Macedonia and efforts to address and reduce them by the government of North Macedonia?

Answer. Following a prolonged political crisis caused by a wiretapping scandal that revealed widespread corruption and abuses by the previous government, the current government took power in June 2017. It has worked to combat corruption and restore accountability. One key step was the enactment of a new Law on Prevention of Corruption and Conflict of Interest in January 2019 that provided for the re-constitution of the State Commission for Prevention of Corruption and Conflict of Interest with greater independence and strengthened competencies. It can now examine public officials' bank records, political party and election campaign finances, and all political appointments, as well as request prosecutions. As a result of efforts such as these by the government of North Macedonia, the country moved up 14 places between 2017 and 2018 in Transparency International's Public Perception of Corruption Index, to rank 93rd out of 180 countries surveyed. More is necessary, and the government of North Macedonia has committed to intensifying anticorruption efforts and is cooperating with the State Commission for Prevention of Corruption and Conflict of Interest's inquiry into alleged nepotism cases involving the employment of current and former government officials or their relatives.

Question. If confirmed, what steps will you take to strengthen good governance and anticorruption programming in North Macedonia?

Answer. If confirmed, I will continue to lead the Embassy in supporting programming that will help North Macedonia implement reforms that strengthen its democracy, the rule of law, and government accountability. U.S. assistance will focus on helping North Macedonia develop an effective and transparent justice sector that reduces corruption and impunity and restores citizens' trust in public institutions. Embassy Skopje will advise, assist, and deliver projects to augment the separation of powers with functional checks and balances, strengthen and build an effective criminal justice system, and fight public corruption, tied directly to the strategic interests of the United States. To avoid duplication of effort, we will coordinate our assistance with other donors.

Question. As you know, the Helsinki Commission has taken a leading role in advocating greater respect for the rights of Roma throughout Europe. Commission cochairman Senator Roger Wicker and I have recently introduced Senate Resolution 141, celebrating the heritage of Roma in this country. North Macedonia has a large and relatively vibrant Romani community, even though its members may face discrimination in employment, education, housing and other areas similar to Roma in other countries.

If confirmed as Ambassador, will you ensure the U.S. embassy continues its active engagement of the Romani community in North Macedonia and speak out when human rights violations or other problems reflecting prejudice occur?

Answer. If confirmed, I will continue longstanding efforts to ensure the rights of all people—including the Romani community as well as other members of ethnic and religious minority communities—are protected. If confirmed, I will continue to promote the values of freedom, democracy, individual liberty, and human dignity. U.S. assistance includes grants to local groups that promote the protection of human rights and fundamental freedoms of members of targeted populations, including minority groups.

Question. While progress will hopefully convince a broad majority of Macedonian citizens of the wisdom of the name-change, in the short-term there is considerable opposition. How might this affect the Macedonian presidential elections in April or obtaining sufficient support for still-needed internal reforms?

Answer. The Prespa Agreement represents the committed efforts of leaders of both North Macedonia and Greece to find a solution to a longstanding problem that advances stability and prosperity in both countries. It involves compromises that were difficult for both sides. While many citizens support the Prespa Agreement and what it will achieve for the country, some citizens are still disappointed with those compromises. We believe the Prespa Agreement advances stability, security, and prosperity throughout the region, as it opens a door for North Macedonia's full Western integration.

The Prespa Agreement is an issue of national interest in North Macedonia and is therefore a topic of discussion among the presidential candidates. All three candidates support a NATO and EU future for North Macedonia.

If confirmed, I will remain committed to working with North Macedonia to guarantee the Prespa Agreement's full implementation and the implementation of continuing reforms, to see that North Macedonia is fully integrated into the Western community of nations.

Question. Now that the Greek and Macedonian parliaments have ratified the Prespa Agreement, what are the next steps for the Macedonian government to formalize the name change and join NATO? Do you anticipate any potential complications?

Answer. The Prespa Agreement sets out a timeline for full implementation of the Agreement and mechanisms for expanding bilateral cooperation, covering the technical and political phase-in of the name. A joint commission on historic and educational matters is already meeting. A group of experts will be established, within the context of the EU, to advise on commercial and trademark use.

NATO Allies signed the Accession Protocol for North Macedonia in Brussels on February 6. Allies are proceeding with their domestic processes necessary to ratify North Macedonia's NATO accession protocol. To date, eleven countries have ratified the Accession Protocol. On March 27, the White House submitted to Congress the report on the Republic of North Macedonia's Accession to NATO for Senate review.

Importantly, North Macedonia and Greece are building on the Prespa Agreement with expanded bilateral cooperation in a range of areas, both officially and between private businesses and organizations. The United States is supporting both North Macedonia and Greece as they move forward with implementation to ensure the success of the Prespa Agreement and to strengthen their bilateral ties.

Question. Do you see opposition to North Macedonia's integration from countries other than Russia, such as Hungary or Turkey?

Answer. Both Hungary and Turkey have been supportive of the Prespa Agreement. North Macedonia deserves these countries' continued support as it moves along its chosen path of Western integration.

Question. What role should the United States play in North Macedonia, and in the Western Balkans as a whole, especially to counter Russian and other destabilizing influences?

Answer. Russia does not accept the post-Cold War settlement in Europe and is pushing back with a variety of tools, both overt and covert, to forestall the region's Western integration. It seeks to incite divisions. In contrast, the United States supports EU membership for all countries of the Western Balkans and NATO membership for those who want it.

In the case of North Macedonia, Russia has been vocal in speaking out against the country's democratically chosen NATO path and attempted to undermine effort to reach an agreement on the name issue. We are supporting North Macedonia's further steps towards Western integration and pushing back on Russia's attempts to hinder these efforts. The United States firmly believes that North Macedonia's interests and those of its Western Balkans neighbors—as well as ours—are best served by their cementing democratic norms, rule of law, and cooperation, based on common values and a shared future.

Question. North Macedonia was directly impacted by the mass migration into Europe from Africa and the Middle East in recent years. What have been the effects of the migrants and refugees who have transited through North Macedonia? What challenges does the country continue to face regarding migration?

Answer. During the 2015-2016 European migration crisis, the U.S. government worked with the United Nations and other international organizations, as well as EU institutions and member states, to provide a comprehensive, coordinated response that protected lives, upheld respect of human rights, and ensured proper screening and registration procedures. The number of new migrants and asylum seekers in North Macedonia has significantly fallen since 2016. The United States has contributed equipment and training on border management in response to Western Balkan requests, and we will work to support the government of North Macedonia as it continues to respond to the effects of migration.

Question. The Helsinki Commission is also active in efforts to combat human trafficking. North Macedonia has been a Tier 2 country since 2016 for not meeting the minimum standards for the elimination of trafficking in persons, even if it is making significant efforts to do so. Prior to that, and despite its other problems, it had been the only country in the Western Balkans to have Tier 1 status:

- As North Macedonia seeks to join the NATO Alliance, are we pressing that country—as frankly we should all NATO members who are not in the Tier 1 category—to devote more resources to the prevention of tracking, the protection of victims and the prosecution of the culprits? What will it take for North Macedonia to again warrant Tier 1 status? What can the U.S. Embassy in Skopje do to help?

Answer. The government of North Macedonia does not fully meet the minimum standards for the elimination of trafficking; however, it is making significant efforts to do so. The government demonstrated increased efforts in 2018 compared to the previous year; therefore, North Macedonia remained a Tier 2 country in our annual Trafficking in Persons report.

If confirmed, I will work with our Embassy to encourage the government to vigorously investigate, prosecute, and convict traffickers and impose strong sentences, as well as improve victim identification, protection, and compensation. We will continue to encourage the government to work closely with non-government organizations to achieve these goals.

Question. What is your assessment of the extent to which North Macedonia has implemented the Ohrid Agreement (the agreement that ended Macedonia's armed conflict between Albanian rebels and Macedonian security forces in August 2001) and taken steps to integrate ethnic Albanians in government and respect their rights regarding language?

Answer. If confirmed, I will continue to support full implementation of the Ohrid Framework Agreement. Our Embassy in Skopje regularly engages to advocate for the advancement of interethnic cooperation. There are continuing efforts to build a

functional multi-ethnic society based on full implementation of the Ohrid Framework Agreement, and we encourage further efforts in this area.

Question. Similarly, how would you assess the commitment of those belonging to the large Albanian community in North Macedonia to the unity and integration of the country?

Answer. Citizens need to be able to interact easily with their government and with each other. Multi-ethnic democracies around the world have chosen to address this issue in different ways. If confirmed, the Embassy and I will support the ongoing efforts of the ethnic communities and the government of North Macedonia to work towards a stronger, functional, multi-ethnic society.

Question. Are there concerns about the influence of Albania and Kosovo in North Macedonia's Albanian community?

Answer. There are strong, historic, cultural, and linguistic ties among ethnic Albanians, and this is natural. However, calls for political unification across borders, and other language insinuating the pursuit of such unification, narrow opportunities for a European path. Full integration into Euro-Atlantic institutions coupled with strong rule of law and unfettered commerce throughout the region remains our vision of a future in which all the people of the region thrive.

RESPONSES TO ADDITIONAL QUESTIONS FOR THE RECORD
SUBMITTED TO KATE MARIE BYRNES BY SENATOR JEANNE SHAHEEN

Question. The foreign aid budget for North Macedonia has declined steadily in recent years from $21.6 million in FY 2017 to a budget request this year for FY 2020 of only $5.7 million. In your view where has U.S. foreign aid been effective in North Macedonia and why has aid declined so dramatically in the past few years?

Answer. North Macedonia, on the threshold of joining NATO, is committed to a path that aligns with Western principles and is focused on partnering with the Western alliance, including the United States, to advance regional prosperity and stability. Bilateral U.S. assistance programs have facilitated North Macedonia's progress by supporting the government's efforts to improve governance and strengthen the rule of law, fostering electoral reforms and political party capacity, bolstering civil society's role in advocating for reforms, and supporting access to objective media content. Regional U.S. assistance programs have advanced private sector-led economic development, including through support to improve North Macedonia's business environment, and strengthened independent media's business viability through improved digital strategies.

The FY 2020 Request for North Macedonia is $5.7 million, which is $640,000 (10 percent) below the FY 2019 Request. U.S. assistance will facilitate citizen-responsive governance; strengthen the rule of law, governance, and democratic institutions; stimulate economic growth, trade, and investment; promote reconciliation; increase energy independence; and increase the resilience of civil society and media to disinformation and malign external influence.

While the Administration views the State Department and USAID's roles in diplomacy and development as critical to national security, the Administration remains committed to restraining overall non-defense discretionary spending, including for the State Department and USAID. If confirmed, I look forward to continuing discussions with Congress on funding for our diplomacy and assistance programs, including for FY 2020.

RESPONSES TO ADDITIONAL QUESTIONS FOR THE RECORD
SUBMITTED TO DAVID SATTERFIELD BY SENATOR ROBERT MENENDEZ

Cyprus

Question. Jane Holl Lute was recently in Cyprus meeting with President Anastasiades regarding the peace process, and the "terms of reference" document is slated to be delivered to the U.N. Secretary General on April 15. If it were not for Turkey's obstructive role in the peace process, Greek Cypriots and Turkish Cypriots would have likely reached a settlement.

- If confirmed, how will you engage with the government of Turkey to mitigate its adverse role in the peace process in Cyprus?

Answer. This Administration continues to support a Cypriot-led, U.N.-facilitated process to reunify the island as a bizonal, bicommunal federation.

We hope the leaders of the two communities will demonstrate their full resolve to a comprehensive settlement not only through their engagement with U.N. Senior Official Jane Holl Lute, but also by meeting again in the near future in order to make progress towards other confidence-building measures (CBMs) which they agreed to in 2015.

If confirmed, I will encourage Turkey to engage in the international effort to reach a negotiated settlement.

Question. Cyprus Peace Process: My position on this is very clear. I oppose Turkey's ongoing occupation of Northern Cyprus, and I believe that if it were not for Turkey obstructive role in the peace process, Greek Cypriots and Turkish Cypriots would have found its way to a settlement:

- If confirmed, what do you envision your role in this peace process?

Answer. If confirmed, I will encourage Turkey to play a productive role in a Cypriot-led, U.N.-facilitated process to reunify the island as a bizonal, bicommunal federation.

Syria—Safe Zone

Question. I am concerned about the potential "safe zone" in northeast Syria being discussed with the Turkish government, which Ambassador Jeffrey recently said would exclude the YPG. The Turks have reportedly planned to repopulate the border areas, potentially pushing Syrian Kurds out of their ancestral homes. Moreover, the Kurds are very concerned about their wellbeing and lasting safety if such a zone were to be created under Turkey's administration:

- What commitments can we make to the Kurdish communities who have fought alongside the United States?

Answer. Turkey is a NATO ally and a key partner in the Global Coalition to Defeat ISIS. We are fully committed to its security. We also want to ensure that our partners who continue to fight with us to ensure the enduring defeat of ISIS are protected. The President has been clear that Turkish forces should not militarily engage against the Syrian Democratic Forces (SDF), including the Kurdish component of the SDF.

Question. What guarantees would we seek to ensure that Kurdish rights, property, and security are protected?

Answer. The President, the Secretary of State, and Ambassador Jeffrey have engaged extensively with their Turkish counterparts on how to ensure a stabilized northeast Syria. Stability requires that people are able to stay in their homes if they choose and that any return of refugees or internally displaced persons is safe, voluntary, and dignified.

Syria—Turkish Incursions

Question. Turkish incursions into Syria, such as in Afrin, have reportedly occurred jointly with jihadist militias and other groups opposed to the Syrian Kurds. Support for and facilitation of these groups are counterproductive for regional stability and exacerbate the human suffering in Syria:

- What is your assessment of these reports?

Answer. Turkey has worked with a number of different Syrian opposition groups over the course of the conflict. We are aware of reports that certain groups have engaged in actions that undermine stability and share your concerns about the consequences of such actions.

We have raised these concerns with Turkish counterparts while emphasizing that it is the responsibility of Turkish authorities to ensure the protection of civilians and property in its operations, including safeguarding civilians from unlawful activities.

Question. Do you think the Turkish military, the military of a NATO-allied country, would have any reason to associate with these kinds of militias?

Answer. Turkey is a NATO ally and a key partner in the Global Coalition to Defeat ISIS. Turkey has legitimate security concerns along its border, which this Administration remains committed to addressing. The Administration has emphasized that stability and security throughout opposition-controlled areas of Syria depend on security and governance structures being acceptable to residents of these areas.

Question. What steps can the United States take to deter this behavior?

Answer. We have made clear to Turkey that it is the responsibility of Turkish authorities to ensure the protection of civilians and property in the areas in which it operates, including safeguarding civilians from unlawful activities. In our Syria-focused discussions with Turkey, we have and will continue to assert that stability and security throughout opposition-controlled areas of Syria depend on security and governance structures being acceptable to residents of these areas.

Syria—Humanitarian Corridor

Question. I am pleased to see that Turkey has played a critical role in maintaining the ceasefire in Idlib. While the fighting may be temporarily on hold, there remains a humanitarian crisis there. government and nongovernment organizations have had significant difficulty opening and maintaining a safe humanitarian corridor to facilitate assistance to the people there. With the United States withdrawing our own START teams from providing direct assistance, we are increasingly reliant on others to carry out this vital work that provides relief and advances stability:

- Can you describe Turkey's role in providing assistance or in cooperating with operating partners on providing assistance?

Answer. Turkey hosts over four million refugees, 3.6 million of whom are Syrian, opening their schools, hospitals, and other public services and allowing refugees the right to work. Over 60% of school-age refugee children are back in school, given the language barrier this is particularly notable. The government of Turkey estimates that it has spent over $30 billion hosting refugees.

In northwest Syria, Turkey plays a critical role in authorizing and facilitating assistance for much of the population of nearly three million, over half of whom were previously displaced from other parts of Syria and depend on cross border humanitarian assistance. In Turkish-controlled areas of northern Syria, the Turkish government along with international, Syrian and Turkish NGOs provide assistance on the ground. We continue to work with Turkish authorities to advocate for better access for increased humanitarian actors in those areas and for more visibility on the full picture of whether the most urgent needs are being met in those areas.

Question. Do you believe it is in our interest to stop the direct delivery of aid?

Answer. Our goals in Syria remain the enduring defeat of ISIS, a lasting political solution in accordance with U.N. Security Council Resolution 2254, and the removal of Iran and its proxies from Syria. Our ongoing assistance, supported by the START and the Southern Syria Assistance Program platforms, along with contributions from our partners in the International Coalition, provides us with the tools necessary to achieve those goals.

The more than $9.5 billion of humanitarian assistance provided by the United States to the people of Syria has undoubtedly saved hundreds of thousands, if not millions of lives. Last month, the United States announced more than $397 million in additional humanitarian assistance for the people of Syria, reflecting the steadfast commitment of the United States to providing lifesaving support to the people of Syria impacted by conflict, both inside Syria and throughout the region. The U.N. and partner NGOs reach over four million people inside Syria each month with aid that we provide.

Throughout northeast Syria, the United States continues to provide critical humanitarian assistance and stabilization work, such as restoring electricity grids, providing psychosocial support for children, supporting justice and accountability, removing rubble, restoring water delivery, and other essential services. Additional aid has rehabilitated damaged schools and allowed hundreds of thousands of children to get back to school, while providing livelihood and agricultural support. Our assistance has removed thousands of acres of territory of the left-behind explosive remnants of war (ERW) and the clearance of corpses and rubble from streets.

Question. Can you talk more about the ways in which we can leverage our assets?

Answer. One of the ways we have leveraged our assets in Syria is through the programs managed by our regional platforms, the Turkey-based Syria Transition Assistance Response Team (START) and the Southern Syria Assistance Platform based in Amman. The networks and on-the-ground connections forged by our stabilization programs have provided insight into the ever changing conditions in northern Syria while forging connections with the Syrian people.

Ensuring the enduring defeat of ISIS will require continued stabilization assistance in the region to alleviate human suffering and to make progress in the political process outlined in UNSCR 2254.

PKK

Question. Turkey indeed faces legitimate and serious security threats from the PKK, a terrorist group designated by the United States as such since 1997. However, Turkey's recent ground incursions into and attacks in Iraqi Kurdistan have been particularly destabilizing in recent months, especially considering the fragile state of the joint KDP-PUK Kurdish Regional government that faces a tough economic recovery from the war against ISIS and ongoing counter-ISIS operations. A stable and secure Kurdish Regional government with a stable Iraqi border is in Turkey's best interests:

- What levers do we have to reduce the PKK threat to Turkey while working to strengthen Iraqi territorial integrity against foreign attack?

Answer. Over the last two years, the Administration has increased our assistance in support of Turkey's national defense against the PKK, in addition to the assistance we have consistently provided to the Turkish government since 2007.

In November 2018, the Department announced the listing of three senior PKK members under the Rewards for Justice program, offering up to $12 million for identification or information leading to their capture. In March 2019, the Department renewed the designation of the PKK as a foreign terrorist organization.

We have encouraged the Turkish and Iraqi governments—including those in the Kurdistan Regional government—to increase their communication and coordination in order to address the destabilizing presence of the PKK in the Iraqi Kurdistan Region. We have seen increased bilateral Iraqi-Turkish engagement on this topic, and will continue to advocate for further cooperation.

Question. What are the most important actions you have taken in your career to date to support democracy and human rights? What has been the impact of your actions?

Answer. In all of my previous posts, I have engaged with human rights activists, representatives of civil society, and foreign government leaders to promote human rights and democracy. The promotion of democracy and human rights is central to our national interests and an essential element of our foreign policy. Societies that respect and defend human rights, fundamental freedoms, and the rule of law are more stable, secure, and prosperous and make stronger allies.

Question. What issues are the most pressing challenges to democracy or democratic development in Turkey? These challenges might include obstacles to participatory and accountable governance and institutions, rule of law, authentic political competition, civil society, human rights and press freedom. Please be as specific as possible.

Answer. The Department's 2018 Human Rights Report for Turkey includes reports of arbitrary killing; suspicious deaths in custody; forced disappearances; torture; arbitrary arrests and detentions; political prisoners; closure of media outlets and criminal prosecution of individuals for criticizing government policies or officials; blocking websites and content; severe restrictions on freedoms of expression, peaceful assembly, association and movement; and violence against women and lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, and intersex (LGBTI) persons, and members of other minorities.

If confirmed, I intend to speak out privately and publicly on issues of human rights and fundamental freedoms in Turkey, including those listed above.

Question. What steps will you take—if confirmed—to support democracy in Turkey? What do you hope to accomplish through these actions? What are the potential impediments to addressing the specific obstacles you have identified?

Answer. We should press other governments, despite obstacles and challenges, to adhere to their human rights obligations. If confirmed, I will urge the Turkish government in public and in private to respect and ensure freedom of expression and the media, fair trial guarantees, judicial independence, and other human rights and fundamentals of democratic rule. Accountable and responsive government, rule of law, and respect for fundamental freedoms are bulwarks of sovereignty and internal and international stability. Protecting these rights and institutions expands the potential for investment and partnership.

Question. How will you utilize U.S. government assistance resources at your disposal, including the Democracy Commission Small Grants program and other sources of State Department and USAID funding, to support democracy and governance, and what will you prioritize in processes to administer such assistance?

Answer. If confirmed, I will continue the Department's engagement with the government of Turkey and its ongoing work with Turkish civil society groups on

strengthening rule of law. democracy, and good governance, such as ensuring protections for journalists and civil society leaders, academics, and anti-corruption NGOs, as well as growing the space for freedom of expression. If confirmed, I will use all available resources at my disposal to pursue these objectives.

Question. If confirmed, do you commit to meet with civil society members, human rights and other non-governmental organizations in the U.S. and with local human rights NGOs, and other members of civil society in Turkey? What steps will you take to pro-actively address efforts to restrict or penalize NGOs and civil society via legal or regulatory measures?

Answer. Yes. If confirmed, I will work with groups that are supporting democratic governance, rule of law, human rights, and fundamental freedoms in Turkey. I would continue the U.S. Mission's important ongoing work of tracking the human rights situation in Turkey, monitoring trials, engaging with civil society leaders, and working with like-minded partners to underscore the importance of respect for rule of law and fundamental freedoms.

Question. If confirmed, do you commit to meet with democratically oriented political opposition figures and parties? What steps will you take to encourage genuine political competition? Will you advocate for access and inclusivity for women, minorities and youth within political parties?

Answer. If confirmed, I will meet with peaceful opposition groups and political figures committed to promoting democracy and the rule of law in Turkey. The United States values engaging with groups and individuals that voice diverse opinions and has a long history of engaging leaders both inside and outside the government, a tradition I will continue. I will also be clear with the Turkish government in public and in private that the United States views transparency, a free press, freedom of expression, freedom of assembly and association, and rule of law as essential elements to the health of Turkish democracy. I will also continue our support for access and inclusivity for women, minorities and youth within political parties.

Question. Will you and your embassy team actively engage with the government of Turkey on freedom of the press and address any government efforts designed to control or undermine press freedom through legal, regulatory or other measures? Will you commit to meeting regularly with independent, local press in Turkey?

Answer. I share your concern about Turkey's negative trajectory on media freedom. Respect for the rule of law, human rights, and fundamental freedoms, such as freedom of expression, as well as media freedom, are pillars of established democracies. Freedom of expression—especially for speech which many may find controversial or uncomfortable—should and must be protected for everyone. If confirmed, I will promote these universal values, and I am committed to meeting regularly with independent, local press in Turkey. I would continue Mission Turkey's work to engage the government of Turkey to address specific cases of violations and laws that unduly restrict freedom of expression. I would regularly emphasize to the Turkish government that freedom of expression strengthens democracy and needs to be protected.

Question. Will you and your embassy team actively engage with civil society and government counterparts on countering disinformation and propaganda disseminated by foreign state or non-state actors in the country?

Answer. Combatting disinformation and propaganda is a priority for the Department. If confirmed, I look forward to working closely with the Department's Global Engagement Center and other U.S. government programs to help stop disinformation and enable larger audiences to gain greater access to accurate information about U.S. culture and policy. In doing so, I hope to build upon Mission Turkey's support for international public broadcasters such as the Voice of America to bolster diverse and independent sources of programming in the absence of a strong, independent media in Turkey, and the use of social media platforms to amplify this content.

Question. Will you and your embassy teams actively engage with the government of Turkey on the right of labor groups to organize, including for independent trade unions?

Answer. Yes. If confirmed, I will continue Mission Turkey's active engagement with the government of Turkey on the right of labor groups to organize, including for independent trade unions. Protecting labor rights are a key component of the Department's efforts to promote democracy and human rights around the world. Mission Turkey and the Department closely track labor rights, including the free-

dom of association and the right to collective bargaining, in the Department's annual Human Rights Report and elsewhere.

Question. Will you commit to using your position, if confirmed, to defend the human rights and dignity of all people in Turkey, no matter their sexual orientation or gender identity? What challenges do the lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender and queer (LGBTQ) people face in Turkey? What specifically will you commit to do to help LGBTQ people in Turkey?

Answer. Yes. If confirmed, I commit to using my position to defend the human rights and dignity of all people in Turkey, no matter their sexual orientation or gender identity. The 2018 Human Rights Report documents violence and other acts of discrimination and abuse against lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, and intersex (LGBTI) persons, and members of other minorities. If confirmed, I look forward to advancing respect for the human rights and fundamental freedoms of all, including LGBTI persons. I would use the full range of tools at my disposal—including bilateral and multilateral diplomatic engagement—to protect the rights of LGBTI persons in Turkey.

Question. Do you agree that any targeting of or retaliation against career employees based on their perceived political beliefs, prior work on policy, or affiliation with a previous administration, is wholly inappropriate and has no place in the federal government? If confirmed, what will you do to ensure that all employees under your leadership understand that any retaliation, blacklisting, or other prohibited personnel practices will not be tolerated?

Answer. Yes. By setting a personal example, communicating the relevant laws and rules directly to my staff, and taking appropriate action when necessary, I will ensure that all employees under my leadership understand that any retaliation, blacklisting, or other prohibited personnel practices will not be tolerated. I will also take allegations of such practices seriously and ensure they are referred to the Department's Inspector General.

Question. Has anyone ever made a formal or informal complaint or allegation of sexual harassment, discrimination (e.g., racial, ethnic, religious, etc.), or inappropriate conduct against you, in a workplace or any other setting? If so, please describe the nature of the complaint or allegation, your response, and any resolution, including any settlements.

Answer. No.

Question. Have you ever addressed concerns or allegations of sexual harassment, discrimination (e.g., racial, ethnic, religious, etc.), or inappropriate conduct made against any employee over whom you had supervisory authority? If so, please describe the outcome and actions taken.

Answer. I have handled such cases as a supervisor over the past three decades. All such cases were dealt with in accordance with the relevant laws and Department policies and in as prompt a manner as possible. Harassment, discrimination and misconduct are unacceptable and allegations of such must be addressed—and I have done so in all such cases throughout my career—in a thorough and effective manner. I will continue to do so if confirmed.

RESPONSES TO ADDITIONAL QUESTIONS FOR THE RECORD
SUBMITTED TO DAVID SATTERFIELD BY SENATOR BENJAMIN L. CARDIN

Question. What are your most meaningful achievements to date in your career to promote human rights and democracy? What has been the impact of your actions?

Answer. In all of my previous posts, I have engaged with human rights activists, representatives of civil society, and foreign government leaders to promote human rights and democracy. The promotion of democracy and human rights is central to our national interests and an essential element of our foreign policy. Societies that respect and defend human rights, fundamental freedoms, and the rule of law are more stable, secure, and prosperous and make stronger allies.

Question. What are the most pressing human rights issues in the Republic of Turkey? What are the most important steps you expect to take—if confirmed—to promote human rights and democracy in the Republic of Turkey? What do you hope to accomplish through these actions?

Answer. The Department's 2018 Human Rights Report for Turkey includes reports of arbitrary killing; suspicious deaths in custody; forced disappearances; tor-

ture; arbitrary arrests and detentions; political prisoners; closure of media outlets and criminal prosecution of individuals for criticizing government policies or officials; blocking websites and content; severe restrictions on freedoms of expression, peaceful assembly, association and movement; and violence against women and lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, and intersex (LGBTI) persons, and members of other minorities.

If confirmed, I intend to speak out privately and publicly on issues of human rights and fundamental freedoms in Turkey, including those listed above.

Question. If confirmed, what are the potential obstacles to addressing the specific human rights issues you have identified in your previous response? What challenges will you face in the Republic of Turkey in advancing human rights, civil society and democracy in general?

Answer. It is always challenging to balance the promotion of human rights, civil society and democracy while advancing our other bilateral objectives, such as security and economic cooperation, with our partners. This is particularly true in Turkey, which is a NATO Ally facing numerous challenges related to human rights and the rule of law. That said, I believe that we should press other governments, despite obstacles and challenges, to adhere to their human rights obligations. If confirmed, I will urge the Turkish government in public and in private to respect and ensure freedom of expression and the media, fair trial guarantees, judicial independence, and other human rights and fundamentals of democratic rule. Accountable and responsive government, rule of law, and respect for fundamental freedoms are bulwarks of sovereignty and internal and international stability. Protecting these rights and institutions expands the potential for investment and partnership.

Question. Are you committed to meeting with human rights, civil society and other non-governmental organizations in the U.S. and with local human rights NGOs in the Republic of Turkey? If confirmed, what steps will you take to pro-actively support the Leahy Law and similar efforts, and ensure that provisions of U.S. security assistance and security cooperation activities reinforce human rights?

Answer. If confirmed, I will work with groups that are helping to move Turkey forward on a path towards democratic governance and rule of law, and respect for human rights and fundamental freedoms. I would continue the U.S. Mission's important ongoing work of closely following the human rights situation in Turkey, monitoring trials, engaging with civil society leaders, and working with like-minded partners to underscore the importance of respect for rule of law and fundamental freedoms. If confirmed, I will ensure the U.S. Mission continues to enforce the Leahy Law and ensures provision of U.S. security assistance and security cooperation activities reinforces human rights.

Question. Will you and your embassy team actively engage with the Republic of Turkey to address cases of key political prisoners or persons otherwise unjustly targeted by the Republic of Turkey?

Answer. Yes. If confirmed, I will urge Turkey to respect and uphold human rights and fundamental freedoms, maintain judicial independence, and to release those held for their political beliefs and those unjustly detained including civil society activists, opposition leaders, and journalists.

I would make it a particular priority to secure the release of Dr. Serkan Golge, a U.S. citizen and NASA physicist, and locally employed staff of the U.S. Mission—all of whom we believe have been detained unjustly.

Question. Will you engage with the Republic of Turkey on matters of human rights, civil rights and governance as part of your bilateral mission?

Answer. Yes. If confirmed, I intend to speak out privately and publicly on matters of human rights, civil rights and governance.

Question. Do you commit to bring to the committee's attention (and the State Department Inspector General) any change in policy or U.S. actions that you suspect may be influenced by any of the President's business or financial interests, or the business or financial interests of any senior White House staff?

Answer. If confirmed, I commit to comply with all relevant federal ethics laws, regulations, and rules, and to raise any concerns that I may have through appropriate channels.

Question. Do you commit to inform the committee if you have any reason to suspect that a foreign government, head of state, or foreign-controlled entity is taking any action in order to benefit any of the President's business or financial interests, or the interests of senior White House staff?

Answer. If confirmed, I commit to comply with all relevant federal ethics laws, regulations, and rules, and to raise any concerns that I may have through appropriate channels.

Question. Do you or do any members of your immediate family have any financial interests in the Republic of Turkey?

Answer. My investment portfolio includes diversified mutual funds, which may hold interests in companies with a presence in Turkey, but which are exempt from the conflict of interest laws. My investment portfolio also includes a sector fund, which may hold interests in companies with a presence in Turkey. Finally, my investment portfolio includes financial interests in companies with a presence in Turkey. I am committed to ensuring that my official actions will not give rise to a conflict of interest. I will divest all investments the State Department Ethics Office deems necessary to avoid a conflict of interest. I will remain vigilant with regard to my ethics obligations.

Question. Research from private industry demonstrates that, when managed well, diversity makes business teams better both in terms of creativity and in terms of productivity. What will you do to promote, mentor and support your staff that come from diverse backgrounds and underrepresented groups in the Foreign Service?

Answer. In my current position as Acting Assistant Secretary for the Bureau of Near Eastern Affairs, I have made clear that the U.S. government's commitment to equal employment opportunity should be respected and promoted. I have encouraged and supported the Equal Employment Opportunity Counselor program and I will continue this approach if confirmed as Chief of Mission for Turkey.

Question. What steps will you take to ensure each of the supervisors at the Embassy are fostering an environment that is diverse and inclusive?

Answer. If confirmed, I will convey to all supervisors at Mission Turkey my expectation that they will promote and respect an inclusive climate that fosters diversity, including the commitment to equal employment opportunity, and will reinforce this message through my example.

Question. How do you believe political corruption impacts democratic governance and the rule of law generally, and in the Republic of Turkey specifically?

Answer. Political corruption has a deleterious effect upon the rule of law, and fighting against corruption helps to strengthen democratic institutions.

Corruption remains a serious concern in Turkey, a reality reflected in Turkey's falling score in recent years in Transparency International's annual Corruption Perceptions Index, where it ranked 78 of 180 countries and territories around the world in 2018. government mechanisms to investigate and punish alleged abuse and corruption by state officials remained inadequate, and impunity remained a problem. Though independent in principle, the judiciary remained prone to government interference, including with respect to the investigation and prosecution of major corruption cases. In some cases, the 2016-2018 state of emergency amplified pre-existing concerns about judicial independence.

Question. What is your assessment of corruption trends in the Republic of Turkey and efforts to address and reduce it by that government?

Answer. Turkey's score in Transparency International's Perceptions of Corruption Index has dropped from 50 in 2013 to 41 in 2018, ranking it 78 of 180 countries. We have seen no pattern or mechanism for investigating, indicting, and convicting individuals accused of corruption, and there are concerns regarding the impartiality of the judiciary in the handling of corruption cases. There are no reports that senior government officials faced official investigations for alleged corruption, and journalists accused of publicizing corruption allegations have at times faced criminal charges.

Question. If confirmed, what steps will you take to strengthen good governance and anticorruption programming in the Republic of Turkey?

Answer. If confirmed, I will continue the Department's engagement with the government of Turkey as well as work with Turkish civil society groups on issues of importance to Turkish citizens, including those related to good governance and anticorruption, such as increasing legal protections for journalists, particularly investigative journalists, civil society members, anti-corruption NGOs, and growing the space for freedom of expression.

Democracy/Human Rights/Rule of Law

Question. According to the most recent State Department Human Rights Report, since 2016 Turkey has purged more than 130,000 government employees, jailed more than 80,000 individuals, closed more than 1,500 NGOs, shuttered more than 200 media outlets, and imprisoned scores of journalists. The Committee to Protect Journalists ranks Turkey as the world's worst jailer of journalists, with at least 68 reporters behind bars at the end of last year. Particularly over the past two years, we have seen a steady stream of farcical indictments alleging involvement in terrorism, espionage, coup attempts, and "insulting the president" levied against every manner of peaceful activist, reporter, politician, and even innocent Americans and the local staff of our consulates in the country.

- Given this state of affairs, in your opinion, is Turkey a democracy? What effective checks remain on Erdogan's presidency?

Answer. As described in the Department's 2018 Human Rights Report, Turkey is a constitutional republic with an executive presidential system and a 600-seat legislature. Although the constitution and law provide citizens the ability to change their government through free and fair elections, the government restricted equal competition and placed restrictions on the fundamental freedoms of assembly and expression.

Question. What do you believe the United States should do to preserve and strengthen the remaining elements of Turkish civil society that defend democracy and human rights?

Answer. If confirmed, I will show support to civil society members, human rights groups, and other non-governmental organizations in Turkey. The United States values the voice and opinions of civil society and has a long history of engaging leaders both inside and outside the government, a tradition I will continue. I will also be clear with the Turkish government in public and in private that the United States views transparency, a free press, freedom of expression, and rule of law as important elements to the health of Turkish democracy.

Question. Will you raise the issue of politically motivated prosecutions of democratically elected officials with Turkey in your capacity as ambassador?

Answer. Yes. The Department has repeatedly expressed serious concern about the pattern of actions by Turkish officials, which appear to target those whose views differ from the government's, including opposition politicians, public intellectuals, civil society actors, lawyers, and journalists. If confirmed, I will underscore the importance of transparency and respect for rule of law.

Question. What role do you see for the U.S. Mission to Turkey in advocating for respect for the human rights and fundamental freedoms of Turkish citizens and in raising specific cases of violations? How would you balance the use of private engagement with public messaging?

Answer. If confirmed, I will urge Turkey, publicly and privately at the highest levels, to respect and uphold human rights and fundamental freedoms, and support judicial independence. I will use whatever form of messaging and engagement that is most effective at achieving results under the particular circumstances of each case.

Detentions

Question. As you know, Turkish authorities continue to interfere with the work of the U.S. Mission to Turkey by holding two veteran local employees—Metin Topuz and Mete Canturk—of the U.S. Consulate General in Istanbul in jail and under house arrest. U.S. citizen and NASA scientist Serkan Golge is one of several American citizens caught up in the sweeping government-led purge that followed the 2016 coup attempt in Turkey. Senator Wicker and I introduced legislation last week that would impose visa denials and asset freezes on the officials responsible for this ongoing injustice.

- Bearing in mind that justice delayed is justice denied, what do you plan to do to secure the prompt release of these local staff and a timely, fair, and transparent adjudication of their cases?

Answer. If confirmed, I will continue Mission Turkey's ongoing engagement to ensure fair, timely treatment of all detainees and the release of all those held arbitrarily. I am committed to taking whatever steps are necessary to ensure the fair resolution of these cases. I will also continue to raise the cases of wrongfully detained U.S. citizens and local employees of the U.S. Mission in Turkey at the highest levels.

Question. How will you protect your other locally employed staff and their families from similar legal jeopardy?

Answer. If confirmed, I will engage the Turkish government at the highest levels to make it clear that arbitrarily detaining our local staff or their families is unacceptable and undermines our ability to cooperate on other elements of the bilateral relationship.

Question. Can Congress play a role in giving you the tools you need to let the Turkish government know this kind of behavior will not be tolerated?

Answer. If confirmed, I intend to utilize all resources at my disposal. I am looking forward to working with Congress and hope to utilize any resources or tools that Congress provides to the Department of State to help strengthen rule of law and respect for human rights in Turkey. If confirmed, I would also welcome Congressional delegations to help reinforce the United States' position that accountable and responsive government, rule of law, and respect for fundamental freedoms are bulwarks of sovereignty and internal and international stability.

Demographic Change/North Syria Intentions

Question. Turkish leadership has repeatedly threatened unilateral military action in northern Syria to create a buffer zone or otherwise seize strategically important territory from Kurdish militias in northern Syria. It has threatened to use force against the Syrian Democratic Forces—U.S. partners in the fight against ISIS—and has often preferred force to negotiations in handling its own Kurdish question:

- What do you think the consequences of a unilateral Turkish military incursion into northern Syria would be on the local populations in Syria and on the broader dynamics within Syria's Civil War?

Answer. We are fully committed to Turkey's security. As we have said before, however, unilateral military strikes into northeast Syria by any party, particularly as U.S. personnel may be present or in the vicinity, are of great concern to us. We have made clear that any actions that could destabilize areas liberated from ISIS could bring about a resurgence of ISIS, which remains a threat in northern Syria.

Question. How can the United States encourage Turkey to seek diplomatic, rather than military, solutions in this regard?

Answer. The President, the Secretary of State, and Ambassador Jeffrey have engaged extensively with their Turkish counterparts on how to ensure a stabilized northeast Syria. At every opportunity, the Administration has emphasized that we believe it is possible to reach an arrangement that meets Turkish national security priorities while allowing for ongoing Coalition efforts to defeat ISIS. We are engaged in ongoing military-to-military and diplomatic consultations with our Turkish counterparts to achieve these objectives.

Question. Do you believe Turkey intends to take delivery of an S-400 air defense system from Russia? What can the Administration do to prevent this from happening?

Answer. The Administration has made it clear that procurement of S-400 will put Turkey's continued participation in the F-35 program and other potential future arms transfers to Turkey at risk, as well as lead to potential actions under the Countering America's Adversaries through Sanctions Act (CAATSA) upon any individuals or entities involved in such a transaction.

As Vice President Pence said at the NATO 70th Anniversary event, "Turkey must choose. Does it want to remain a critical partner in the most successful military alliance in history, or does it want to risk the security of that partnership by making such reckless decisions that undermine our alliance?"

Question. Is the Administration's decision to end Turkey's preferential trade status in March 2019 at all related to the S-400 issue?

Answer. The General System of Preferences (GSP) is a unilateral trade benefit program intended to help the world's poorest countries grow economically. USTR's review found that Turkey is sufficiently economically developed and should no longer benefit from preferential market access to the United States market. Turkey's increase in Gross National Income per capita, declining poverty rates, and export diversification are evidence of Turkey's higher level of economic development since the United States designated Turkey as a GSP beneficiary country in 1975.

Question. According to the State Department's annual human rights report, at the end of 2018, 6,000 lawmakers, executives, and party members from the pro-Kurdish Peoples' Democratic Party (HDP) were in prison on politicized charges. Will you

raise the issue of politically motivated prosecutions of democratically elected officials with Turkey in your capacity as ambassador?

Answer. The Administration is seriously concerned by the pattern of actions by Turkish officials, which appear to target those whose views differ from the government, including opposition politicians. If confirmed, I will underscore the importance of transparency and respect for due process. Fair and non-politicized judicial process will reinforce confidence in the Turkish judicial system among citizens.

Question. According to the text of the North Atlantic Treaty, NATO states commit to safeguard the freedom, common heritage and civilization of their peoples, founded on the principles of democracy, individual liberty and the rule of law.″ The government of Turkey has fallen short of this standard in its treatment of ethnic minority populations, like Kurds and Armenians, and of its political opposition:

- As Ambassador to Turkey, how would you encourage the current government to better uphold principles of pluralism and democracy?″

Answer. Turkey has long been a multi-ethnic, multi-religious state and we welcome the government's recognition of the richness these communities provide.

The Administration is concerned about Turkey's negative trajectory on democracy, rule of law, and respect for human rights and fundamental freedoms. Transparency, respect for the rule of law, and freedom of the press, expression, association, and of peaceful assembly are pillars of established democracies. If confirmed, I will continue to promote these values.

Question. According to the text of the North Atlantic Treaty, NATO states commit to "settle any international dispute in which they may be involved by peaceful means in such a manner that international peace and security and justice are not endangered, and to refrain in their international relations from the threat or use of force in any manner inconsistent with the purposes of the United Nations." Turkey has repeatedly threatened to use force against the Syrian Democratic Forces—U.S. partners in the fight against ISIS—and has often preferred force to negotiations in handling its own Kurdish question:

- Is this in line with Turkey's NATO commitments and values?

Answer. Turkey is a NATO ally and a key partner in the Global Coalition to Defeat ISIS. We are fully committed to its security. We also want to ensure that our partners who continue to fight with us are not attacked, and that forces acting in Syria are not able to attack Turkey, all while protecting the safety of civilians.

Question. How can the United States encourage Turkey to seek diplomatic, rather than military, solutions in this regard?

Answer. The President, the Secretary of State, and Ambassador Jeffrey have engaged extensively with their Turkish counterparts on how to ensure a stabilized northeast Syria. At every opportunity, this administration has emphasized that we believe it is possible to reach an arrangement that meets Turkish national security priorities while allowing for ongoing Coalition efforts to defeat ISIS. We are engaged in ongoing military-to-military and diplomatic consultations with our Turkish counterparts to achieve these objectives.

RESPONSES TO ADDITIONAL QUESTIONS FOR THE RECORD
SUBMITTED TO DAVID SATTERFIELD BY SENATOR JEANNE SHAHEEN

Question. Should the United States be prepared to counter the expansion of Gazprom's TurkStream pipeline as well as the nuclear reactors being financed by Russia in Turkey's southeast?

Answer. Turkstream does not advance Europe's need for greater energy diversification. When complete, the first line of TurkStream will transit gas exclusively to Turkey's large and relatively diversified domestic market, replacing volumes that are currently shipped by Gazprom to Turkey via the Trans Balkan Pipeline. However, the second line would increase Europe's reliance on Russian gas. Rosatom's construction of the Akkuyu nuclear power plant in Turkey's southeast may also deepen Turkey's dependence on Russian energy sources, as Russian suppliers would provide all of the nuclear fuel for the reactors. If confirmed, I will engage with government of Turkey on the need for energy diversification and security, including through the importation of more U.S. liquefied natural gas.

The Department of State takes the implementation and enforcement of the Countering America's Adversaries through Sanctions Act (CAATSA) seriously. If confirmed, it will be the highest priority for me and the mission to closely monitor

Gazprom's TurkStream pipeline projects as well as other projects by Russia that may deepen Turkey and Europe's reliance on Russian energy.

Question. According to the NGO We Will Stop Femicides (Kadin Cinayetlerini Durduracagiz Platformu), a total of 440 women lost their lives through violence (mostly committed by male relatives or spouses) in Turkey in 2018. The organization said that in 88 percent of these cases, it was "not clear" whether the state protected the woman under threat. What do you think is driving this increasing trend of violence against women in Turkey, and if confirmed, what are your plans to address this matter? How will you work with the government of Turkey to ensure that they are addressing this growing problem in Turkey? Are there particular organizations that you plan to work with?

Answer. Mission Turkey closely tracks the issue of violence against women. The Mission publicly and vocally engages on this issue, from speaking directly with the government to partnering with NGOs that empower and educate young women and girls, as well as engaging with the public via social and traditional media.

NGOs have reported that the annual rate of women who lost their lives through violence in the country has steadily increased since 2002. Some assess that the increase may be the result of greater awareness and reporting. Some activists have also raised concerns about social trends that advocate more traditional roles for women and restrictive conditions on independent women's organizations.

Mission Turkey actively engages with a range of women's rights and advocacy groups. If confirmed, I will continue to work with organizations committed to addressing the problem of violence against women in Turkey. I will also encourage the Turkish government to improve services for victims of violence, including improving psychosocial services for victims of such forms of violence.

Question. I was pleased by your testimony and statements regarding Sekan Golge, Hamza Ulucay, Metin Topuz, and Mete Canturk. If confirmed, do you pledge to visit this American citizen and these Mission Turkey employees? As you know, they are either in jail or under house arrest. If you feel like you cannot commit to a visit to each, please explain why.

Answer. If confirmed, I will continue Mission Turkey's ongoing engagement to ensure the fair, timely, and transparent treatment of Serkan Golge and the remaining two detained Mission Turkey employees. I am committed to taking whatever steps are necessary to ensure the fair resolution of these cases, including attending trials and visiting wrongfully detained persons when legally appropriate and helpful for securing their just treatment and release. I will also continue to raise the cases of wrongfully detained U.S. citizens and local employees of the U.S. Mission in Turkey at the highest levels.

Question. The 2018 State Department Human Rights Report highlighted that Turkish authorities had dismissed or suspended more than 130,000 civil servants from their jobs, arrested or imprisoned more than 80,000 citizens and closed more than 1,500 non-governmental organizations (NGOs) on terrorism-related grounds since the coup attempt in 2016. However, the human rights issues were not limited to the purge but also included arbitrary killings; suspicious deaths of persons in custody; forced disappearances; torture; arbitrary arrest and detention of tens of thousands of persons, including opposition members of parliament, lawyers, journalists, foreign citizens, and three Turkish-national employees of the U.S. Mission to Turkey for purported ties to "terrorist" groups or peaceful legitimate speech; political prisoners, including numerous elected officials and academics; closure of media outlets and criminal prosecution of individuals for criticizing government policies or officials; blocking websites and content; severe restriction of freedoms of assembly and association; restrictions on freedom of movement; and violence against women, and lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, and intersex (LGBTI) persons, and members of other minorities. The detailed country report also provided many concrete examples of human rights abuses such as 28 disappearance cases across the country.

- Despite these damning statistics, last year, I had to step in when the State Department canceled a very small funding stream meant to go to Turkish civil society organizations (to help them engage with other civil society actors outside of Turkey). I understand that the space for civil society engagement in Turkey is narrowing by the day, but what can we do to continue working with those elements of Turkish society that share our values and are willing to risk their lives to build a more democratic Turkey?

Answer. If confirmed, I will continue the Department's engagement with the government of Turkey as well as its work with Turkish civil society groups on the respect for fundamental freedoms and rule of law, improving protections for journal-

ists and civil society members, workers' rights, and growing the space for freedom of expression.

Question. Will you advocate for Osman Kavala's release, who is being held in solitary confinement, and the release of other civil society actors, including those in Amnesty International, who have been jailed without adequate evidence and largely bogus charges?

Answer. The Department has expressed grave concern about the case of Osman Kavala and the 15 other civil society and media leaders that prosecutors in Turkey indicted earlier this year, as well as other similar cases. If confirmed, I will continue to advocate for the rights to freedom of expression, peaceful assembly, and association. These rights are fundamental to any healthy democracy, and I will continue to urge Turkey to respect these freedoms and to release all those held arbitrarily.

Question. Do you plan to prioritize cultural programming to help represent American culture in a positive light in Turkey? I am concerned that average Turks only have the perception of the U.S. that is portrayed on largely Erdogan-owned media which depicts the U.S. in a very negative light?

Answer. There is considerable misinformation circulating in Turkish media concerning U.S. policy and American culture. Cultural programming and exchange programs are effective means of correcting misconceptions and misinformation. If confirmed, I will use every resource at my disposal to help represent the United States and American culture in an accurate light.

Question. Studies by the DFRLab and Rand have pointed to the rise of Sputnik Turkiye as an "independent news source" in Turkey. How will you bolster Voice of America and other truly independent sources of news in Turkey? Will you incorporate Voice of America, etc. in the Embassy's social media platforms, etc.?

Answer. I am aware of Sputnik Turkiye's role in the Turkish media space, as well as others like it. If confirmed, I look forward to working closely with the Department's Global Engagement Center and other U.S. government programs to help stop disinformation and enable larger audiences to gain greater access to accurate information about U.S. culture and policy. In doing so, I hope to build upon Mission Turkey's support for international public broadcasters such as the Voice of America to bolster diverse and independent sources of programming in the absence of a strong, independent media in Turkey, and the use of social media platforms to amplify this content.

NOMINATIONS

THURSDAY, MAY 16, 2019

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

The committee met, pursuant to notice, at 2:00 p.m. in Room SD–419, Dirksen Senate Office Building, Hon. Mitt Romney, presiding.

Present: Senators Romney [presiding], Cardin, Shaheen, Udall, and Kaine.

OPENING STATEMENT OF HON. MITT ROMNEY, U.S. SENATOR FROM UTAH

Senator ROMNEY. This hearing of the Senate Foreign Relations will come to order.

Today the committee will hold a nominations hearing for four ambassadorial positions. I appreciate that each of you has answered a call to serve our country.

First, we are going to hear from Ms. Bridget A. Brink, to be Ambassador to the Slovak Republic. Ms. Brink previously served as Deputy Assistant Secretary for the Bureau of European and Eurasian Affairs and as Deputy Chief of Mission at the U.S. Embassy in Uzbekistan. Her career has been devoted to European affairs, and I hope to hear how this experience could shape her time in Slovakia and will help her meet the challenges that Russia is posing in the region.

Second, we have Mr. Kenneth A. Howery, to be Ambassador to the Kingdom of Sweden. As the co-founder of PayPal, as well as an early investor in major Silicon Valley companies such as Facebook and SpaceX, Mr. Howery has helped shape Silicon Valley, and I am interested to hear how he plans to approach this new challenge. I am especially interested in Mr. Howery's views on the challenges Russia poses to Sweden today and how we can continue to strengthen the relationship with that great country.

Our third nominee is Colonel Matthew S. Klimow, to be Ambassador to Turkmenistan. Colonel Klimow, thank you for your service to our country, first for your career in the Army and also for your time as Deputy Assistant Secretary for NATO and the Senior Advisor for the Under Secretary of Management at the State Department. Turkmenistan lies bordering both Iran and Afghanistan and, of course, has a long history with Russia given that it was formerly part of the Soviet Union. It also has deep ties to China. I look forward to hearing from you on how you might preserve U.S. strategic interests in the area given the many adversaries at its doorstep.

Our fourth nominee is Mr. John Jefferson Daigle, to be Ambassador to the Republic of Cabo Verde. Mr. Daigle is a Foreign Service officer who currently serves as the Designated Federal Official for the United States Advisory Commission on Public Diplomacy. Previously, Mr. Daigle has served in places like Cambodia and Iraq. Cabo Verde is a prime example of how an island chain small in size can still have strategic value. I look forward to hearing your thoughts on how we can strengthen our relationship with this nation.

With that, I would like to recommend that we recognize the distinguished ranking member for her comments. Senator Shaheen?

STATEMENT OF HON. JEANNE SHAHEEN, U.S. SENATOR FROM NEW HAMPSHIRE

Senator SHAHEEN. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

And congratulations to each of you, and thank you for your willingness to be considered for these nominations to these very important posts.

I am going to submit my opening statement for the record and look forward to hearing your comments as nominees and the discussion that follows. Thank you.

[Senator Shaheen's prepared statememt follows:]

PREPARED STATEMENT OF HON. JEANNE SHAHEEN

Thank you, Mr. Chairman, and thank you to the nominees before us today and their families. Ms. Brink, Mr. Howery, Colonel Klimow and Mr. Daigle, each of the respective countries you have been nominated to serve in are at the helm of critical U.S. foreign policy priorities.

Ms. Brink, given your extensive experience in the European Bureau and in Georgia, you are well aware of the strategic relevance of Central Europe and of the U.S. and EU's energy diversification goals in that region. Further, I was particularly pleased to see the Slovak Republic elect its first woman and youngest-ever president last March. I am looking forward to hearing your input on these matters today.

Mr. Howry, Sweden is not only a critical counterterrorism partner in Iraq, but it is on the frontlines of the fight against Russian malign influence. I will be interested to hear your thoughts on how we can better support Sweden in its dealings with Russian flyovers, disinformation and other hostile actions and ensure that the administration's rhetoric is not amplifying the false narratives that the Kremlin is circulating.

Colonel Klimkow, Turkmenistan's strategic location is undoubtedly important for U.S. security interests, particularly as they relate to Afghanistan and Iran, but Turkmenistan's record on human rights and reliance on China is of extreme concern. I am interested to hear how the U.S. can best balance its priorities in that country.

And, Mr. Daigle, as you know well, the State Department considers Cabo Verde to be "one of Africa's success stories." Given the strategic location of Cabo Verde, the U.S. investment made in that country and the sizable Cabo Verdean diaspora in the United States, it is definitely in our interest to continue Cabo Verde's progress. I look forward to your thoughts on that matter.

Again, welcome and congratulations to all of the nominees today. I look forward to hearing your testimony and answers to our questions.

Senator ROMNEY. Thank you, Senator Shaheen.

We are now going to turn to our first nominee, Ms. Bridget Brink. Thank you for your willingness to take on this important role. Your full statement will be included in the record, without objection. So if you could please keep your remarks to no more than 5 minutes, we would appreciate it so that members of the committee can engage you with their questions. Ms. Brink?

STATEMENT OF BRIDGET A. BRINK, OF MICHIGAN, A CAREER MEMBER OF THE SENIOR FOREIGN SERVICE, CLASS OF MINISTER–COUNSELOR, TO BE AMBASSADOR EXTRAORDINARY AND PLENIPOTENTIARY OF THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA TO THE SLOVAK REPUBLIC

Ms. BRINK. Thank you, Mr. Chairman, Ranking Member Shaheen, distinguished members of the Foreign Relations Committee, for the opportunity to appear before you today.

I am honored to be President Trump's nominee for the position of U.S. Ambassador to the Slovak Republic. I am grateful for the trust and confidence the President and Secretary Pompeo have placed in me. If confirmed, I pledge to work with you to advance our nation's interests in the Slovak Republic.

I first want to introduce and thank my husband, Nicholas Higgins, for his love and support for over 26 years. A fellow Foreign Service officer, Nick has served in Afghanistan, India, and Georgia, and has traveled from Armenia to be here today. We are so proud of our children, Jack and Cole, who are also here today. As part of a diplomatic family that has moved every few years for their entire lives, I want to thank them for their own service to our country.

Coming from Michigan, I know these careers have taken us far from those who gave us so much. I want to acknowledge and thank my mother, Gwen Brink; father and stepmother, John and Judy Brink; sister, Joanna Brink; nephews, Andrew and Andre Brink; aunt and uncle, Mary and Patrick Sayne, as well as my in-laws, Adrienne and Kingsley Foster; and my brothers and sisters-in-law, all of whom have been bedrocks of support every step of the way.

I have worked closely with our NATO allies and EU partners to advance U.S. interests in Europe throughout my nearly 23-year career.

If confirmed, my number one priority would be to ensure the security and safety of my embassy team, as well as any and all U.S. citizens living and traveling in the Slovak Republic. I would also focus the work of the embassy on three main priorities.

First, I would reinforce our defense partnership with Slovakia. As a member of NATO, Slovakia contributes to NATO missions in Afghanistan, Iraq, and Latvia. Slovakia also plans to meet the NATO Wales Pledge of spending 2 percent of GDP ahead of schedule. If confirmed, I will work to deepen our defense cooperation, which shores up security on NATO's eastern flank. I will also encourage increased energy security as a key part of any nation's national security.

Second, I would promote increased trade and investment opportunities. If confirmed, I will prioritize the continued health of Slovakia's business climate for U.S. investors and work to improve transparency and accountability.

Third, I would underscore and promote our shared values. Since the end of the Cold War, Slovakia has anchored itself solidly within the democratic family of nations. If confirmed, I will support the strengthening of democratic institutions and the rule of law that underpin our transatlantic bond.

With Secretary Pompeo's visit to Bratislava in February and President Trump's Oval Office meeting with Prime Minister

Pellegrini earlier this month, the United States is deepening our partnership with Slovakia. If confirmed, it would be my highest honor to lead our talented team in Slovakia to build on this diplomatic investment and advance our country's interests there and across the region.

Mr. Chairman, Ranking Member Shaheen, and members of the committee, thank you again for the opportunity to appear before you today. I welcome your questions.

[The prepared statement of Ms. Brink follows:]

PREPARED STATEMENT OF BRIDGET A. BRINK

Mr. Chairman, Ranking Member Shaheen, distinguished members of the Foreign Relations Committee, thank you for the opportunity to appear before you today. I am honored to be President Trump's nominee for the position of U.S. Ambassador to the Slovak Republic. I am grateful for the trust and confidence the President and Secretary Pompeo have placed in me. If confirmed, I pledge to work with you to advance our nation's interests in the Slovak Republic.

I first want to introduce and thank my husband Nicholas Higgins for his love and support for over 26 years. A fellow Foreign Service officer, Nick has served in Afghanistan, India, and Georgia, and has traveled from Armenia to be here today. We are so proud of our children, Jack and Cole, who are also here today. As part of a diplomatic family that has moved every few years for their entire lives, I want to thank them for their own service to our country.

Coming from Michigan, I know these careers have taken us far from those who gave us so much. I want to acknowledge and thank my mother Gwen Brink, father and stepmother, John and Judy Brink, sister Joanna Brink, nephews Andrew and Andre Brink, aunt and uncle Mary and Patrick Sayne as well as my in-laws Adrienne and Kingsley Foster and my brothers and sisters-in-law, all of whom have been bedrocks of support every step of the way.

As a new officer serving in Belgrade during the Balkan wars, a political officer supporting historic reform in Georgia, and a policymaker in Washington during Russia's attempts to redraw the borders of Europe, I have worked closely with our NATO Allies and EU partners to advance U.S. interests in Europe throughout my nearly 23-year career. As a student in London in 1989, I remember clearly that November day when the Berlin Wall fell. Eight days later, the Velvet Revolution began. In the three decades since, the United States has been proud to support Slovakia's transition to democracy and its NATO accession.

If confirmed, my number one priority would be to ensure the safety and security of my Embassy team as well as any and all U.S. citizens in the Slovak Republic. I would also focus the work of the Embassy on three priorities:

First, I would reinforce our defense partnership with Slovakia. As a member of NATO, Slovakia contributes to NATO missions in Afghanistan, Iraq, and Latvia. Slovakia is also modernizing its military with NATO-interoperable equipment. Last year's purchase of 14 U.S.-made F-16s was the largest defense procurement in Slovakia's history and signaled Slovakia's commitment to strengthening its relationship with the United States. Slovakia plans to meet the NATO Wales Pledge of spending two percent of its GDP on defense ahead of schedule. If confirmed, I will prioritize this cooperation, which shores up security on NATO's Eastern Flank.

I will also encourage increased energy security, a key part of any nation's national security.

Second, I would promote increased trade and investment opportunities. Since joining the EU in 2004, Slovakia's economy has become one of the fastest growing in Europe. If confirmed, I will pursue U.S. investment and export promotion efforts to maximize the many commercial opportunities in the Slovak market. I will also prioritize the continued health of Slovakia's business climate for U.S. investors, and work to improve its transparency and predictability. I will promote opportunities for Slovak firms seeking to invest in the United States.

Third, I would prioritize our shared values. Since the end of the Cold War, Slovakia has anchored itself solidly within the democratic family of nations. I understand that the people of Slovakia care deeply about safeguarding their hard-won freedoms. I am proud of the support that America has offered to Slovakia at critical moments in its history. If confirmed, I would support the strengthening of democratic institutions and rule of law with the knowledge that accountability and transparency are essential to modern democracies and economic prosperity.

With Secretary Pompeo's visit to Bratislava in February—the first such visit in almost 20 years—and President Trump's Oval Office meeting with Prime Minister Pellegrini earlier this month, the United States is deepening our partnership with Slovakia. If confirmed, it would be my highest honor to lead our talented team in Slovakia to build on this diplomatic investment and advance our country's interests there and across the region.

Mr. Chairman, Ranking Member Shaheen, and members of the committee, thank you again for the opportunity to appear before you today. I welcome your questions.

Senator ROMNEY. Thank you, Ms. Brink.

Mr. Howery?

STATEMENT OF KENNETH A. HOWERY, OF TEXAS, TO BE AMBASSADOR EXTRAORDINARY AND PLENIPOTENTIARY OF THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA TO THE KINGDOM OF SWEDEN

Mr. HOWERY. Mr. Chairman, Ranking Member, distinguished members of the committee, thank you for the honor and privilege of addressing the committee as the President's nominee to be the United States Ambassador to the Kingdom of Sweden.

I thank President Trump and Secretary Pompeo for their trust in me for this important nomination. I also thank the professionals at the White House, State Department, and the U.S. embassy in Sweden.

My mother, Karen Howery, is here, and my father, Ken Howery, is watching from overseas. I owe them my thanks as well. They embody integrity, hard work, and giving back, and instilled those values in their children, as my sister Christina can attest. She is here today, and her husband John and their daughters, Emma and Eden, are watching in Austin.

Family taught me the importance of public service. My grandfathers are no longer with us, but their legacies remain. Both served in World War II: Fred Howery in the Navy in the Pacific theater and Hubert Jurek in the Army in Europe and North Africa. Without the encouragement of my family and the examples they set, I would not be here today. I am grateful to them all, and I believe my grandfathers would be pleased that I might also serve, in a different way, the nation they loved.

A visit to the Capitol is a reminder that ideas and determination can shape the world. I hope my own experience reflects those principles. When I graduated from Stanford, I co-founded PayPal. Our idea was simple: to make online transactions easy.

PayPal started small. We drafted our first business plan in a windowless broom closet. Today, PayPal is one of the world's large e-payments systems, operating in over 200 regions and countries with over 18,000 employees. But what is extraordinary about that story is how ordinary it is. America's tremendous talent pool and business climate encourage constant innovation. That is true for Sweden too.

After PayPal, I co-founded a venture capital firm that has supported hundreds of new companies, helping create tens of thousands of jobs and fostering innovation in space exploration, quantum computing, biotechnology, virtual reality, alternative energy, and consumer technologies. One of them is Spotify, which was born in Sweden, has operations in the U.S., and trades on the New York Stock Exchange.

International issues have always been important to me in business and more broadly. I have participated in the World Economic Forum and am a member of the Explorers Club, which promotes scientific exploration. I also advise Kiva, a nonprofit that helps individuals make micro-loans to fight poverty in over 80 nations.

I have had the good fortune to travel to 99 countries, including trips to Sweden, a country for which, like many Americans, I have great affinity. Our two nations share long ties of kinship and common values. The formal American-Swedish relationship dates to 1783 when Sweden became one of the first nations to recognize the United States in the Treaty of Amity and Commerce, cosigned by Benjamin Franklin, our first envoy to Sweden.

If confirmed, I will devote myself to deepening that legacy, emphasizing economic and security partnerships. American-Swedish trade already encompasses everything from medicines and machine parts to clothing and furniture. We can expand established trade while creating entirely new opportunities. Our nations are leaders in technological innovation and transnational investment, providing ample opportunities for mutual benefit, which I will vigorously promote.

Another priority I will work to advance, if confirmed, is our nation's mutual commitment to security, exemplified by our cooperation on everything from counterterrorism to Arctic concerns.

Security and the prosperity it permits are pillars of the American-Swedish relationship. Strengthening those pillars allows us to build great things upon them, including expansion of our artistic, scientific, and cultural exchanges.

While there is no perfect preparation to serve as an ambassador, I believe my experience and outlook would prove particularly useful in Sweden. I have spent my career thinking about technology, which is increasingly central to growth. I also firmly believe that many goals, even those that seem impossible, can be achieved through cooperation, always being mindful that the preconditions for success are, as Franklin showed, friendship and shared priorities.

An ambassadorship is a position of honor and trust. I take those ideals seriously. If confirmed, I will strive to do credit to the office, always faithful to the values of decency, progress, and freedom that are responsible for the successes of the United States of America, the Kingdom of Sweden, and our 236 prosperous years as global partners.

Thank you for allowing me to appear before the committee today. I welcome your questions.

[The prepared statement of Mr. Howery follows:]

PREPARED STATEMENT OF KENNETH A. HOWERY

Mr. Chairman, Ranking Member, distinguished members of the committee, thank you for the honor and privilege of addressing the committee as the President's nominee to be the United States Ambassador to the Kingdom of Sweden.

I thank President Trump and Secretary Pompeo for their trust in me for this important nomination. I also thank the professionals at the White House, State Department, and the U.S. Embassy in Sweden for sharing their expertise and guidance.

My mother, Karen Howery, is here, and my father, Ken Howery, is watching from overseas. I owe them my thanks as well. They embody integrity, hard work, and giving back, and instilled those values in their children—as my sister, Christina,

can attest. She's here today, and her husband, John, and their daughters, Emma and Eden, are watching in Austin.

Family taught me the importance of public service. My grandfathers are no longer with us, but their legacies remain. Both served in World War II: Fred Howery in the Navy in the Pacific Theater and Hubert Jurek in the Army in Europe and North Africa. Without the encouragement of my family, and the examples they set, I would not be here today. I'm grateful to them all—and I believe my grandfathers would be pleased that I might also serve, in a different way, the nation that they loved.

A visit to the Capitol is a reminder that ideas and determination can and have shaped our country and the world for the better. I hope that my own experience reflects those inspirational principles. When I graduated from Stanford, I co-founded PayPal. Our idea was simple: to make on-line payments convenient and secure.

PayPal started small: we drafted our first business plan in a windowless broom closet. Today, PayPal is one of the world's largest e-payments systems, operating in over 200 regions and countries, with over 18,000 employees. But what's extraordinary about that story is how ordinary it is. America's tremendous talent pool and business climate encourage constant innovation; new ideas, companies, and jobs emerge daily. That's true for Sweden, too.

After PayPal, I co-founded a venture capital firm that has and continues to support hundreds of new companies, helping create tens of thousands of jobs, and fostering innovation in space exploration, quantum computing, biotechnology, virtual reality, alternative energy, and consumer technologies. One of those companies is Spotify, the popular music streaming platform, which was born in Sweden, has operations in the U.S., and trades on the New York Stock Exchange.

International issues have always been important to me, in business and more broadly. I've participated in the World Economic Forum and am a member of the Explorers Club, which promotes scientific exploration. I also advise Kiva, a non-profit that helps individuals to fight poverty by making micro-loans to people in over 80 countries. Kiva has helped more than 3 million people, over three-quarters of whom are women, to build better lives.

I've had the good fortune to travel to 99 countries, including trips to Sweden, a country for which, like many Americans, I have great affinity. Our two nations share long ties of kinship and common values. Swedish settlers first arrived in North America in 1638, settling along the Delaware River and today, over four million Americans claim Swedish ancestry. In addition to family, Sweden provided our young nation with one of its earliest friends. In 1783, Sweden became one of the first nations to formally recognize the United States, in the Treaty of Amity and Commerce co-signed by Benjamin Franklin, our first envoy to Sweden.

If confirmed, I will devote myself to deepening that legacy, emphasizing economic and security partnerships. American-Swedish trade already encompasses everything from medicines and machine parts to clothing and furniture; you can find iPhones in H&M pockets, and IKEA desks in American homes. The depth of our nations' commerce affirms the strength of our shared values and our commitments to free and fair trade. The United States is Sweden's largest trading partner outside of Europe, and some 1,300 American companies operate in Sweden, the largest foreign contingent that Sweden hosts. Our ties are reciprocal: Sweden is a major investor in the United States, supporting over 200,000 jobs here. Indeed, on a per capita basis, Sweden is one of the biggest investors in America, a testimony to the Swedes' enduring faith in the American endeavor. We can expand on those relationships, furthering existing trade, while paving new avenues to promote growth and employment.

In particular, American and Swedish leadership in science, technology and entrepreneurship offers considerable opportunities for mutual benefit, which I will vigorously pursue. Stockholm is already home to the second-highest number of billion-dollar technology companies per capita after Silicon Valley, creating tremendous potential for further cooperation. Our two nations also partner on everything from polar science to cancer research. And, of course, the Nobel Prize famously attests to Sweden's essential role in fostering an international climate that rewards scientific and artistic excellence, as America's many Nobel Laureates can confirm.

Another priority I will work to advance, if confirmed, is our nations' mutual commitment to security. Our countries are committed to a safe Arctic, and partner on regional security in the Baltic Sea. Sweden is also a NATO Enhanced Opportunities Partner, and has participated in international security operations in Afghanistan, Libya, and the Balkans. Our nations are close partners in the fight against terrorism, and are both members of the Global Coalition to Defeat ISIS. Sweden has long served as the United States' protecting power in North Korea, and continues to play an important role in helping to bring detained Americans home.

Security, and the prosperity it permits, are pillars of the American-Swedish relationship. Strengthening those pillars allows us to build great things upon them, including the expansion of our artistic, scientific, and cultural exchanges.

While there is no perfect preparation to serve as an ambassador, I believe that my experience and outlook would prove particularly useful in Sweden. I've spent my career thinking about technology, which is increasingly central to growth and a priority for both nations. I also firmly believe that many goals, even those that seem impossible, can be achieved through cooperation-always being mindful that the preconditions for success are, as Franklin showed, friendship and shared priorities.

An ambassadorship is a position of honor and trust. I take those ideals seriously. If confirmed, I will strive to do credit to the office, always faithful to the values of decency, progress, and freedom that are responsible for the successes of the United States of America, the Kingdom of Sweden, and our 236 prosperous years as global partners.

Thank you for allowing me to appear before the committee today. I welcome your questions.

Senator ROMNEY. Thank you, Mr. Howery.

Colonel Klimow?

STATEMENT OF COLONEL MATTHEW S. KLIMOW, USA, RETIRED, OF NEW YORK, A CAREER MEMBER OF THE SENIOR EXECUTIVE SERVICE, TO BE AMBASSADOR EXTRAORDINARY AND PLENIPOTENTIARY OF THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA TO TURKMENISTAN

Mr. KLIMOW. Mr. Chairman, Ranking Member Shaheen, and distinguished members of the committee, I am honored to appear before you today as President Trump's nominee to be the next United States Ambassador to Turkmenistan.

If confirmed, I pledge to work with this committee to advance our nation's interests in Turkmenistan and in the vital region of Central Asia.

Before I proceed, I would like to recognize my wife Edie. Edie is here today. She is a retired Army nurse, and in the course of serving our nation together, we have had 18 household moves and we hope to have the privilege to do so again.

Our son Daniel is with us. He is an attorney at the State Department, and he is here with his wife Beth, who is also serving at the State Department. I am just incredibly proud of both of them. So, as you can see, diplomacy is all in the family for us.

Mr. Chairman, the United States has long-term interests in Central Asia, and Turkmenistan presents both opportunities and challenges in furthering our policy objectives.

Turkmenistan's geopolitical significance is obvious. It has long borders with Afghanistan and Iran. It possesses some of the world's largest natural gas reserves, and it serves as a bridge between the Caucasus, Central Asia, and the regions beyond.

The reality is that Turkmenistan is situated in a tough neighborhood. Porous borders, terrorism, drug trafficking are all potential threats to Turkmenistan.

Both China and Russia exert enormous economic and political pressure on the government in Ashgabat.

Since its independence, Turkmenistan has embraced a policy of positive neutrality to ensure its sovereignty and territorial integrity.

Within those parameters, Turkmenistan has supported efforts by the United States to increase regional stability, especially in regard to Afghanistan. If confirmed, I will work to support Turkmenistan's

contributions to a stable Afghanistan and ensure that our partnership in this area continues.

I will also work diligently to bolster America's influence with the government of Turkmenistan. We have an opportunity to act as a counterweight and a positive alternative to Russia and China's unrelenting push to further their economic and political objectives at the expense of the Turkmen people.

If confirmed, I will also encourage Turkmenistan's increased integration in regional and global markets, which promotes greater stability and creates opportunities for U.S. trade and investment. I will make every opportunity to promote diversification of Turkmenistan's gas export markets across the Caspian Sea, as well as to South Asia.

Economic development, however, is a challenge in Turkmenistan given its weak regulatory environment and excessive bureaucracy. Also troubling are concerted attempts to control access to information, to include the Internet and independent news sources.

If confirmed, I will work toward making steady progress in those areas, and that effort would include encouraging access to uncensored information and taking advantage of U.S. cultural exchanges and educational opportunities.

If confirmed, I will also engage the government of Turkmenistan assertively and constructively across the full spectrum of human rights issues, to include the use of forced labor in cotton harvesting and undue restrictions on religious practices. I believe that progress in those areas is possible through forthright, consistent, pragmatic dialogue.

Mr. Chairman, in 1948, tens of thousands of people died in an earthquake that devastated the capital of Ashgabat, and that seismic fault line is still active.

I have spent a great deal of my life living and working overseas, often in dangerous places.

If confirmed, I will make the safety of our embassy a top priority, incorporating situational awareness and meticulous crisis response planning in all aspects of embassy life.

I am not a stranger to Central Asia. In the crucial months following the terrorist attacks of 11 September 2001, I traveled throughout South and Central Asia with the Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, meeting with heads of state, chiefs of defense to solidify basing rights, gain political support, and to articulate U.S. national interests. And although much has changed in the following years, those national interests endure.

I can imagine no greater honor than returning to Central Asia and representing our nation at this critical time.

But the greatest privilege that any person can ask for is to simply be entrusted to lead others. If confirmed, I will work tirelessly to make a difference in the lives of our staff, to forge a cohesive team that strengthens the institutions we deeply care about, and to do so in an atmosphere of mutual respect with dignity as our byword. That is a leader's sacred trust instilled in me at West Point, at the heart of my service as a soldier, and at the core of what we do every day as diplomats and professionals at the United States Department of State.

Thank you, Senator, and I look forward to your questions.

[The prepared statement of Colonel Klimow follows:]

PREPARED STATEMENT BY MATTHEW S. KLIMOW

Mr. Chairman and distinguished members of the committee. I am honored to appear before you today as President Trump's nominee, to be the next United States Ambassador to Turkmenistan.

If confirmed, I pledge to work with this committee to advance our nation's interests in Turkmenistan and in the vital Central Asia region.

I'd like to recognize my wife, Edie, a retired Army nurse who is with me today. In the course of serving our nation, we have had 18 household moves, and we hope to have the privilege to do so again.

Our son, Daniel, is with us—he is an attorney at the State Department—also his wife Beth, who serves at the State Department as well. So, as you can see, diplomacy is a family affair for us.

The United States has long-term interests in Central Asia, and Turkmenistan presents opportunities and challenges in furthering U.S. policy objectives.

Turkmenistan's geo-political importance is clear:

- it has long borders with Afghanistan and Iran;
- it possesses some of the world's largest natural gas reserves; and
- it serves as a bridge between the Caucasus, Central Asia, and the regions beyond.

The reality is that Turkmenistan is situated in a tough neighborhood. Porous borders, terrorism, and drug trafficking are all potential threats to Turkmenistan.

Both China and Russia exert enormous economic and political pressure on the government in Ashgabat.Since its independence, Turkmenistan has embraced a policy of "positive neutrality" to ensure its sovereignty and territorial integrity.

With those parameters, Turkmenistan has supported efforts by the United States to increase regional stability, especially in regard to Afghanistan.

If confirmed, I will work to support Turkmenistan's contributions to a stable Afghanistan and ensure that our partnership in this area continues.

I will also work diligently to bolster America's influence with the government of Turkmenistan.

We have an opportunity to act as a counterweight and positive alternative to Russia and China's unrelenting push to further their economic and political objectives at the expense of the Turkmen people.

If confirmed, I will also encourage Turkmenistan's increased integration in regional and global markets, which promotes greater stability and creates opportunities for U.S. trade and investment.

I will make every effort to promote diversification of Turkmenistan's gas export markets-across the Caspian Sea as well as to South Asia.

Economic development, however, is a challenge in Turkmenistan given its weak regulatory environment and excessive bureaucracy.

Also troubling are concerted attempts to control access to information, to include the internet and independent news sources.

If confirmed, I will work toward making steady progress in those areas. That effort would include encouraging access to uncensored information and taking advantage of U.S. cultural exchanges and educational opportunities.

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I can imagine no greater honor than returning to Central Asia and representing our nation at this critical time.

But, the greatest privilege that any person can ask for is to simply be entrusted to lead others.

If confirmed, I will work tirelessly to:

- make a difference in the lives of our staff;
- forge a cohesive team that strengthens the institutions we deeply care about; and
- do so in an atmosphere of mutual respect with dignity as our byword.

That is a leader's sacred trust,instilled in me:

- at West Point;
- at the heart of my service as a soldier; and
- at the core of what we do every day as diplomats and professionals at the United States Department of State.

Thank you, Senator. I look forward to your questions.

Senator ROMNEY. Thank you, Colonel Klimow.

Mr. Daigle?

STATEMENT OF JOHN JEFFERSON DAIGLE, OF LOUISIANA, A CAREER MEMBER OF THE SENIOR FOREIGN SERVICE, CLASS OF MINISTER–COUNSELOR, TO BE AMBASSADOR EXTRAORDINARY AND PLENIPOTENTIARY OF THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA TO THE REPUBLIC OF CABO VERDE

Mr. DAIGLE. Thank you very much, Mr. Chairman, Ranking Member Shaheen, and members of the committee.

It is my honor to appear here today as the President's nominee to be the next U.S. Ambassador to the Republic of Cabo Verde. I am grateful for the confidence that the President and Secretary of State have placed in me with this nomination. If confirmed by the Senate, I pledge to do my utmost to uphold this trust and to advance U.S. national interests.

Over the past 2 decades, I have been privileged to represent the United States at U.S. missions on four continents. Any measure of success that I have achieved during those postings would not have been possible without the love and support of my family. So I would like to start by expressing my sincerest gratitude to them. I come from a very large Louisiana family. I have 10 sisters, one brother, and more than 70 nieces and nephews, so I will not name them all here. But I do want to single out my wonderful mother, Carole Daigle; my father, World War II naval hero, Warren Daigle; and of course, my partner and spouse of 18 years, Matthew Cuenca-Daigle, who is here with me today, as he has been for almost all of my Foreign Service postings except the very first one.

Over the course of my career, I have worked with governments that are allies of the United States and with those that have had strained ties with our country. I have worked in developing nations and in rich ones. Irrespective of the host country environment, the one constant I have witnessed throughout my service is the positive impact the United States has on people around the world by staying true to our values as we further our national interests. As a public diplomacy officer, I am keenly aware of the direct relationship that exists between advancing U.S. national interests and strengthening our ties with foreign peoples and supporting them in their aspirations for a better life for themselves and their children.

Cabo Verde is a true success story in lifting up the lives of its people, having transitioned to a lower middle-income economy in recent years. The country enjoys a vibrant, multi-party democracy,

and has had an unbroken history of civilian rule since its independence in 1975. This year, we are celebrating 200 years of relations between our two countries, which stretch back to December 1818 when the United States established in Cabo Verde the first U.S. consulate in sub-Saharan Africa. Since then, many people of Cabo Verdean descent have settled in the United States, with New England now home to a large and vibrant Cabo Verdean diaspora.

Increasing economic growth and development is the top U.S. priority in Cabo Verde, which has the distinction of being the first country to complete two Millennium Challenge Corporation compacts. Both compacts focused on improving Cabo Verde's openness to investment and the private sector, which are playing vital roles in the country's development. Cabo Verde now aspires to have a bilateral trade agreement with the United States and, if confirmed, I will vigorously support efforts to increase trade and investment between our two countries. A key focus will be continuing to support Cabo Verde in strengthening its business environment in support of the administration's Africa Strategy and Prosper Africa objectives.

Cabo Verde has set an ambitious target to produce 100 percent of its energy using renewable resources by 2040. And in December 2018, Cabo Verde also announced new plans to capitalize on its geostrategic location to attract private sector investment in such areas as tourism, air transport, and maritime activity to advance the country's strategic plan for sustainable development. Both of these initiatives present exciting opportunities for U.S. companies and entrepreneurs to partner with Cabo Verde and help the country reach its goals.

In February, Boston's mayor led a delegation to Cabo Verde, and I look forward to welcoming other U.S. delegations and business people to the country wishing to explore trade and investment opportunities. U.S. investors will soon be able to take advantage of the new support and opportunities presented by the BUILD Act and the new Development Finance Corporation. I will promote these new tools as a means of attracting U.S. investment to Cabo Verde, and I will champion the country's continued efforts to improve its business climate and achieve self-reliance.

Our other top objective in Cabo Verde is strengthening security cooperation between our countries, which is reflected in our strong maritime security and law enforcement partnerships. Cabo Verde has hosted U.S. military exercises such as Epic Guardian 2016 and Africa Endeavor 2018, and the Boston police are providing training on community policing practices. AFRICOM and the U.S. Coast Guard also conduct training and exercises and share best practices with their Cabo Verdean counterparts to enhance the country's capacity to interdict illicit maritime vessels and carry out search and rescue operations. The success of this training was dramatically illustrated by Cabo Verde's interception in late January of 9 tons of cocaine bound for Europe.

Cabo Verde has also made excellent advances in recent years in combating sexual and gender-based violence and violence against children, as well as improving prison conditions. If confirmed, I pledge to sustain U.S. support and encouragement for Cabo Verde's

admirable efforts to continue making progress on these and other civil and human rights issues.

Finally, if confirmed, no responsibility will be more important to me than that of protecting the lives, interests, and welfare of the thousands of American citizens who live in Cabo Verde and the thousands more who visit the country each year.

Mr. Chairman, Ranking Member Shaheen, if confirmed, I look forward to working with you and the honorable members of this committee to advance U.S. interests in Cabo Verde and to sustain and expand the progress we have achieved in our long and positive relationship.

Again, thank you for the opportunity to appear before you today. I would be pleased to answer any questions you may have.

[The prepared statement of Mr. Daigle follows:]

PREPARED STATEMENT OF JOHN JEFFERSON DAIGLE

Thank you very much Mr. Chairman, Ranking Member, and members of the committee. It is my honor to appear here today as the President's nominee to be the next U.S. Ambassador to the Republic of Cabo Verde. I am grateful for the confidence that President Trump and Secretary of State Pompeo have placed in me with this nomination. If confirmed by the Senate, I pledge to do my utmost to uphold this trust and to advance U.S. national interests.

Over the past two decades, I have been privileged to represent the United States at U.S. missions on four continents. Any measure of success that I achieved during these postings would not have been possible without the support of my family, so I would like to start by expressing my sincerest gratitude to them. I come from a very large Louisiana family—I have 10 sisters, one brother, and more than 70 nieces and nephews—so I won't name them all, but I do want to single out my mother, Carole Daigle; my father, World War II naval hero Warren Daigle; and of course my partner and spouse of 18 years, Matthew Cuenca-Daigle, who has been with me through every posting but one.

Over the course of my career, I have worked with governments that are allies of the United States and with those that have had strained ties with our country. I have worked in developing nations and in rich ones. Irrespective of the host country environment, the one constant I have witnessed throughout my service is the positive impact the United States has on people around the world by staying true to our values as we further our national interests. As a Public Diplomacy officer, I am keenly aware of the direct relationship that exists between advancing U.S. national interests and strengthening our ties with foreign peoples and supporting them in their aspirations for a better life for themselves and their children.

Cabo Verde is a true success story in lifting up the lives of its citizens, having transitioned to a lower middle-income economy in recent years. The country enjoys a vibrant, multi-party democracy and has had an unbroken history of civilian rule since its independence in 1975. This year we are celebrating 200 years of relations between our two countries, which stretch back to December 1818 when the United States established in Cabo Verde the first U.S. consulate in subSaharan Africa. Since then, many people of Cabo Verdean descent have settled in the United States, with New England now home to a large and vibrant Cabo Verdean diaspora.

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In February, Boston's mayor led a delegation to Cabo Verde, and I look forward to welcoming other U.S. delegations and businesspeople to the country wishing to explore trade and investment opportunities. Investors will soon be able to take advantage of the new support and advantages presented by the BUILD Act and the new Development Finance Corporation. I will promote these new tools as a means of attracting U.S. investment to Cabo Verde, and I will champion the country's continued efforts to improve its business climate and achieve selfreliance.

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Our Status of Forces Agreement with Cabo Verde entered into force in November 2018. The agreement enables the U.S. military to respond more rapidly to humanitarian or disaster-related emergencies and enhances our ability to conduct military training exercises in coordination with our partners in West Africa, and AFRICOM continues to explore new ways to deepen our cooperation under the agreement. Cabo Verde is a model in the region for forging successful security partnerships, and if confirmed, it is my goal to not just maintain but to expand our collaboration with Cabo Verde in this area by working with AFRICOM and others in the inter-agency to explore all options available to us.

Cabo Verde has made excellent advances in recent years in combating sexual and gender-based violence and violence against children, as well as improving prison conditions. If confirmed, I pledge to sustain U.S. support and encouragement for Cabo Verde's admirable efforts to continue making progress on these and other civil and human rights issues.

Finally, if confirmed, no responsibility will be more important to me than that of protecting the lives, interests, and welfare of the thousands of American citizens who live in Cabo Verde and the thousands more who visit the country each year.

Mr. Chairman, Ranking Member, if confirmed, I look forward to working with you and the honorable members of this committee to advance U.S. interests in Cabo Verde and to sustain and expand the progress we have achieved in our long and positive relationship.

Again, thank you for the opportunity to appear before you today. I would be pleased to answer any questions you may have.

Senator ROMNEY. Thank you so much for your testimony, and that is true for each of you. Thank you also to your families for being here where that was possible. I mentioned earlier that we appreciate the sacrifice you have made in behalf of our country and our national interests. But I also want to underscore the appreciation we have for the members of your family and for their contributions and supporting you in these important roles.

I get 5 minutes to ask questions, and I have a question to ask each of you. So with a little math, you can figure out how much time I would like you to spend on the answer.

Ms. Brink, Russia is meddling in Slovakia, obviously, tried to disseminate information that is untrue there. The presidential elections saw a pro-Russia candidate get a good deal of support.

What do you think we can do or you can do to help combat Russia's malign interest in Slovakia?

Ms. BRINK. Thank you, Mr. Chairman, for that question. This is a really important question.

Slovakia has come a very long way since independence. One of the key areas where more work needs to be done is on anti-corruption and strengthening the transatlantic bond. With the recent

presidential election you mentioned of a person with a reputation as a strong anti-corruption fighter, I think there will be an opportunity for us to work together on that.

With regard specifically to malign influence and misinformation, in my experience corruption offers an opportunity, an opening for that, which we must try to close. And we have many programs that we work on as part of the administration with support and funding from Congress to try to fight this influence. And to be quick, I will just say we have programs that help to support independent journalists and also civil society. We use our own platforms to call out this misinformation, and we also work with the Slovak government to help the government identify and find countermeasures.

Senator ROMNEY. Thank you.

Mr. Howery, we obviously have a very strong relationship with Sweden. It is a country that is committed defense in a region which is dangerous from time to time.

Are there ways you think we need to strengthen or deepen our security partnership with the nation of Sweden?

Mr. HOWERY. Thank you for the question, Chairman Romney.

As you mentioned, the current relationship between Sweden and the United States is very strong. The two countries have signed a bilateral statement of intent for defense cooperation. They have purchased the Patriot missile system. We participate together in trainings and exercises. And so we already have a strong base upon which to build.

If confirmed, I would seek to continue strengthening bilateral ties between the U.S. and Sweden, as well as strengthening ties between Sweden and NATO; Sweden is a NATO partner, not a NATO member, but strengthening that relationship as well and work closely with Swedish officials on strengthening national security ties.

Senator ROMNEY. Thank you.

Colonel Klimow, do you have a perspective of what China is trying to do in Turkmenistan? Obviously, the Russians have long had interest in what is happening there, but is China playing a role there? And is there an effort on our part that should try and dissuade them from becoming too close to any malign intent?

Mr. KLIMOW. Thank you for your question, Senator. And also thank you for your membership and leadership in the subcommittee that oversees Central Asia.

You are correct, Senator. China has a big influence in Turkmenistan, and that is understandable. They have historic trading links that go back centuries.

Turkmenistan is a relatively young country, and I believe it is in our national interest to help them feel secure in their sense of sovereignty, independence, and territorial integrity, especially when they are dealing not only with China but with Russia as well. That is good for the entire Central Asia region to have Turkmenistan feel that they are strong enough to resist the malign efforts of the powers in the region, to include China and Russia.

It is also in our interest to help them with reforms. A stable country is based on the support of its people. It is in our interest to help them bring the Turkmen people into the 21st century marketplace of ideas and technology. I think in that way, they are bet-

ter prepared to deal with China. We offer them a very positive alternative, one without strings attached, and if confirmed, I will work hard to make that a reality.

Senator ROMNEY. Thank you very much, Colonel.

With regard to Mr. Daigle and Cabo Verde, I have to tell you that it is hard for me to pronounce that properly because as a former resident of Massachusetts, I had a number of friends there that called themselves Cape Verdeans. So I think of it being called Cape Verde. It is Cabo Verde, which is a different pronunciation, but I appreciate your willingness to be of service there.

Clearly the location geographically of this nation is of great strategic significance to anyone considering maritime trade or perhaps even naval ambition. And it is not surprising to understand that China is making a substantial investment in the country.

I wonder if there are efforts on your part—and hopefully, there will be—to dissuade the leadership there from getting involved perhaps with ports and predatory loans that China has been known for and instead focus them on projects that can build the economy for the nation but not lead them to become involved in an unfortunate way with China.

Mr. DAIGLE. Yes, sir. Thank you for that question.

As Cabo Verde exercises its sovereign right to choose its own partners, if I am confirmed, I would really advocate with the country's leaders the importance of pursuing stronger trade ties with the United States, as well as a broader range of trade partners, and also stress upon them the importance of selecting foreign investment that is high quality, inclusive, sustainable, and transparent. So I think those are the important things to stress with the country so that they do choose things that are in their best interests.

At this point, China is very active in Cabo Verde, and they have made investments in their infrastructure. But at this point, the Chinese do not hold a significant percentage of their external debt.

Senator ROMNEY. Thank you so much.

We will now turn to the ranking member for questions that she may have.

Senator SHAHEEN. Well, thank you, Mr. Chairman.

I would like to begin with you, Ms. Brink. I recently introduced legislation with a number of the members of this committee to sanction vessels that are engaged in laying deep sea pipe for Russia's pipeline, Nordstream 2 pipeline.

Given your experience in the European Bureau and the fact that there has been no sign that the construction of Nordstream 2 is slowing down, do you think that the EU member states in Central Europe are doing enough to express their concerns about Nordstream 2?

Ms. BRINK. Thank you, Senator Shaheen.

This is a really important question. Energy security is national security. And I think we all can always do more. And I would say with regard to Slovakia, this is one area that I intend to focus on. Slovakia could increase its energy independence and its national security by doing a couple things, including by continuing its opposition vocally to Nord Stream 2, which it has been. So I would encourage that.

We, as an administration, are also opposed to the second stream of Turk Stream. In addition to that area, I would also support interconnectors. There are some possibilities of interconnectors to Poland and potentially other neighboring states. We believe the free flow of gas in the region is beneficial to Slovakia and to Slovakia's security.

And then finally, there is potential for U.S. LNG and bringing U.S. LNG to Europe, which also could change the balance and the dependence on a single country. There is also nuclear energy and trying to bring that down from 100 percent dependence on Russia which would, in our view at least, be in Slovakia's interest. So I would prioritize that.

Senator SHAHEEN. Well, thank you. I appreciate your response. I think it is very important that we do everything we can to encourage Europe to diversify its electricity production and to not have another generation that is dependent on Russian oil and gas.

Mr. Howery, one of the challenges in Sweden has been Russia's effort to spread disinformation throughout the country. Some of the instances that have gained traction there have been stories about adopted Russian children who are abused, horrible stories about crimes committed by migrants.

If confirmed, how will you help to counter these false narratives?

Mr. HOWERY. Thank you for the question, Ranking Member Shaheen.

This is a really important question and one that Sweden, like ourselves, has been dealing with. Sweden has been the target of, as you mentioned, Russian disinformation, as well as cyber intrusions from Russia. And they have been a partner of ours in pushing back. We do share information in the information space with Sweden.

They have taken a number of steps, internally, to try to push back on Russian disinformation, everything from training election officials to look for election meddling in the most recent election. And they have actually set up a national board for psychological defense. These are just a few of the countermeasures I know that Sweden has implemented.

If confirmed, I would want to speak with Embassy Stockholm and Swedish officials to find out if these or other countermeasures they have taken have been effective in pushing back against Russia. So, if confirmed, I would commit to prioritizing working closely with Sweden to push back against Russian—their destabilizing activities.

Senator SHAHEEN. I hope you will also plan to meet with the Global Engagement Center at the State Department to talk about what we are doing to push back against disinformation as well.

Mr. HOWERY. I plan on doing that. Thank you.

Senator SHAHEEN. Colonel Klimow, in your written testimony, you talk about the importance of Turkmenistan for its geopolitical presence and the importance of the relationship that we have.

How do you balance that relationship with the human rights challenges that Turkmenistan is facing?

Mr. KLIMOW. Ranking Member Shaheen, thank you very much for that very thoughtful and important question.

Let me start by saying that I believe there is nothing more fundamental than human dignity. I also believe it is the duty of every American diplomat, whether it is a junior officer reporting for his or her first tour at an embassy or the chief of staff, to be a champion for American values, and those include, of course, human rights, freedom of expression, good governance and democracy. If I am confirmed, this will be one of the highest priorities of my portfolio, and I believe that I have a role to play in that regard as well.

I think part of the first things that I would need to do is to establish rapport at the highest levels of the Turkmenistan government. There are three or four areas, to include of freedom of religion, that I would like to focus on, as well as trafficking in persons where they are a tier 3 country. These are issues of great import, and I believe that through forthright, consistent, pragmatic, and disciplined messaging and engagement, we can make a difference.

Thank you, Senator.

Senator SHAHEEN. Well, thank you. I am out of time, but your last comment about the consistent, disciplined messaging I think is a good reminder of what good diplomacy includes.

Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Senator ROMNEY. Thank you.

Senator Udall?

Senator UDALL. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

And thank all of you for your service. I know three of you have been longtime career folks.

Mr. Daigle, small, low-lying islands such as those that comprise Cabo Verde are at the highest risk of suffering from climate change. With rising sea levels, these islands really risk extinction.

As Ambassador to Cabo Verde, how will you work with the government and the people of Cabo Verde to encourage them to do what they can to address climate change and its impending effects on the islands?

Mr. DAIGLE. Thank you for that question, sir.

In Cabo Verde's instance at least, the islands are volcanic. So they are a little bit more elevated than some of the lower-lying islands in the Pacific. So the risk of the islands being completely inundated is a little bit less.

But nevertheless, the effects of climate change are real in the country. They have experienced severe droughts over the past several years. Cabo Verde in Portuguese means the Green Cape, and that is certainly not the case any longer. There is not a lot of greenery left in Cabo Verde. So it is an issue that the government is seized with.

At this point, the country no longer qualifies for U.S. development assistance because it has become a lower middle-income country. But I will certainly look to partner with USAID and see what else we might be able to do to assist them in coping with climate change, particularly through USAID's regional hub in West Africa.

Senator UDALL. And how would you describe this administration's climate change policy to the country of Cabo Verde?

Mr. DAIGLE. There is a discussion underway as to what is the cause of climate change within the government and how we should deal with it. At this point, I think we have made efforts to assist

countries in coping with climate change and adjusting to it. And I will certainly see what else we might be able to do with Cabo Verde, should I be confirmed and head out there.

Senator UDALL. Mr. Howery and Mr. Daigle, is climate change a real emergency, or is it an opportunity, as Secretary Pompeo described it, because the melting ice will open up new routes to trade even as it floods coasts and low-lying areas? That was a comment made about the Arctic.

Mr. DAIGLE. Mr. Howery or Mr. Daigle?

Senator UDALL. Both of you. Mr. Howery, why do you not start on that one?

Mr. HOWERY. Thank you, Senator.

Climate change is real, but my personal views are not what is important. My job, if confirmed, will be to represent the United States and our foreign policy in Sweden. It will not be my job to set policy or to promote my personal views.

Senator UDALL. So what would you describe this administration's climate change policy as to the country that you are going to serve, which is actively been one of the leaders in the world in terms of climate change and believes it is an urgent threat and that we should move forward with it very deliberately? So what are you going to tell them what is the United States' policy, as you understand it?

Mr. HOWERY. Thank you, Senator.

If confirmed, I would help explain that regarding the Paris Agreement specifically, the President has announced his intention to withdraw the country from the Paris Agreement, absent the identification of terms more favorable to the American people.

If confirmed as Ambassador, my job would be to find points of overlap and intersection on environmental policy. Like many challenges we have faced in the past, I believe that the role of innovation and new technologies will have to play a critical role. Given my background, I will look for ways to engage the private sector. I believe this is an opportunity to leverage the ingenuity of individuals and businesses instead of just relying on regulation to help protect the environment while growing the economy. So, if confirmed, I look forward to working on this issue with Swedish officials.

Senator UDALL. And the two other panelists, would you describe your description of this administration's climate policy and how you will relate that to the country you are serving?

Mr. KLIMOW. Thank you, Senator.

Turkmenistan is a relatively young country. I would go to first principles in engaging with Turkmenistan, especially in regard to water management and the effects that climate change may have on what is a dire situation throughout Central Asia. I would also work with them in terms of smart energy. Surprisingly, I found as I began my quest to become Ambassador to Turkmenistan, that they are interested in solar power and wind power. These things, of course, will be part and parcel of the bigger energy program.

Thank you, Senator.

Senator UDALL. Mr. Chairman, with your permission, I would just ask the last witness to——

Senator ROMNEY. Absolutely, please.

Senator UDALL. Thank you for the courtesies.

Ms. BRINK. Thank you, Mr. Senator.

Slovakia was disappointed that the United States—President Trump—announced our intention to withdraw from the Paris Agreement. Slovakia had the EU presidency at the time of the conclusion of the agreement and adheres to the EU position.

If confirmed, my goal would be to try to find areas where we can work with Slovakia to address climate change, but also address other issues. And I think there are some areas where we could do both. For example, in the energy sphere, renewable energy is a real area where we can work with Slovakia to try to bring down dependence on a single country with regard to their own energy needs.

Also, we already have a lot of cooperation in the technology sector, and I think that could offer some areas of exploration as well. And I would look for any and all areas where we can continue to work together.

Senator UDALL. Thank you for the courtesies, Mr. Chairman. I appreciate it.

Senator ROMNEY. Thank you.

Senator Kaine?

Senator KAINE. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

And thanks to the witnesses. Congratulation on your nominations.

Just a couple of questions, Ms. Brink, first for you with respect to Slovakia.

Slovakia has a number of challenges, and one of them is in their military, replacing obsolete Soviet era equipment. We supported the accession of Slovakia to NATO in 2004.

How could the State Department work together with Slovakia to help them make the transition to equipment that is more compatible with those of NATO allies?

Ms. BRINK. Thank you, Mr. Senator.

This is going to be, if confirmed, one of my key priorities. We have some good news here in that Slovakia has prioritized modernizing its military as a NATO member and moving away from Soviet era military equipment. And just last year, Slovakia purchased 14 F–16's, which is a very significant purchase. They are also continuing military modernization needs. And if confirmed, I would do what I can to advocate for U.S. businesses because that would be good, obviously, for our business, but to continue to have NATO interoperable equipment is also good for Slovakia's military.

Senator KAINE. Thank you for that.

Mr. Howery, with respect to Sweden, there was news this week in the "Jerusalem Post" and elsewhere about a hate crime committed in Sweden, the stabbing of a 60-year-old woman who was a leading figure in one of Sweden's largest cities' Jewish community. And it highlights how pervasive hate crimes perpetrated against Jews have become around the country and in our own country.

I introduced a resolution in the last 2 weeks with Senator Cruz to focus upon the need for all of us to band together regardless of nationality or party to condemn and combat anti-Semitism.

As Ambassador, how would you work to try to make sure that anti-Semitism is on the decrease and not on the increase in Sweden?

Mr. HOWERY. Thank you, Senator Kaine.

I agree this is a very important issue.

As you mentioned, Sweden does struggle with, in some cases, anti-Semitism just like we have some here at home. Jews in Sweden are the most frequently targeted group relative to their size of religiously motivated hate crimes. So it is an issue.

If confirmed, I would work with Swedish officials to reiterate our support for both religious tolerance and religious freedom and work together closely with them and would welcome your involvement as well, if I am confirmed.

Senator KAINE. Thank you, Mr. Howery.

Ms. Brink, the issue has been one slightly different, but also one in Slovakia. In 2015, the foreign minister of Slovakia said, with respect to refugees, that they wanted just to take Christians. They were particularly antipathetic to taking Muslim refugees. And they cited the small Muslim population. There were not many mosques. But the notion of something like humanitarian aid you would condition it upon people's religion is very abhorrent to me, and I hope it is to you.

Sadly, this is becoming a feature in all of the hearings we are having, is what we can do at home and abroad to try to promote respect for that important American value that you are neither preferred nor punished based on how you worship or do not worship. And I hope you will also in Slovakia stand strong for that principle.

Ms. BRINK. Yes, sir. Senator, this has always been something that I have promoted through over 20 years of my foreign service career. I will continue to do so when I go to Slovakia, and I know that members of the Hill, but also our public cares about this issue since it is a key American value and it underpins the transatlantic bond that we have with Slovakia and also the rest of Europe.

Senator KAINE. It is very important. When Senator Cruz and I introduced the bill, I said we came in the Senate on the same day, but I am not sure we have ever found common cause enough on a single issue to introduce a bill together. But on this one, we were very much in common cause. And I am excited that it has picked up so many bipartisan cosponsors.

Colonel, let me ask you a question about Turkmenistan. Since 2015, the U.S.-Turkmenistan bilateral relationship has been assisted and complemented by the C5 Plus 1 Framework, which is the U.S. engagement, really a forum for the U.S. and the five Central Asian countries. And we have used that framework to talk about issues like security and economic connections and trade and environmental issues. Talk a little bit about how that framework might assist in your work, should you be confirmed as Ambassador to Turkmenistan.

Mr. KLIMOW. Thank you for that question, Senator.

In fact, a C5 Plus 1 meeting is taking place this week. This is an encouraging sign that we are making some progress I believe with the government of Turkmenistan. They recently volunteered to co-chair committees on environment. And we believe that the

fact that they stepped forward is an indication that there may be other opportunities to work with them on some of the pressing issues regarding human rights.

But the C5 Plus 1 forum is a centerpiece. It allows us to engage with Turkmenistan where in many instances, it is very difficult to reach the government of Turkmenistan in a meaningful way.

Senator KAINE. Great. Thank you.

Mr. Chair, thank you.

Senator ROMNEY. Thank you.

Thank you to all of the nominees for your very thoughtful and well reasoned responses to the questions that have come from the members. I appreciate that very much. We want to appreciate also the questions that have been asked.

And at this stage, just note that for information of the members, that the record will remain open until the close of business on Friday, including for members to submit questions for the record.

And so with the thanks of the committee, the hearing is now adjourned.

[Whereupon, at 2:50 p.m., the hearing was adjourned.]

Additional Material Submitted for the Record

RESPONSES TO ADDITIONAL QUESTIONS FOR THE RECORD
SUBMITTED TO BRIDGET A. BRINK BY SENATOR ROBERT MENENDEZ

Question. What are the most important actions you have taken in your career to date to support democracy and human rights? What has been the impact of your actions?

Answer. As Deputy Assistant Secretary of State, I worked across Eastern Europe and the Caucasus in support of democracy and human rights in Ukraine, Moldova, Belarus, Georgia, Azerbaijan, and Armenia. I led anti-corruption efforts in Ukraine and Moldova. In both countries, our support for conditioning IMF assistance on reforms resulted in important institutional steps forward, including the creation of an anti-corruption court in Ukraine and cleaning up the banking sector in Moldova. In Azerbaijan, I advocated vigorously for the release of human rights and democracy activists, and was gratified to see the release of high-profile activists Leyla and Arif Yunus and Khadija Ismailova during my tenure.As Deputy Chief of Mission in Georgia, I supported the first democratic transfer of power in that country's history with the change of power in 2012. With this peaceful transfer, Georgia was able to continue its contribution to the NATO mission in Afghanistan as well its support of European energy security with the Southern Gas Corridor. As the Chief of the Political and Economic Section, I supported the reforms of the Rose Revolution that turned around a nearly failed state. While there, I led our team to help Georgia combat trafficking-in-persons and attain "Tier 1" status on the annual Trafficking in Persons report for the first time. For our overall efforts to promote human rights, my ambassador nominated me and our human rights officer for the State Department's annual human rights award.

Question. What issues are the most pressing challenges to democracy or democratic development in the Slovak Republic? Please be as specific as possible.

Answer. The 2018 U.S. Country Report on Human Rights Practices in Slovakia highlighted several ongoing human rights issues of concern, including: corruption; violence or hate speech targeting lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, and intersex (LGBTI) persons; widespread discrimination against Roma; and security force violence against ethnic and racial minorities.

Question. What steps will you take—if confirmed—to support democracy in the Slovak Republic? What do you hope to accomplish through these actions? What are the potential impediments to addressing the specific obstacles you have identified?

Answer. If confirmed, I will work to strengthen democratic institutions and the rule of law in Slovakia, reinforcing that accountability and transparency are necessary to modern democracy and economic prosperity. I will also stress that corruption enables malign actors to undermine Slovakia's hard-fought independence.In my experience, three factors are needed to improve rule of law and fight corruption in this region: political will, strong institutions, and public accountability. The election in March of President-elect Zuzana Caputova, with her strong reputation as a fighter against corruption, suggests the Slovak people wish to see more progress in this area. Slovakia has an adequate legal structure, but democracies need an independent, impartial, and accountable judiciary whose first obligation is to uphold the law. If confirmed, I will use this opportunity to support an independent and accountable judiciary as well as other actions to strengthen Slovakia's democratic institutions.

Question. How will you utilize U.S. government assistance resources at your disposal, including the Democracy Commission Small Grants program and other sources of State Department and USAID funding, to support democracy and governance, and what will you prioritize in processes to administer such assistance?

Answer. As an EU member and World Bank-designated "high income country," Slovakia has "graduated" from U.S. development assistance. If confirmed, I will use the full range of public diplomacy and other resources at our disposal to support small-scale projects to promote democracy and good governance as well as to counter Russian disinformation.

Question. If confirmed, do you commit to meet with civil society members, human rights and other non-governmental organizations in the Slovak Republic?

Answer. If confirmed, I will engage with civil society in Slovakia, including with human rights organizations. If confirmed, I will actively monitor the health of the civil society sector and will oppose any efforts to restrict NGOs or civil society through legal or regulatory measures.

Question. If confirmed, do you commit to meet with democratically oriented political opposition figures and parties? What steps will you take to encourage genuine political competition? Will you advocate for access and inclusivity for women, minorities and youth within political parties?

Answer. If confirmed, I will meet with a broad array of democratically-oriented political opposition figures and parties and will advocate for their broad access to and inclusion in political processes. I will advocate for access and inclusivity for women, minorities, and youth within political parties.

Question. Will you and your embassy team actively engage with civil society and government counterparts on countering disinformation and propaganda disseminated by foreign state or non-state actors in the country?

Answer. Russia uses disinformation and other hybrid tactics in Slovakia to exploit historical and cultural ties. Russia also exploits broad displeasure with corruption and the rule of law within Slovakia to erode Slovak citizens' confidence in democratic institutions as well as the progress Slovakia has made as a member of the Transatlantic community. If confirmed, I will engage with civil society and government counterparts to counter disinformation and propaganda in Slovakia. I will also continue to make public messaging about the shared values, history, and experiences that unite the American and Slovak people a key Mission priority.

Question. Will you commit to using your position, if confirmed, to defend the human rights and dignity of all people in the Slovak Republic, no matter their sexual orientation or gender identity? What challenges do the lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender and queer (LGBTQ) people face in the Slovak Republic? What specifically will you commit to do to help LGBTQ people in the Slovak Republic?

Answer. If confirmed, I will work to protect and defend human rights for all, including by broadening and deepening efforts to address the bias-motivated violence and discrimination LGBTI persons face in areas such as employment and occupation, housing, and access to government services. I will also continue our Embassy's long-standing public support for the human rights of LGBTI persons. The 2018 U.S. Country Report on Human Rights Practices in Slovakia noted a number of concerns, including anti-LGBTI violence, online harassment, and the forced or coerced sterilization of transgender persons in order to obtain legal gender recognition.

Question. Do you agree that any targeting of or retaliation against career employees based on their perceived political beliefs, prior work on policy, or affiliation with a previous administration, is wholly inappropriate and has no place in the federal government? If confirmed, what will you do to ensure that all employees under your leadership understand that any retaliation, blacklisting, or other prohibited personnel practices will not be tolerated?

Answer. Yes. If confirmed, I will make sure all employees know their rights and responsibilities as set out by U.S. law and the Department's rules and regulations.

Question. Has anyone ever made a formal or informal complaint or allegation of sexual harassment, discrimination (e.g., racial, ethnic, religious, etc.), or inappropriate conduct against you, in a workplace or any other setting? If so, please describe the nature of the complaint or allegation, your response, and any resolution, including any settlements.

Answer. I have never had a formal or informal complaint or allegation of sexual harassment, discrimination, or inappropriate conduct raised against me.

Question. Have you ever addressed concerns or allegations of sexual harassment, discrimination (e.g., racial, ethnic, religious, etc.), or inappropriate conduct made against any employee over whom you had supervisory authority? If so, please describe the outcome and actions taken.

Answer. Throughout my career, I have immediately addressed any issues with regard to sexual harassment, discrimination, or inappropriate conduct by anyone over whom I have had supervisory authority in accordance with the Department of State's policies and practices in dealing with such conduct.

In cases of inappropriate conduct, I have followed the Department's established practices. With regard to discrimination, I am aware of an informal concern about conduct made against two employees at missions where I served as Deputy Chief of Mission (DCM). As DCM, I was made aware of concerns regarding any potential conduct that could be considered as a concern regarding an EEO protected category. I take any allegation seriously and follow established protocols on how such concerns should be addressed. In my role as DCM, I regularly communicated our Mission's commitment to proactively addressing any possible EEO concern and if confirmed, I am committed to continuing this practice.

RESPONSES TO ADDITIONAL QUESTIONS FOR THE RECORD
SUBMITTED TO BRIDGET A. BRINK BY SENATOR BENJAMIN L. CARDIN

Question. What are your most meaningful achievements to date in your career to promote human rights and democracy? What has been the impact of your actions?

Answer. As Deputy Assistant Secretary of State, I worked across Eastern Europe and the Caucasus in support of democracy and human rights in Ukraine, Moldova, Belarus, Georgia, Azerbaijan, and Armenia. I led anti-corruption efforts in Ukraine and Moldova. In both countries, our support for conditioning IMF assistance on reforms resulted in important institutional steps forward, including the creation of an anti-corruption court in Ukraine and cleaning up the banking sector in Moldova. In Azerbaijan, I advocated vigorously for the release of human rights and democracy activists, and was gratified to see the release of high-profile activists Leyla and Arif Yunus and Khadija Ismailova during my tenure.As Deputy Chief of Mission in Georgia, I supported the first democratic transfer of power in that country's history with the change of power in 2012. With this peaceful transfer, Georgia was able to continue its contribution to the NATO mission in Afghanistan as well its support of European energy security with the Southern Gas Corridor. As the Chief of the Political and Economic Section, I supported the reforms of the Rose Revolution that turned around a nearly failed state. While there, I led our team to help Georgia combat trafficking-in-persons and attain "Tier 1" status on the annual Trafficking in Persons report for the first time. For our overall efforts to promote human rights, my ambassador nominated me and our human rights officer for the State Department's annual human rights award.

Question. What are the most pressing human rights issues in Slovakia? What are the most important steps you expect to take—if confirmed—to promote human rights and democracy in Slovakia? What do you hope to accomplish through these actions?

Answer. The 2018 U.S. Country Report on Human Rights Practices in Slovakia highlighted several ongoing human rights issues of concern, including: corruption;

violence or hate speech targeting lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, and intersex (LGBTI) persons; widespread discrimination against Roma; and security force violence against ethnic and racial minorities. If confirmed, I will engage with Slovak authorities and civil society and encourage cooperation to promote tolerance and nondiscrimination and to address ongoing corruption concerns.

Question. If confirmed, what are the potential obstacles to addressing the specific human rights issues you have identified in your previous response? What challenges will you face in Slovakia in advancing human rights, civil society and democracy in general?

Answer. Strengthening the rule of law and addressing corruption are long-term, ongoing, and complex challenges. While Slovakia has come a long way since independence, more remains to be done. If confirmed, I will work to strengthen democratic institutions and the rule of law in Slovakia, reinforcing that accountability and transparency are necessary to modern democracy and Slovakia's continued economic success. This effort will need to involve engagement with both the Slovak government as well as members of civil society.

Question. Are you committed to meeting with human rights, civil society and other non-governmental organizations in the U.S. and with local human rights NGOs in Slovakia? If confirmed, what steps will you take to pro-actively support the Leahy Law and similar efforts, and ensure that provisions of U.S. security assistance and security cooperation activities reinforce human rights?

Answer. Yes. If confirmed, I will engage with civil society and non-governmental organizations both in the United States and in Slovakia on a range of human rights and other issues of mutual interest. With my experience in the Balkans, I appreciate the importance of the Leahy Law and will ensure all the required vetting is carried out for any security assistance and security cooperation activities.

Question. Will you and your embassy team actively engage with Slovakia to address cases of key political prisoners or persons otherwise unjustly targeted by Slovakia?

Answer. According to the 2018 Country Report on Human Rights Practices, there were no reports of political prisoners or detainees in Slovakia. However, I have always prioritized such cases in the past, and, if confirmed, I pledge to actively engage with Slovakia to address any such cases should they arise.

Question. Will you engage with Slovakia on matters of human rights, civil rights and governance as part of your bilateral mission?

Answer. Yes.

Question. Do you commit to bring to the committee's attention (and the State Department Inspector General) any change in policy or U.S. actions that you suspect may be influenced by any of the President's business or financial interests, or the business or financial interests of any senior White House staff?

Answer. I commit to comply with all relevant federal ethics laws, regulations, and rules, and to raise any concerns that I may have through appropriate channels.

Question. Do you commit to inform the committee if you have any reason to suspect that a foreign government, head of state, or foreign-controlled entity is taking any action in order to benefit any of the President's business or financial interests, or the interests of senior White House staff?

Answer. I commit to comply with all relevant federal ethics laws, regulations, and rules, and to raise any concerns that I may have through appropriate channels.

Question. Do you or do any members of your immediate family have any financial interests in Slovakia?

Answer. No.

Question. Research from private industry demonstrates that, when managed well, diversity makes business teams better both in terms of creativity and in terms of productivity. What will you do to promote, mentor and support your staff that come from diverse backgrounds and underrepresented groups in the Foreign Service?

Answer. I have actively promoted diversity as a principle of leadership and driver of productivity in every managerial position I have held in the Department of State. I believe that leaders need to lead by example. If confirmed, I will actively seek diversity in recruitment, continue to mentor more junior staff and encourage those I supervise to do the same, and work to ensure that leadership positions in the mission reflect the diversity of our institution.

Question. What steps will you take to ensure each of the supervisors at the Embassy are fostering an environment that is diverse and inclusive?

Answer. As I have in previous leadership positions, I will underscore my expectation of a commitment to diversity and inclusion as a key aspect of achieving our foreign policy goals. If confirmed, I will relay my own "zero tolerance" for violations of Equal Employment Opportunity laws and State Department rules and regulations on harassment. I will also encourage supervisors to foster an environment that is diverse and inclusive by focusing on recruitment, mentoring more junior officers, and creating a working environment that is based on respect.

Question. How do you believe political corruption impacts democratic governance and the rule of law generally, and in Slovakia specifically?

Answer. Corruption erodes citizens' confidence in democratic institutions, enables malign actors, increases their influence, and weakens economic growth. The February 2018 murder of investigative journalist Jan Kuciak brought the issue of corruption to the center of Slovakia's political debate and resulted in the collapse of the government and the election in March 2019 of President-elect Zuzana Caputova. Although Slovakia enacted a number of new measures to fight corruption in the last year, including a whistleblower protection law and risk assessments of corruption vulnerabilities in government offices, implementation remains key.

Question. What is your assessment of corruption trends in Slovakia and efforts to address and reduce it by that government?

Answer. The 2018 U.S. Country Report on Human Rights Practices in Slovakia noted corruption remained a concern. According to the report, the Slovak government did not always implement its anti-corruption laws effectively, and high-level officials were rarely prosecuted for corruption. While the recent enactment of a whistleblower protection law is a step in the right direction, its effectiveness will depend on successful implementation. The election in March of President-elect Zuzana Caputova, with her strong reputation as a fighter against corruption, suggests the Slovak people wish to see more progress in this area. If confirmed, I will seek to continue our work in support of anti-corruption efforts as an important aspect of Slovakia's political stability and economic prosperity.

Question. If confirmed, what steps will you take to strengthen good governance and anticorruption programming in Slovakia?

Answer. If confirmed, I will work with my team at the Embassy in Bratislava to engage Slovak officials at all levels of government to support good governance and anti-corruption programming. The Embassy promotes awareness of the importance of the rule of law to building a strong country and a strong economy and supports efforts by Slovak officials and non-governmental organizations to promote transparency, combat fraud, and encourage accountability. This support comes through grants and awards to NGOs and individuals working in the field. The Embassy also brings in substantive experts to offer training to Slovak judges, police, and prosecutors. If confirmed, I will continue to build on these efforts.

RESPONSES TO ADDITIONAL QUESTIONS FOR THE RECORD SUBMITTED TO KENNETH A. HOWERY BY SENATOR ROBERT MENENDEZ

Question. What are the most important actions you have taken in your career to date to support democracy and human rights? What has been the impact of your actions?

Answer. I have been a long-time advisor to Kiva, a non-profit with the goal to "expand financial access to help underserved communities thrive." They achieve this by allowing individuals to fight poverty by making micro-loans to people around the world. Kiva has raised more than $1.3 billion in loans to help more than 3 million people in over 80 countries, 81 percent of whom are women.

Kiva has also funded loans to thousands of refugees and internally displaced people (IDPs) around the globe. Kiva's goal is to address refugees' needs by offering access to loans that allow them to pay for critical medical needs, continue their education, or start a business in an effort to rebuild their lives.

Question. How will you utilize U.S. government assistance resources at your disposal, including the Democracy Commission Small Grants program and other sources of State Department and USAID funding, to support democracy and governance, and what will you prioritize in processes to administer such assistance?

Answer. Sweden has a strong record on human rights issues. If confirmed, I will utilize all U.S. government resources at my disposal to continue supporting democracy and good governance in Sweden. As much of our cooperation on human rights issues with Sweden occurs in other countries (e.g., emerging democracies and developing countries), I will prioritize ensuring that our human rights and assistance agendas are coordinated and do not duplicate resources or lines of effort.

Question. If confirmed, do you commit to meet with civil society members, human rights and other non-governmental organizations in Sweden?

Answer. Yes.

Question. If confirmed, do you commit to meet with democratically oriented political opposition figures and parties? What steps will you take to encourage genuine political competition? Will you advocate for access and inclusivity for women, minorities and youth within political parties?

Answer. Yes. If confirmed, I will stress the importance of having genuine political competition during my meetings with government and civil society leaders. I will also advocate for access and inclusivity for women, minorities and youth within political parties.

Question. Will you and your embassy team actively engage with civil society and government counterparts on countering disinformation and propaganda disseminated by foreign state or non-state actors in the country?

Answer. Yes.

Question. Will you commit to using your position, if confirmed, to defend the human rights and dignity of all people in Sweden, no matter their sexual orientation or gender identity? What challenges do the lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender and queer (LGBTQ) people face in Sweden? What specifically will you commit to do to help LGBTQ people in Sweden?

Answer. Sweden has strong antidiscrimination laws in place that protect the rights of lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, and intersex (LGBTI) individuals. As a result, they do not face the same challenges found in less democratic countries. If confirmed, I commit to using my position to defend the human rights and dignity of all people in Sweden and continue Embassy Stockholm's engagement with members of the LGBTI community in Sweden.

Question. Do you agree that any targeting of or retaliation against career employees based on their perceived political beliefs, prior work on policy, or affiliation with a previous administration, is wholly inappropriate and has no place in the federal government? If confirmed, what will you do to ensure that all employees under your leadership understand that any retaliation, blacklisting, or other prohibited personnel practices will not be tolerated?

Answer. Yes. If confirmed, I will do everything possible to ensure that all employees understand that any retaliation, blacklisting, or other prohibited practices will not be tolerated. I will do this by ensuring that existing federal and Department rules and regulation are clearly understood and enforced.

Question. Has anyone ever made a formal or informal complaint or allegation of sexual harassment, discrimination (e.g., racial, ethnic, religious, etc.), or inappropriate conduct against you, in a workplace or any other setting? If so, please describe the nature of the complaint or allegation, your response, and any resolution, including any settlements.

Answer. No.

Question. Have you ever addressed concerns or allegations of sexual harassment, discrimination (e.g., racial, ethnic, religious, etc.), or inappropriate conduct made against any employee over whom you had supervisory authority? If so, please describe the outcome and actions taken.

Answer. No.

RESPONSES TO ADDITIONAL QUESTIONS FOR THE RECORD
SUBMITTED TO KENNETH A. HOWERY BY SENATOR BENJAMIN L. CARDIN

Question. What are your most meaningful achievements to date in your career to promote human rights and democracy? What has been the impact of your actions?

Answer. I have been a long-time advisor to Kiva, a non-profit with the goal to "expand financial access to help underserved communities thrive." They achieve this by allowing individuals to fight poverty by making micro-loans to people around the world. Kiva has raised more than $1.3 billion in loans to help more than 3 million people in over 80 countries, 81 percent of whom are women.

Kiva has also funded loans to thousands of refugees and internally displaced people (IDPs) around the globe. Kiva's goal is to address refugees' needs by offering access to loans that allow them to pay for critical medical needs, continue their education, or start a business in an effort to rebuild their lives.

Question. What are the most pressing human rights issues in Sweden? What are the most important steps you expect to take—if confirmed—to promote human rights and democracy in Sweden? What do you hope to accomplish through these actions?

Answer. Sweden has a strong human rights record. However, one challenge facing Swedish society is anti-Semitism. According to the U.S. Department of State's 2017 International Religious Freedom Report (the latest available), Jews in Sweden are the most frequently targeted group relative to the size of its community of religiously motivated hate crimes. If confirmed, I will engage with Swedish authorities and civil society and encourage cooperation to promote religious tolerance and nondiscrimination.

Question. If confirmed, what are the potential obstacles to addressing the specific human rights issues you have identified in your previous response? What challenges will you face in Sweden in advancing human rights, civil society and democracy in general?

Answer. If confirmed, I will continue Mission Sweden's engagement with Swedish officials at all levels of government, as well as civil society to promote religious tolerance and nondiscrimination. One potential obstacle is the difficulty of maintaining good communication between our Embassy in Stockholm and Jewish groups outside of Stockholm. If confirmed, I will deepen the Embassy's outreach to Jewish groups across Sweden, including those outside of Stockholm, to support their efforts to maintain community security and combat anti-Semitism and use my position as the U.S. Ambassador to continue to call attention to this important issue.

Question. Are you committed to meeting with human rights, civil society and other non-governmental organizations in the U.S. and with local human rights NGOs in Sweden? If confirmed, what steps will you take to pro-actively support the Leahy Law and similar efforts, and ensure that provisions of U.S. security assistance and security cooperation activities reinforce human rights?

Answer. Yes. If confirmed, I will engage with civil society and non-governmental organizations both in the United States and in Sweden on a range of human rights and other issues of mutual interest. I will also ensure all the required vetting is carried out for any security assistance and security cooperation activities.

Question. Will you and your embassy team actively engage with Sweden to address cases of key political prisoners or persons otherwise unjustly targeted by Sweden?

Answer. Yes.

Question. Will you engage with Sweden on matters of human rights, civil rights and governance as part of your bilateral mission?

Answer. Yes.

Question. Do you commit to bring to the committee's attention (and the State Department Inspector General) any change in policy or U.S. actions that you suspect may be influenced by any of the President's business or financial interests, or the business or financial interests of any senior White House staff?

Answer. If confirmed, I commit to comply with all relevant federal ethics laws, regulations, and rules, and to raise concerns that I may have through appropriate channels.

Question. Do you commit to inform the committee if you have any reason to suspect that a foreign government, head of state, or foreign-controlled entity is taking any action in order to benefit any of the President's business or financial interests, or the interests of senior White House staff?

Answer. If confirmed, I commit to comply with all relevant federal ethics laws, regulations, and rules, and to raise concerns that I may have through appropriate channels.

Question. Do you or do any members of your immediate family have any financial interests in Sweden?

Answer. My investment portfolio includes interests in entities that have a presence in Sweden. This includes stock holdings, mutual funds or exchange traded funds, and private investment funds that hold interests in companies with a presence in Sweden. I am committed to ensuring that my official actions will not give rise to a conflict of interest. If confirmed, I will divest all investments the State Department Ethics Office deems necessary and recuse myself from matters when required to avoid a conflict of interest, and I will remain vigilant with regard to my ethics obligations.

Question. Research from private industry demonstrates that, when managed well, diversity makes business teams better both in terms of creativity and in terms of productivity. What will you do to promote, mentor and support your staff that come from diverse backgrounds and underrepresented groups in the Foreign Service?

Answer. Supporting diversity in the workplace is not only a good practice in advancing American values, it is also a boon to productivity, as diverse perspectives often reveal unexpected opportunities. I support diversity and advocate for people with different experiences and backgrounds. If confirmed, I will take steps to create a culture based on respect, teamwork, and inclusivity to ensure people of different ages, races, genders, and sexual orientations feel supported.

Question. What steps will you take to ensure each of the supervisors at the Embassy are fostering an environment that is diverse and inclusive?

Answer. People take cues from the leader of their organization, and I understand the importance of my actions and words. If confirmed, I will work to create a positive work environment first by modeling respect for diversity and inclusion in my own work, but also by engaging directly with the supervisors and employees at the Embassy to convey the importance of these values. I will also ensure they are promoting and supporting team members from diverse backgrounds and underrepresented groups.

Question. How do you believe political corruption impacts democratic governance and the rule of law generally, and in Sweden specifically?

Answer. Corruption erodes public trust and institutions. Sweden has strong democratic institutions, established rule of law, and a free press. The law provides criminal penalties for corruption, and the government generally implements the laws effectively.

Question. What is your assessment of corruption trends in Sweden and efforts to address and reduce it by that government?

Answer. Sweden has a strong record of combating corruption. According to Transparency International's 2018 Corruption Perceptions Index, Sweden was ranked as the third least corrupt country in the world out of 180 countries. If confirmed, I will continue to engage Swedish officials on this important issue to ensure the country remains free from corruption.

Question. If confirmed, what steps will you take to strengthen good governance and anticorruption programming in Sweden?

Answer. If confirmed, I will continue Embassy Stockholm's engagement with officials at all levels of the Swedish government in support of good governance and anticorruption. Through the International Visitor Leadership Program and other public diplomacy programs, I will deepen and expand our engagement with Sweden on ways to promote transparency and the rule of law, which are core elements of both our societies.

RESPONSES TO ADDITIONAL QUESTIONS FOR THE RECORD
SUBMITTED TO MATTHEW KLIMOW BY SENATOR ROBERT MENENDEZ

Question. What are the most important actions you have taken in your career to date to support democracy and human rights? What has been the impact of your actions?

Answer. From 1995-2000, I was member of a team of United States diplomats and senior military leaders that traveled throughout the conflict region in the Balkans, to include Kosovo and Bosnia-Herzegovina, pursuing peace and justice in that war-torn region. In Srebrenica, site of genocidal mass murder of Bosniaks, I met with

families of the survivors. In Brcko, I witnessed the wanton destruction of homes that had occurred based on ethnic and religious hatred. I heard the testimonials of women who were subject to brutal mass rape used as a weapon of war. Our work in the region brought stability and safety for a populace that experienced some of the worst human rights violations in the last decade of the 20th century. Those events and my work in the Balkan region strengthen my commitment to support democracy and human rights.

Question. Do you commit to engaging the government on the release of political prisoners and prisoners of conscience in Turkmenistan? In particular, do you commit to raise the case of long-held political prisoner Gulgeldy Annaniyazov?

Answer. If confirmed, I commit to maintaining an open and frank dialogue with the government of Turkmenistan on our values and concerns about human rights and fundamental freedoms, and this includes raising the cases of Gulgeldy Annaniyazov and other individual political prisoners. Working with my Embassy staff, if confirmed, I would continue to urge Turkmenistan to uphold its obligations and commitments on human rights, fundamental freedoms, and adherence to the rule of law, including its obligations with respect to substantive and procedural trial safeguards under the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights (ICCPR).

Question. How will you utilize U.S. government assistance resources at your disposal, including the Democracy Commission Small Grants program and other sources of State Department and USAID funding, to support democracy and governance, and what will you prioritize in processes to administer such assistance?

Answer. If confirmed, under my leadership the Embassy will continue to use the full range of available resources to support democracy and governance with our partners in Turkmenistan. This includes utilization of the Democracy Commission Small Grants program, USAID's civil society and governance strengthening programming funding, and other State Department funding sources in accordance with relevant U.S. laws and regulations to support more accountable and inclusive democratic institutions that can deliver tangible benefits to all citizens. Central to these efforts will be support to civil society along with programs to eliminate trafficking in persons.

Question. If confirmed, do you commit to meet with civil society and non-governmental organizations doing work in/on Turkmenistan?

Answer. Yes. If confirmed, I commit to developing and maintaining regular contact with human rights activists, civil society leaders, and other representatives of domestic and international non-governmental organizations in Turkmenistan, as is appropriate and safe for those involved, with the goal to strengthen Turkmenistan's democratic development, stability, and prosperity.

Question. Will you and your embassy team actively engage with civil society and government counterparts on countering disinformation and propaganda disseminated by foreign state or non-state actors in the country?

Answer. If confirmed, I will actively engage with civil society and my government counterparts to counter disinformation and propaganda disseminated by foreign states or non-state actors in Turkmenistan. This will include supporting accreditation for trained independent journalists. I further commit to coordinating public diplomacy programming in Turkmenistan to promote people-to-people exchanges and increase access to accurate information about the United States, countering the impact of foreign state-sponsored disinformation.

Question. Will you commit to using your position, if confirmed, to defend the human rights and dignity of all people in Turkmenistan, no matter their sexual orientation or gender identity?

Answer. I pledge to uphold our values and defend human rights and dignity, regardless of sexual orientation or gender identity. If confirmed, I commit to working with civil society and NGOs that address LGBTI issues and to have a frank dialogue with the government of Turkmenistan on the obligation of governments to respect the human rights of everyone in their countries.

Question. Do you agree that any targeting of or retaliation against career employees based on their perceived political beliefs, prior work on policy, or affiliation with a previous administration, is wholly inappropriate and has no place in the federal government? If confirmed, what will you do to ensure that all employees under your leadership understand that any retaliation, blacklisting, or other prohibited personnel practices will not be tolerated?

Answer. Yes. I agree that targeting of or retaliation against career employees based on their perceived political beliefs, prior work on policy, or affiliation with a previous administration, has no place in the federal government. I commit to comply with all relevant federal ethics laws, regulations, and rules. If confirmed, I will communicate these expectations and values to all Embassy staff.

Question. Has anyone ever made a formal or informal complaint or allegation of sexual harassment, discrimination (e.g., racial, ethnic, religious, etc.), or inappropriate conduct against you, in a workplace or any other setting? If so, please describe the nature of the complaint or allegation, your response, and any resolution, including any settlements.

Answer. In 2011, an employee filed a complaint with the U.S. Department of State Office of Civil Rights (S/OCR). I was the employee's second-line supervisor. The S/OCR investigation did not find any evidence of discrimination, harassment, or misconduct, and the case was closed without further action. I take any allegation seriously and follow established protocols on how such concerns should be addressed and if confirmed, I am committed to continuing this practice.

Question. Have you ever addressed concerns or allegations of sexual harassment, discrimination (e.g., racial, ethnic, religious, etc.), or inappropriate conduct made against any employee over whom you had supervisory authority? If so, please describe the outcome and actions taken.

Answer. I take the issues of sexual harassment, discrimination (e.g., racial, ethnic, religious, etc.), and inappropriate conduct with the utmost seriousness and do not tolerate any types of behavior that could be considered discriminatory. As a battalion commander in the U.S. Army from 1992-1994, I administered non-judicial punishment under Article 15 of the Uniform Code of Military Justice and, in one instance, referred a soldier for court martial for inappropriate relations with a subordinate.

RESPONSES TO ADDITIONAL QUESTIONS FOR THE RECORD SUBMITTED TO MATTHEW KLIMOW BY SENATOR BENJAMIN L. CARDIN

Question. What are your most meaningful achievements to date in your career to promote human rights and democracy? What has been the impact of your actions?

Answer. From 1995-2000, I was a member of a team of United States diplomats and senior military leaders that traveled throughout the conflict region in the Balkans, to include Kosovo and Bosnia-Herzegovina, pursuing peace and justice in that war-torn region. In Srebrenica, site of genocidal mass murder of Bosniaks, I met with families of the survivors. In Brcko, I witnessed the wanton destruction of homes that had occurred based on ethnic and religious hatred. I heard the testimonials of women who were subject to brutal mass rape used as a weapon of war. Our work in the region brought stability and safety for a populace that experienced some of the worst human rights violations in the last decade of the 20th century. Those events and my work in the Balkan region strengthen my commitment to support democracy and human rights.

Question. What are the most pressing human rights issues in Turkmenistan? What are the most important steps you expect to take—if confirmed—to promote human rights and democracy in Turkmenistan? What do you hope to accomplish through these actions?

Answer. I am particularly concerned about restrictions on religious freedom, freedom of expression by the media and civil society, freedom of assembly, and freedom of movement as well as prison conditions and the use of forced labor in Turkmenistan's cotton harvest. If confirmed, I pledge to engage in an open, pragmatic and consistent dialogue with the government of Turkmenistan on our values and concerns about human rights and fundamental freedoms, including freedom of religion or belief, and the rule of law.

Question. If confirmed, what are the potential obstacles to addressing the specific human rights issues you have identified in your previous response? What challenges will you face in Turkmenistan in advancing human rights, civil society and democracy in general?

Answer. Sharing long borders with Iran and Afghanistan, Turkmenistan is in a challenging neighborhood. Its government does not acknowledge that it is repressing human rights and fundamental freedoms, including the freedoms of association, ex-

pression, religion and assembly. It also has a tradition dating back to Soviet times of utilizing forced labor in the cotton harvest. If confirmed, I will continue to engage the government of Turkmenistan on new or current laws that restrict human rights and fundamental freedoms in the country. I will seek out every opportunity, using the programs and mechanisms available to me, to urge the government to protect these rights and freedoms, strengthen the rule of law and civil society, and increase respect for rights.

Question. Are you committed to meeting with human rights, civil society and other non-governmental organizations in the U.S. and with local human rights NGOs in Turkmenistan? If confirmed, what steps will you take to pro-actively support the Leahy Law and similar efforts, and ensure that provisions of U.S. security assistance and security cooperation activities reinforce human rights?

Answer. If confirmed, I commit to developing and maintaining regular contact with human rights activists, civil society leaders, and other representatives of domestic and international non-governmental organizations in Turkmenistan, as is appropriate and safe for those involved. If confirmed, I will support the Embassy's Leahy program for vetting security force units and individual recipients of U.S. foreign assistance. I will further ensure that all U.S. security and law enforcement assistance activities will continue to reinforce the importance of human rights.

Question. Will you and your embassy team actively engage with Turkmenistan to address cases of key political prisoners or persons otherwise unjustly targeted by Turkmenistan?

Answer. If confirmed, I pledge to continue to raise key individual cases with the government of Turkmenistan and urge the protection of human rights and fundamental freedoms, including its obligations with respect to substantive and procedural trial safeguards and the rule of law.

Question. Will you engage with Turkmenistan on matters of human rights, civil rights and governance as part of your bilateral mission?

Answer. Yes. The United States has full and robust dialogue with Turkmenistan on the range of bilateral issues, including human rights and good governance. The Department consistently raises specific human rights concerns with the government of Turkmenistan, and underscores those concerns through official statements at the U.N. the OSCE, and other bodies, as well as in our annual reports on Human Rights, International Religious Freedom, and Trafficking in Persons. If confirmed, I will continue to use these reports and other tools to document human rights problems and encourage Turkmenistan to make progress in areas of concern.

Conflicts of Interest

Question. Do you commit to bring to the committee's attention (and the State Department Inspector General) any change in policy or U.S. actions that you suspect may be influenced by any of the President's business or financial interests, or the business or financial interests of any senior White House staff?

Answer. I commit to comply with all relevant federal ethics laws, regulations, and rules, and to raise any concerns that I may have through appropriate channels.

Question. Do you commit to inform the committee if you have any reason to suspect that a foreign government, head of state, or foreign-controlled entity is taking any action in order to benefit any of the President's business or financial interests, or the interests of senior White House staff?

Answer. I commit to comply with all relevant federal ethics laws, regulations, and rules, and to raise any concerns that I may have through appropriate channels.

Question. Do you or do any members of your immediate family have any financial interests in Turkmenistan?

Answer. Neither I nor any members of my family have any financial interests in Turkmenistan.

Diversity

Question. Research from private industry demonstrates that, when managed well, diversity makes business teams better both in terms of creativity and in terms of productivity. What will you do to promote, mentor and support your staff that come from diverse backgrounds and underrepresented groups in the Foreign Service?

Answer. If confirmed, I will make a priority of encouraging the recruitment and professional development of a diverse staff that represents the United States. Working with my staff, I will encourage the recruitment of a diverse, qualified group of

applicants for each job opening, and I will continue the mentoring program for entry-level officers to include specialists and eligible family member employees.

Question. What steps will you take to ensure each of the supervisors at the Embassy are fostering an environment that is diverse and inclusive?

Answer. If confirmed, I will communicate to Embassy senior staff that I will have zero tolerance for discrimination and sexual harassment. In addition, ahead of our annual personnel selection season, I will communicate my expectation that we invite applications from the broadest possible slate of qualified candidates to ensure that we foster a diverse and inclusive community. I will ask our supervisors to reinforce these principles with their American and Turkmen staff to ensure we set appropriate expectations.

Corruption

Question. How do you believe political corruption impacts democratic governance and the rule of law generally, and in Turkmenistan specifically?

Answer. Corruption and the arbitrary application of law are problems in Turkmenistan and hindrances to good governance and economic growth. The Department of State's Investment Climate Statement clearly outlines these obstacles. If confirmed, this is an area where I will continue to push the government of Turkmenistan to pursue needed reforms and build respect for the rule of law.

Question. What is your assessment of corruption trends in Turkmenistan and efforts to address and reduce it by that government?

Answer. As outlined in the Department of State's Investment Climate Statement, a lack of established rule of law, an opaque regulatory framework, and rampant corruption are serious problems in Turkmenistan. The report also notes that rules and procedures lack transparency and although Turkmenistan has legislation to combat corruption, these laws are not generally enforced. Monitoring or investigating corruption is difficult in Turkmenistan. If confirmed, this is an area where I will continue to push the government of Turkmenistan to pursue needed reforms and build respect for the rule of law.

Question. If confirmed, what steps will you take to strengthen good governance and anticorruption programming in Turkmenistan?

Answer. Turkmenistan has much to gain by removing the barriers to a truly democratic process presented by endemic corruption. Corruption is a serious impediment to development. If confirmed, I would continue programming and high-level engagement efforts to improve rule of law in the interests of establishing and maintaining a fair playing field for all actors, as well as to urge the government to move forward with the democratic reforms necessary to support political pluralism, a vibrant civil society, and an improved investment climate.

RESPONSES TO ADDITIONAL QUESTIONS FOR THE RECORD
SUBMITTED TO JOHN JEFFERSON DAIGLE BY SENATOR ROBERT MENENDEZ

Question. Cape Verde was upgraded to Tier 2 in the 2018 Trafficking in Persons (TIP) Report. Cabo Verde does not meet the minimum standards in part because it "did not train law enforcement or judiciary officials on trafficking investigations and prosecutions; officials remained without formal procedures to identify trafficking victims and refer them to care; and the Ministry of Justice and Labor (MJT) did not receive any funding specifically for anti-trafficking efforts."

- Does the United States support any activities focused on training for judges or law enforcement on trafficking investigation and prosecutions?

Answer. The United States has provided funding to the United Nations Office of Drugs and Crime (UNODC) in 2018 and now we are processing a second grant to the International Organization for Migration (IOM) to combat TIP in Cabo Verde. Both grants were provided to the United Nations but in close coordination with the Ministry of Justice and Labor (MJT).

The United States has funded TIP and other related human rights training for Cabo Verde's police investigators, prosecutors, and judges to TIP and other related human rights trainings in Ghana, the U.S., and elsewhere. The United States sent eight Cabo Verdean professionals to an International Visitor Leadership Program on demand to learn about how the United States responds to incidents involving vic-

tims of violent crime. The United States also funded an IVLP on sexual violence response for two other professionals.

Question. Has the United States provided funding to the Ministry of Justice for anti-trafficking efforts?

Answer. Yes, indirectly through grants for UNODC and IOM.

Question. What organizations on the ground provide care for trafficking victims and how are they funded?

Answer. government-funded agencies provide emergency services, temporary shelter, and psycho-social care to female and child trafficking victims, as well as other at-risk populations, in partnership with the IOM and several strong local non-governmental organizations. In general the Cabo Verdean Institute for Children and Adolescents assists child victims, the Cabo Verdean Institute for Gender Equality assists women victims, the Public Ministry assists victims requiring long-term care, and the IOM provides services to foreign nationals who are victims of trafficking in Cabo Verde.

Question. What further steps could the government of Cabo Verde take to improve its TIP ranking next year?

Answer. The United States recommends that the Cabo Verdean government take the following steps to improve its TIP ranking next year:

- Vigorously investigate and prosecute trafficking offenses and convict and punish traffickers-including Cabo Verdean-American sex traffickers and sex tourists.
- Develop and train officials on standardized procedures to identify trafficking victims-including adults and victims among vulnerable populations-and to refer victims to services.
- Train law enforcement and judiciary officials on the 2015 anti-trafficking amendment, article 271-A.
- Consistently refer potential trafficking victims to the appropriate shelters to ensure all identified trafficking victims receive care and collect data on such efforts.
- Increase efforts to raise public awareness of human trafficking, including child sex trafficking and domestic servitude.
- Develop a system to compile and share comprehensive anti-trafficking law enforcement and victim identification data among agencies.
- Increase collaboration with foreign governments on cases of transnational trafficking and child sex tourism involving foreign nationals.

Question. What are the most important actions you have taken in your career to date to support democracy and human rights? What has been the impact of your actions?

Answer. Over my 20-year career as a Public Diplomacy officer, I have worked closely with government and civil society organizations in a number of countries—including Nigeria, Iraq, and Cambodia—to implement programs that promoted human rights and democracy, including through press conferences, media professionalization and literacy training, and capacity building. As the Chargé d'Affaires, a.i., and Deputy Chief of Mission in Cambodia, I was also able to directly engage government leaders regarding human rights concerns, which opened up space for civil society action and freedom for public expression in the lead-up to contentious national elections.

Question. What issues are the most pressing challenges to democracy or democratic development in Cabo Verde? These challenges might include obstacles to participatory and accountable governance and institutions, rule of law, authentic political competition, civil society, human rights and press freedom. Please be as specific as possible.

Answer. The United States views Cabo Verde as one of the Continent's strongest multi-party democracies; however, improvement is always possible. We would like to do more to help Cabo Verde to take a more active role in encouraging democracy in West Africa and among Portuguese-speaking African countries. Cabo Verde will continue to be one of Africa's best political and economic success stories. It has one of the highest literacy rates, a vibrant two-party political system, and a low level of corruption (as noted by Transparency International). Challenges to Cabo Verde's democracy include its small market, which limits the number of private-sector employment opportunities, which leads journalists and others to self-censor to avoid problems with future employability, and complicates decentralization models in this resource-poor economy with significant variations among the islands.

Question. What steps will you take—if confirmed—to support democracy in Cabo Verde? What do you hope to accomplish through these actions? What are the potential impediments to addressing the specific obstacles you have identified?

Answer. Cabo Verde serves as a regional example of democracy and good governance. If confirmed I will encourage Cabo Verde to continue this trend. If confirmed, I will continue to support Cabo Verde's efforts to distribute wealth and prosperity, and I will prioritize voices from outside the capital in reporting and in program participation.

Question. How will you utilize U.S. government assistance resources at your disposal, including the Democracy Commission Small Grants program and other sources of State Department and USAID funding, to support democracy and governance, and what will you prioritize in processes to administer such assistance?

Answer. We can use ESF, Public Diplomacy, Self-Help, and other funds to support democracy and governance. We will seek to apply these resources to people and projects throughout the archipelago, drawing voices from all the islands to form our opinions and shape our policies.

Cabo Verde will hold legislative, municipal, and presidential elections in 2021 and one of my priorities, if confirmed, will be to encourage free, fair, and credible elections.

Question. If confirmed, do you commit to meet with civil society members, human rights and other non-governmental organizations in the U.S. and with local human rights NGOs, and other members of civil society in Cabo Verde? What steps will you take to pro-actively address efforts to restrict or penalize NGOs and civil society via legal or regulatory measures?

Answer. Yes, if confirmed, I commit to meet with civil society members, human rights and other non-governmental organizations in the U.S. and with local human rights NGOs, and other members of civil society in Cabo Verde. Embassy Praia currently has a robust and growing relationship with civil society in Cabo Verde. As appropriate I will meet with local contacts in the capital, around the archipelago, and the government to address efforts to restrict NGOS and civil society. I will encourage Cabo Verde to serve as a leader in democracy, good governance, and human rights.

Question. If confirmed, do you commit to meet with democratically oriented political opposition figures and parties? What steps will you take to encourage genuine political competition? Will you advocate for access and inclusivity for women, minorities and youth within political parties?

Answer. Yes, if confirmed, I commit to meet with democratically oriented political opposition figures and parties. Cabo Verde enjoys a vibrant, multi-party democracy and has had an unbroken history of civilian rule since its independence in 1975, and if confirmed I would encourage Cabo Verde to continue serving as an example of democracy, good governance, and human rights.

If confirmed, I would also advocate for access and inclusion for women, minorities, and youth within political parties. Embassy Praia continually seeks to promote opportunities for women and youth, and under my leadership I would continue this trend.

Question. Will you and your embassy team actively engage with Cabo Verde on freedom of the press and address any government efforts designed to control or undermine press freedom through legal, regulatory or other measures? Will you commit to meeting regularly with independent, local press in Cabo Verde?

Answer. Yes. Embassy Praia has a strong relationship with the Cabo Verdean press and the United States has funded training for journalists on investigative journalism and elections. If confirmed I will continue to encourage freedom of the press and meet with them regularly.

Question. Will you and your embassy team actively engage with civil society and government counterparts on countering disinformation and propaganda disseminated by foreign state or non-state actors in the country?

Answer. Yes. Embassy Praia has worked directly with the government and the local media to counter disinformation. If confirmed, I would continue to ensure training on accurate reporting is provided for the press and government officials, particularly spokespersons.

Question. Will you and your embassy teams actively engage with Cabo Verde on the right of labor groups to organize, including for independent trade unions?

Answer. Yes. If confirmed, I will continue to ensure my country team remains actively engaged on the right of labor groups to organize and that they increase their knowledge on the labor conditions in Cabo Verde. Currently, the embassy engages with government and civil society actors on questions of child labor, forced labor, and labor in the informal sector. Cabo Verde's labor unions are strong and established. They face few institutionalized obstacles to operation. Unions tend to represent their members' interests reasonably well.

Question. Will you commit to using your position, if confirmed, to defend the human rights and dignity of all people in Cabo Verde, no matter their sexual orientation or gender identity? What challenges do the lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender and queer (LGBTQ) people face in Cabo Verde? What specifically will you commit to do to help LGBTQ people in Cabo Verde?

Answer. Yes. If confirmed, I would work with existing civil society and governmental organizations to promote the basic humanity of all citizens and residents of Cabo Verde.

The LGBTQ community enjoys a relatively good status in Cabo Verde but faces discrimination in obtaining work and housing. There is significant, culturally accepted dark humor about the LGBTQ community that will be difficult to change in the short term. In recent years, there have been no known acts of violence perpetrated against members of the LGBTQ community. Cabo Verde adhered to the Equal Rights Campaign in 2018, and the embassy facilitated a trip by the president of the Institute on Equity and Equality of Gender to Vancouver, where she met with State Department officials. The embassy routinely seeks opportunities to support LGBTQ civil society organizations with training and funding opportunities. If confirmed, I would encourage Cabo Verde to continue its positive trend serving as a regional leader on this issue and to continue setting the example on human rights.

Question. Do you agree that any targeting of or retaliation against career employees based on their perceived political beliefs, prior work on policy, or affiliation with a previous administration, is wholly inappropriate and has no place in the federal government? If confirmed, what will you do to ensure that all employees under your leadership understand that any retaliation, blacklisting, or other prohibited personnel practices will not be tolerated?

Answer. Yes, I agree that any targeting of or retaliation against career employees based on their perceived political beliefs, prior work on policy, or affiliation with a previous administration, is wholly inappropriate and has no place in the federal government. If confirmed, I would clearly state at my very first Country Team meeting with section heads and my first Town Hall with all Mission staff that any retaliation, blacklisting, or other prohibited personnel practices will not be tolerated, and I would continue to reinforce this message through word and deed throughout my tenure as Chief of Mission.

Question. Has anyone ever made a formal or informal complaint or allegation of sexual harassment, discrimination (e.g., racial, ethnic, religious, etc.), or inappropriate conduct against you, in a workplace or any other setting? If so, please describe the nature of the complaint or allegation, your response, and any resolution, including any settlements.

Answer. I take the issues of sexual harassment, discrimination (e.g., racial, ethnic, religious, etc.), and inappropriate conduct with the utmost seriousness and throughout my career, I have immediately addressed any issues raised to me in accordance with the Department of State's policies and practices in dealing with such conduct.

With regard to discrimination, I am aware of two instances when EEO complaints were filed regarding one of my direct reports and my involvement in the cases. In both of these instances, I followed Department protocols fully and cooperated with the Department's Office of Civil Rights. At the conclusion of both investigations, OCR determined that there was no evidence of discrimination or harassment and closed the cases.

Question. Have you ever addressed concerns or allegations of sexual harassment, discrimination (e.g., racial, ethnic, religious, etc.), or inappropriate conduct made against any employee over whom you had supervisory authority? If so, please describe the outcome and actions taken.

Answer. I take the issues of sexual harassment, discrimination (e.g., racial, ethnic, religious, etc.), and inappropriate conduct with the utmost seriousness and throughout my career, I have immediately addressed any issues raised to me in accordance with the Department of State's policies and practices in dealing with such conduct.

With regard to discrimination, I am aware of two instances where EEO complaints were filed involving one of my direct reports. In both of these instances, I followed Department protocols fully and cooperated with the Department's Office of Civil Rights. At the conclusion of both investigations, OCR determined that there was no evidence of discrimination or harassment and closed the cases.

RESPONSES TO ADDITIONAL QUESTIONS FOR THE RECORD SUBMITTED TO JOHN JEFFERSON DAIGLE BY SENATOR BENJAMIN L. CARDIN

Question. What are your most meaningful achievements to date in your career to promote human rights and democracy? What has been the impact of your actions?

Answer. Over my 20-year career as a Public Diplomacy officer, I have worked closely with government and civil society organizations in a number of countries—including Nigeria, Iraq, and Cambodia—to implement programs that promoted human rights and democracy, including through press conferences, media professionalization and literacy training, and capacity building. As the Chargé d'Affaires, a.i., and Deputy Chief of Mission in Cambodia, I was also able to directly engage government leaders regarding human rights concerns, which opened up space for civil society action and freedom for public expression in the lead-up to contentious national elections.

Question. What are the most pressing human rights issues in Cabo Verde? What are the most important steps you expect to take—if confirmed—to promote human rights and democracy in Cabo Verde? What do you hope to accomplish through these actions?

Answer. Cabo Verde has made excellent advances in recent years in combating sexual and gender-based violence and violence against children, as well as improving prison conditions. If confirmed, I pledge to sustain U.S. support and encouragement for Cabo Verde's admirable efforts to continue making progress on these and other civil and human rights issues. I hope to engage resources to improve media freedoms—including training for journalists on mis- and disinformation—and to highlight the role of citizens in a robust democracy. I would encourage the government to prioritize equitable growth and distribution of its economic gains.

Question. If confirmed, what are the potential obstacles to addressing the specific human rights issues you have identified in your previous response? What challenges will you face in Cabo Verde in advancing human rights, civil society and democracy in general?

Answer. Cabo Verde struggles with a perennial lack of resources, and vulnerable elements of society tend to suffer the most from neglect and invisibility. Its small market and a legacy of government involvement in all sectors results in a tendency toward self-censorship: few Cabo Verdeans are eager to speak publicly and frankly about issues for fear of alienating a potential future employer. Finally, although conditions in Cabo Verde are improving slowly, complacency about some of the issues hinders more rapid progress in addressing them.

Question. Are you committed to meeting with human rights, civil society and other non-governmental organizations in the U.S. and with local human rights NGOs in Cabo Verde? If confirmed, what steps will you take to pro-actively support the Leahy Law and similar efforts, and ensure that provisions of U.S. security assistance and security cooperation activities reinforce human rights?

Answer. Yes, if confirmed, I commit to meet with civil society members, human rights and other non-governmental organizations in the United States and with local human rights NGOs and other members of civil society in Cabo Verde. Embassy Praia currently has a robust and growing relationship with civil society in Cabo Verde. As appropriate, I would meet with local contacts in the capital, around the archipelago, and with the government to address challenges faced by NGOs and civil society. I would encourage Cabo Verde to continue serving as a leader in democracy, good governance, and human rights.

Question. Will you and your embassy team actively engage with Cabo Verde to address cases of key political prisoners or persons otherwise unjustly targeted by Cabo Verde?

Answer. Cabo Verde has no tradition of political prisoners or political targeting. There has never been a violent conflict on Cabo Verdean soil, and political transitions have all been peaceful and transparent. If confirmed, I would build on the

solid foundation Embassy Praia has developed with security services, correctional personnel, and political actors to advance and advocate for the best human rights environment possible.

Question. Will you engage with Cabo Verde on matters of human rights, civil rights and governance as part of your bilateral mission?

Answer. Yes

Question. Do you commit to bring to the committee's attention (and the State Department Inspector General) any change in policy or U.S. actions that you suspect may be influenced by any of the President's business or financial interests, or the business or financial interests of any senior White House staff?

Answer. I commit to comply with all relevant federal ethics laws, regulations, and rules, and to raise concerns that I may have through appropriate channels.

Question. Do you commit to inform the committee if you have any reason to suspect that a foreign government, head of state, or foreign-controlled entity is taking any action in order to benefit any of the President's business or financial interests, or the interests of senior White House staff?

Answer. I commit to comply with all relevant federal ethics laws, regulations, and rules, and to raise concerns that I may have through appropriate channels.

Question. Do you or do any members of your immediate family have any financial interests in Cabo Verde?

Answer. No.

Question. Research from private industry demonstrates that, when managed well, diversity makes business teams better both in terms of creativity and in terms of productivity. What will you do to promote, mentor and support your staff that come from diverse backgrounds and underrepresented groups in the Foreign Service?

Answer. As a member of a minority group myself, I deeply appreciate how critically important it is for leaders to promote, mentor, and support all staff members, irrespective of their gender, ethnic background, sexual orientation, or religious beliefs. If confirmed, I would work with the Mission's Deputy Chief of Mission to ensure post has a robust mentoring program in place for all entry level officers, and I would regularly discuss mentoring with the Mission's supervisory team. To promote an environment of transparency and equality, I would also institute an open-door policy and encourage all Mission staff to come directly to me for guidance and support as desired and to make me aware of any issues as needed.

Question. What steps will you take to ensure each of the supervisors at the Embassy are fostering an environment that is diverse and inclusive?

Answer. If confirmed, during my very first Country Team meeting, I would stress the importance that I place on fostering an inclusive and diverse environment and that this would be an important criteria upon which I will evaluate supervisors as part of the annual employee review process. I would also stress these values in my introductory Town Hall meeting with all Mission staff and continue to do so throughout my tenure at Embassy Praia.

Question. How do you believe political corruption impacts democratic governance and the rule of law generally, and in Cabo Verde specifically?

Answer. Cabo Verde regularly ranks in the top five African countries in Transparency International's index. In 2018 it was #3 (behind Seychelles and Botswana) and #45 globally. The opposition parties regularly claim that the government is corrupt, but to date we haven't seen actionable evidence of the sort. The current government is often accused of non-transparency, and it sometimes fails to communicate legitimate business clearly and in a timely manner.

Question. What is your assessment of corruption trends in Cabo Verde and efforts to address and reduce it by that government?

Answer. Corruption by the government is not a big issue in Cabo Verde, although the current government fails sometimes to communicate its plans and methods clearly. Prime Minister Ulisses Correia e Silva requested and received support from the National Democratic Institute for creating a more robust and investigative press corps during his tenure as Mayor of Praia; that program continues today. As Cabo Verde's 2020 and 2021 electoral cycles approach, political actors will likely talk more about transparency and corruption, but much of it will be grandstanding.

Question. If confirmed, what steps will you take to strengthen good governance and anticorruption programming in Cabo Verde?

Answer. Cabo Verde needs resources to address the small indicators of corruption that remain, and it needs a broader and less government-dependent market. If confirmed, I would continue to push for support to fight mis- and disinformation campaigns; encourage participation in local, regional, and international events for civil society actors; and pursue professional development opportunities and training for Cabo Verde's security and judicial sectors.

NOMINATIONS

TUESDAY, MAY 21, 2019

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

The committee met, pursuant to notice, at 11:04 a.m. in Room SD–419, Dirksen Senate Office Building, Hon. Marco Rubio, presiding.

Present: Senators Rubio [presiding], Gardner, Young, Menendez, Cardin, Udall, Murphy, and Kaine.

OPENING STATEMENT OF HON. MARCO RUBIO, U.S. SENATOR FROM FLORIDA

Senator RUBIO. This is the Senate Foreign Relations Committee hearing on the nominations of Ms. Pamela Bates of Virginia to be the U.S. Representative to the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development, with the rank of Ambassador; Christopher Landau of Maryland, to be the U.S. Ambassador to Mexico; Ms. Jennifer Nordquist of Virginia, to be the U.S. Executive Director for the International Bank for Reconstruction and Development; and Mr. Eliot Pedrosa of Florida, to be U.S. Executive Director of the Inter-American Development Bank.

I would also add that Mr. Pedrosa, who is a Florida native, is currently serving as the alternate Inter-American Bank Executive Director and was previously a principal shareholder of the law firm of Greenberg Traurig where he was the chair of the Miami firm's litigation department. This is the second hearing for you, so welcome back.

Ms. Nordquist is currently the Chief of Staff at the Council of Economic Advisors. She was previously the Chief of Staff for the Economics Program at the Brookings Institution.

Christopher Landau, nominated to be U.S. Ambassador to Mexico, will play a critical role in a country with strong ties to the United States. I had the opportunity to speak to him. We had a great conversation about the challenges and opportunities in the relationship between the U.S. and our southern neighbors in Mexico.

Ms. Bates served for 24 years as a career member of the United States Foreign Service before assuming her current role as a partner at Securitas Global Risk Solutions in Wayne, Pennsylvania. 2017 is when she joined.

I welcome the nominees here with us today. Thank you, all four of you, for the willingness to serve and continue to serve our country. If confirmed, each of you will have important roles and respon-

sibilities in advancing our nation's foreign policy objectives and in protecting our national security interests, as well as our values.

Before us are four very different positions that will each help advance economic growth and stability in our own hemisphere and beyond. This will be especially true for those countries in the western hemisphere that are undergoing democratic transitions and are taking important steps to improve their economy, security, and bilateral relations with the United States.

I will start with Mexico where the U.S. and Mexico share not just the long border, but a long history and a critical relationship on a number of fronts.

Last year, Mexico elected a candidate from the Movimiento Regeneracion Nacional, the MORENA party, that was created in 2014. President Obrador's election broke with the two traditional parties in Mexico that had ruled Mexican politics for years. In the coming days, it will be important to find areas where our cooperation together can be strengthened. We are partners in security cooperation and intelligence sharing as a result of the Merida Initiative. The U.S. and Mexico are trading partners, with the U.S. being Mexico's most important export market for goods. 80 percent of Mexico's exports come to the United States. We should continue to find ways to enhance our cooperation on existing initiatives to fight the production and distribution of opioids and illicit fentanyl that cause far too many deaths in the U.S. each year.

We also need to work with Mexico to improve trade practices to ensure that it remains a fair trade partner with the U.S.

The Mexican government has committed to increasing government subsidies, which by the way is in violation of WTO rules, to promote more agricultural acreage and greenhouse and irrigation infrastructure with the intent to export more fruits and vegetables into the U.S. across a longer marketing season.

Mexican producers are dumping produce in select U.S. markets at select times of the year to try to outmaneuver U.S. antidumping laws.

Concerns are rising with respect to the role transnational criminal organizations are playing to commingle drug shipments and launder money with legitimate Mexican agricultural operations.

We also need to engage the Mexican government on Venezuela, and we should work with the Mexican and Guatemalan governments to bolster security in the border areas between these two countries.

Finally, the U.S. needs to press the government of Mexico and have conversations about ongoing human rights violations in the country such as the targeting and the murder of journalists.

In general, for all of our nominees, your positions representing the U.S. in countries and at multilateral organizations are essential to advancing our objectives worldwide. The ongoing challenges posed around the world by increasingly aggressive governments, such as the Chinese Communist government and the Russian government under Vladimir Putin, make the case even further for U.S. engagement and leadership in the world and in organizations, such as the three that you are nominated here for today.

We must find ways to support developing countries, our friends, and our allies who are targets of Chinese economic bullying and pressure.

We have a real opportunity to strengthen the U.S. role and partnerships on an array of important foreign policy matters. Your roles will be critical to ensuring that U.S. interests are advanced here in our own region and across the world.

Once again, thank you and your families for your commitment to our country.

And now I will recognize the ranking member for his opening comments.

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

Senator CARDIN. Well, thank you, Mr. Chairman, for convening this hearing.

It is interesting that we have a Marylander and a Floridian and two Virginians that happen to be thrown into the mix. But we welcome all of you here.

As I told Mr. Landau, if I was not ranking, I would have been pleased to introduce him to the committee as a Marylander. I think your background, your family background—as I understand, you have lived in Canada, Paraguay, Chile, and Venezuela. Your father was involved in diplomatic services. So I think that is going to be important background in regards to serving as Ambassador to Mexico.

I welcome all four of the nominees here today, and I thank you for your willingness to, in some cases, continue to serve our country; in some cases, to make this commitment of public service during an extremely difficult time. And I very much recognize that you cannot do this without the support of your families. So we thank your families for being willing to share your significant other in public service.

As the chairman has mentioned, all four of these positions are critically important to our national security and our economic welfare. So each of these positions, in its own right, are important.

The Ambassador to Mexico is particularly of importance to us on the Western Hemisphere Subcommittee that Senator Rubio and I chair and are ranking. I know this is a full committee hearing, but we are particularly concerned about the relationship with Mexico.

It has been too long without a confirmed Ambassador. So, Mr. Chairman, I hope that we can expedite this nomination and get it moving because I think it is important that we have a confirmed Ambassador in our neighbor, Mexico.

I did have the opportunity to meet with Mr. Landau. I enjoyed our conversation. I went over a lot of the issues that I think are critically important. The chairman has already mentioned some. The U.S.-Mexico-Canada trade agreement is here now. It is going to be submitted to us very shortly. Then the Congress is going to have to take that up, and your role in that regard could be very, very important.

We have gone over the migration issues. The challenge is going to be greater. I was in Mexico City not too long ago. I met with my counterparts in the Mexican Senate. They were outraged by

President Trump's language and the concept of a medieval wall. That is going to make your job more challenging, and we look forward to how you can use diplomacy so that we can work together with Mexico to deal with the migration issues, which is critically important.

Mexico is confronting criminal elements and drug activity that we have to work in partnership. One of the areas that I ask every nominee for Ambassador to be committed to—and I asked you in my office—is to advance human rights. There are challenges in Mexico on human rights. No question about it. It is not safe to be a journalist. It is not safe to be a social activist in a large part of Mexico. And we would expect that you will find ways that we can advance the protection of these values in our bilateral relationship with Mexico.

As the chairman pointed out, there is a new administration in Mexico, a different party. So I think it does present opportunities, and we look forward to how you believe you can advance those interests on behalf of the United States.

In regards to Eliot Pedrosa, the Executive Director for the Inter-American Development Bank, a very important position to improve lives in Latin America and the Caribbean. The challenge is Venezuela. It is a challenge for our whole hemisphere and the economic impact and the migration issues, people leaving Venezuela, the economic impact of the humanitarian crisis there.

And the unresolved issues in the Northern Triangle that some of us are working very hard to develop the type of partnership between the United States and the Northern Triangle to deal with their security issues, to deal with their economic issues, to deal with their basic problems of good governance. So that is an issue that we need to explore as to how we can use the Inter-American Development Bank to meet those types of challenges.

It is interesting to focus, as I am sure all of us are aware, for social inclusion and equality, productivity and innovation, and economic integration. These are principles we all agree on and I welcome how you believe we can use the bank in that regard.

As is true with all the international bank activities, the player that is presenting the greatest interest to us is China. China's involvement in this hemisphere is one in which we would welcome your thoughts as to how the bank can deal with that opportunity or challenge, the way you look at it.

The Executive Director of the International Bank for Reconstruction and Development, Jennifer Nordquist, again a position that is critically important. It is the largest lender among the world banks. We have been presented a plan for recapitalization. The administration is supportive of the recapitalization with reform. The decision will be Congress' to make on recapitalization and reform, and we welcome your comments as to how you see the reforms taking place within the bank and how the recapitalization, which falls heaviest on the United States because of our share, is in our national security interests.

In regards to the OECD, Pamela Bates, first of all, thank you for your career service. That is a commitment that you have made moving on to an extremely important position. The OECD is committed to market economies backed by democratic institutions, and

that is being challenged in our regions as well as globally. So how does the OECD protect market economies and the democratic institutions in the work that you do? You have key interests today from China, again. How do you deal with that? Brazil, India, Indonesia, South Africa. Challenges are great in the global community, and OECD can play an extremely important role. And I look forward to our conversation in regards to those matters.

Bottom line, four very important positions, and we thank each of you for being willing to serve.

Senator RUBIO. Thank you.

Ms. Bates, we will begin with you.

STATEMENT OF PAMELA BATES, OF VIRGINIA, TO BE REPRESENTATIVE OF THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA TO THE ORGANIZATION FOR ECONOMIC COOPERATION AND DEVELOPMENT, WITH THE RANK OF AMBASSADOR

Ms. BATES. Chairman Rubio, Ranking Member Cardin, and distinguished members of the Senate Committee on Foreign Relations.

It is an honor and a privilege to appear before you today as the nominee to serve as the Representative of the United States of America to the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development, the OECD. I deeply appreciate the trust and confidence placed in me by President Trump and Secretary Pompeo by nominating me for this responsibility.

On a personal note and as a prior member of the career foreign service, I would like to thank the many family members, friends, and colleagues who have encouraged me in my journey which has led to this room today. I would like to thank my husband and son for adapting to and making the most of serving overseas with the Department of State. I would especially like to thank our son, who bravely attended new schools, sometimes in a foreign language, and who skillfully and diplomatically enjoys correcting my French pronunciation.

I would also like to acknowledge my family members who could not be here today, many of whom served our wonderful country. My two grandfathers, who fought in World War I in the Army and my uncles who fought in World War II in Korea; my two grandmothers and my aunts who worked tirelessly on the home front; my father, a proud graduate of the United States Naval Academy; and my mother, the first person that I know of in my family to endeavor to take the foreign service exam.

I would also like to thank my brother, a colonel in the United States Marine Corps, and his family, who are currently serving our country.

My family, and especially my parents, instilled in me a deep appreciation for the freedoms that we enjoy as citizens of the United States, as well as the duty to serve our country.

Finally, I would also like to thank many friends and colleagues, some of whom are here today. You have helped me to be a better diplomat and, if confirmed, representative of our great nation.

Mr. Chairman, I believe that my life experience, including more than 2 decades of experience with the Department of State, has prepared me well to take on this important challenge.

As a Foreign Service officer, I devoted most of my career to advancing U.S. economic interests across the globe. From working to secure greater access to international markets for U.S. firms, to supporting energy security and promoting U.S. trade and investment, I have gained a deep understanding of the intersection between government and the private sector and the role international organizations can play in advancing U.S. interests. Through my work at the OECD, the International Energy Agency, and the World Trade Organization, I have worked with likeminded countries to build support for policies that benefit the United States. I have also spent time in the private sector, an experience that will be valuable to ensuring that private sector perspectives inform the work of the U.S. mission to the OECD.

Since its founding in 1961, the OECD has played a unique role among international organizations as a valuable source of market-friendly, evidence-based research and policy advice. Through economic analysis, peer reviews, and development of policy standards, the OECD encourages sound economic policies that support economic growth and open markets for U.S. trade and investment. The OECD also serves as a platform to convene likeminded governments to cooperate on approaches to common challenges. It provides a venue where networks of regulators and government officials agree on market-enhancing rules on export credits, anti-bribery, sovereign wealth funds, international investment and competition policy. This work helps to promote U.S. job creation and expand international trade, investment, and financing and create opportunities for U.S. business and workers.

The National Security Strategy calls on international organizations to be more accountable. If confirmed, I will work with other member countries to make the OECD accountable, transparent, member-driven, and cost-effective. I will advocate for improving the OECD's working methods to ensure member-driven prioritization, increase efficiency, and improve management practices to bring the OECD to the forefront of leading international organizations.

If confirmed, I will press the OECD to focus on its core work of improving the functioning of markets and governments, encouraging fair and efficient systems of taxation, competition and investment; reinforcing mechanisms for combating corruption; and promoting the openness, integrity, and transparency of business and governments. I will ensure that the OECD's leadership responds to members' concerns rather than pursuing its own agenda.

Over the past 50 years, the OECD has expanded its membership from the original 20 countries to 36. It is currently considering additional members. We need to proceed carefully to support qualified candidates without undermining the core work of the OECD. The OECD derives its global relevance not from universal membership but from the quality and impact of its policy instruments and best practice recommendations.

If confirmed, I look forward to consulting with this committee and its staff both here in Washington and during the visits of congressional delegations to Paris.

I thank the committee for this opportunity to appear today. If confirmed, my primary goal will be to leverage our participation in the OECD to advance U.S. economic interests.

I would be happy to answer your questions. Thank you.
[The prepared statement of Ms. Bates follows:]

PREPARED STATEMENT OF PAMELA BATES

Chairman Rubio, Ranking Member, and distinguished members of the Senate Committee on Foreign Relations, it is an honor and a privilege to appear before you today as the nominee to serve as the Representative of the United States of America to the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development, the OECD. I deeply appreciate the trust and confidence placed in me by President Trump and Secretary Pompeo by nominating me for this responsibility.

On personal note, and as a prior member of the career foreign service, I would like to thank the many family members, friends and colleagues who have encouraged me in my journey which has led to this room today. I would like to thank my husband and son for adapting to and making the most of serving overseas with the Department of State. I would especially like to thank our son, who bravely attended new schools, sometimes in a foreign language—and who skillfully and diplomatically enjoys correcting my French pronunciation. I would also like to acknowledge my family members who could not be here today, many of whom served our wonderful country. My two grandfathers, who fought in World War I and my uncles who fought in World War II and Korea, my two grandmothers and my aunts who worked tirelessly on the home front, my father, a proud graduate of the United States Naval Academy, and my mother, the first person that I know of in my family to endeavor to take the foreign service exam. I would also like to thank my brother, and his family, who are currently serving with the United States Marine Corps. My family, and especially my parents, instilled in me a deep appreciation for the freedoms we enjoy as citizens of the United States, as well as the duty to serve our country. Finally, I would also like to thank many friends and colleagues, some of whom are here today. You have helped me to be a better diplomat and, if confirmed, representative of our great nation.

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The National Security Strategy calls on international organizations to be more accountable. If confirmed, I will work with other member countries to make the OECD accountable, transparent, member-driven, and cost-effective. I will advocate for improving the OECD's working methods to ensure member-driven prioritization, increase efficiency and improve management practices to bring the OECD to the forefront of leading international organizations.

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If confirmed, I look forward to consulting with this committee and its staff, both here in Washington and during the visits of congressional delegations to Paris.

I thank the committee for this opportunity to appear today. If confirmed, my primary goal will be to leverage our participation in the OECD to advance U.S. economic interests. I would be happy to answer your questions.

Senator RUBIO. Thank you very much.

Mr. Landau?

STATEMENT OF CHRISTOPHER LANDAU, OF MARYLAND, TO BE AMBASSADOR EXTRAORDINARY AND PLENIPOTENTIARY OF THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA TO THE UNITED MEXICAN STATES

Mr. LANDAU. Mr. Chairman, Ranking Member, and distinguished members of this committee, I am honored to appear before you today as the nominee for Ambassador to Mexico. I am very grateful to both President Trump and Secretary Pompeo for their trust and confidence' and I appreciate the time that the members of this committee and your staff have spent with me. The confirmation process has only reaffirmed my respect for our Founders' wisdom in requiring the advice and consent of the Senate for ambassadorial nominations. If confirmed, I look forward to working closely with all of you.

This hearing brings my life full circle. As an 8-year-old boy, I attended my father's hearing as nominee for Ambassador to Paraguay. I am here today, 47 years later, with my wife Caroline and our two children, Nathaniel and Julia. I am incredibly grateful for their love and support, as well as their enthusiasm, for this opportunity to serve our great country.

My dad, George Landau, was a career Foreign Service officer. For him and for our family, the Foreign Service was more than just a job; it was the path to the American dream. Both of my parents were immigrants who came to this country with nothing. My father fled Austria when the Nazis took over in 1938 and made his way to Colombia, South America, and then to New York City. He became a U.S. citizens and Army intelligence officer in World War II.

He later joined the Foreign Service and ultimately served as U.S. Ambassador to Paraguay, Chile, and Venezuela. He was nominated by and served under Presidents of both political parties.

My parents devoted their lives to strengthening the bonds between the U.S. and Latin America. I would not be here today but for the opportunities that this country and particularly the Foreign Service afforded my family.

I can think of no greater honor or privilege than the opportunity to represent our country in Mexico and to continue my family's mission of building bridges between the U.S. and Latin America. I grew up in the region and speak Spanish fluently. I focused on Latin American studies as an undergraduate and fully intended to join the Foreign Service myself.

Ironically, it was my dad who urged me to go to law school and get a professional degree. My 30-year career in the law, in which

I had the opportunity to brief and argue cases in the U.S. Supreme Court, all of the federal courts of appeals, and many State courts, has given me a profound respect for the rule of law, the importance of resolving disputes civilly, and the dignity of the individual. If confirmed, I will bring these passions to my job in Mexico.

Our relationship with Mexico is one of paramount importance and complexity. We share a nearly 2,000-mile border from San Diego, California to Brownsville, Texas. More than 10 percent of all Americans, some 36 million people, are of Mexican heritage. Our cultures have grown increasingly intertwined from the Starbucks in Mexico City to Hollywood blockbusters directed by Mexicans. There is a lot to celebrate in our relationship with Mexico that often gets lost amidst discussion of the challenges.

If confirmed, I will continue this administration's focus on a number of key priorities. The first will be to ensure the rule of law at the border. That is obviously a huge job that involves many agencies. My role, if confirmed, will be to foster cooperation with the Mexican people and authorities, neither country can solve the challenge of illegal immigration alone, and I am convinced that we can find common ground.

Another key priority, if confirmed, will be the protection of the American people. The scourge of illegal drugs is devastating both our communities and the Mexican communities. Again, I see this as an area where we share a common interest with Mexico and pledge, if confirmed, to strengthen our partnership in fighting drugs. I would also like to underscore the importance of protecting the many millions of U.S. citizens who live in or visit Mexico.

Finally, I would like to emphasize the importance of our economic relationship with Mexico. One of the most dramatic changes in my lifetime has been the integration of the U.S. and Mexican economies. When I was in college, the leading book on U.S.-Mexico relations was called "Distant Neighbors." We used to have our backs to each other. Now the leading book is called "Vanishing Frontiers," and Mexico recently became our largest trading partner in the world. This transformation offers benefits, but it also presents challenges. If confirmed, I look forward to working for passage of the USMCA and to promote fair and reciprocal trade.

Mr. Chairman, Ranking Member Cardin, and distinguished members of this committee, our relationship with Mexico is unique in its direct impact on the security and prosperity of the American people. If confirmed, I pledge to be a good and faithful steward of that relationship.

Thank you.

[The prepared statement of Mr. Landau follows:]

PREPARED STATEMENT CHRISTOPHER LANDAU

Mr. Chairman, Ranking Member, and distinguished members of the committee, I'm honored to appear before you today as the nominee for Ambassador to Mexico. I'm very grateful to both President Trump and Secretary Pompeo for their trust and confidence. And I appreciate the time that the members of this committee and your staff have spent with me. The confirmation process has only reaffirmed my respect for our Founders' wisdom in requiring the advice and consent of the Senate for Ambassadorial nominations. If confirmed, I look forward to working closely with all of you.

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later, with my wife, Caroline, and our two children, Nathaniel and Julia. I'm incredibly grateful for their love and support, as well as their enthusiasm for this opportunity to serve our great country.

My dad, George Landau, was a career Foreign Service Officer. For him, and for our family, the Foreign Service was more than just a job; it was the path to the American dream. Both of my parents were immigrants who arrived here with nothing. My dad fled Austria alone, at age 18, shortly after the Nazi takeover in 1938, and was able to get a visa for Colombia, South America. He arrived there by boat, without speaking a word of Spanish. That was the beginning of my family's close connection with Latin America. My dad had two main objectives in Colombia: to get his parents safely out of Austria, and to get himself to the United States. Within three years, he managed to accomplish both. With the help of the Catholic Church, he extracted his parents from Nazi-occupied Austria, thereby saving them from certain death, and they lived happily in Colombia for the rest of their lives and are buried there. And with the help of the Otis Elevator Company, my dad obtained a job in New York City, and arrived in this country in July 1941, just months before Pearl Harbor. After the war broke out, he joined the Army, and soon became both a military intelligence officer and an American citizen. He met my mother, Maria, on active duty in occupied Austria, and she came over as a war bride in 1947.

It was always my father's dream to join the Foreign Service, and he took and passed the exam in 1946, but wasn't allowed to join because he hadn't been a citizen long enough. Eventually, he met the citizenship requirements, and joined in 1957. Within 15 years, he became U.S. Ambassador to Paraguay, and then to Chile, and finally to Venezuela. He was nominated by, and served under, Presidents of both political parties. My parents devoted their lives to strengthening the bonds between the U.S. and Latin America. I wouldn't be here today but for the opportunities that this country, and particularly the Foreign Service, afforded my family. There's no other country in the world where immigrants like my parents could—through sheer talent, determination, and hard work—rise so fast and so far. For that, I'm deeply grateful.

I can think of no greater honor or privilege than the opportunity to represent our country in Mexico, and to continue my family's mission of building bridges between the U.S. and Latin America. I grew up in the region, and speak Spanish fluently. I focused on Latin American studies as an undergraduate, and fully intended to join the Foreign Service myself. Ironically, it was my dad who urged me to go to law school and get a professional degree. My 30-year career in the law, in which I had the opportunity to brief and argue cases in the U.S. Supreme Court, all of the federal courts of appeals, and many state courts, has given me a profound respect for the rule of law, the importance of resolving disputes civilly, and the dignity of the individual. If confirmed, I'll bring these passions to my job in Mexico.

Our relationship with Mexico is of one of paramount importance and complexity. We share a nearly 2,000 mile border from San Diego, California, to Brownsville, Texas. More than 10 percent of all Americans—some 36 million people—are of Mexican heritage. Our cultures have grown increasingly intertwined, from the Starbucks in Mexico City to Hollywood blockbusters directed by Mexicans. There's a lot to celebrate in our relationship with Mexico that often gets lost amidst discussion of the challenges.

If confirmed as Ambassador, I'll continue this administration's focus on a number of key priorities. The first will be to safeguard American sovereignty and ensure the rule of law at the border. That's obviously a huge job that involves many agencies. My role, if confirmed, will be to foster cooperation with the Mexican people and authorities. Neither country can solve the challenge of illegal immigration alone, and I'm convinced that we can find common ground.

Another key priority, if confirmed, will be the protection of the American people. The scourge of illegal drugs is devastating both our communities and Mexican communities. Again, I see this as an area where we share a common interest with Mexico, and pledge if confirmed to focus on strengthening our partnership in fighting drugs, with a particular focus on fentanyl, heroin, and methamphetamine. I'd also like to underscore the importance of protecting the many millions of U.S. citizens who live in, and visit, Mexico. The U.S. Mission in Mexico is the largest consular operation in the world, and I fully understand and appreciate the value of those consular services to our fellow Americans and your constituents.

Finally, I'd like to emphasize the importance of our economic relationship with Mexico. One of the most dramatic changes in my lifetime has been the integration of the U.S. and Mexican economies. When I was in college, the leading book on U.S.-Mexico relations was called "Distant Neighbors." We used to have our backs to one another. Now, the leading book is called "Vanishing Frontiers," and Mexico recently became our largest trading partner in the world. This transformation offers benefits,

but also presents challenges. If confirmed, I look forward to working for passage of the USMCA and to promote fair and reciprocal trade.

Mr. Chairman, Ranking Member, and members of this committee, our relationship with Mexico is unique in its direct impact on the security and prosperity of the American people. If confirmed, I pledge to be a good and faithful steward of that relationship. Thank you.

Ms. Nordquist?

STATEMENT OF JENNIFER D. NORDQUIST, OF VIRGINIA, TO BE UNITED STATES EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR OF THE INTERNATIONAL BANK FOR RECONSTRUCTION AND DEVELOPMENT FOR A TERM OF TWO YEARS

Ms. NORDQUIST. Chairman Rubio, Ranking Member Cardin, as well as full committee Chairman Risch and Ranking Member Menendez, and all distinguished members of the committee, thank you for the opportunity to testify before you today.

I would also like to thank President Trump for nominating me to serve as Executive Director of the International Bank for Reconstruction and Development, which forms a major component of the World Bank.

I would not be sitting here today were it not for the love and support of my family, who are both literally and figuratively behind me: my husband and my rock Nels—and since this is a Foreign Service panel, I will also mention that he was in the Foreign Service and naval officer and is currently in the intelligence community—our three children, Annika, who flew in from Stanford University to be here, Lars and Britt Marie, who both are happily missing school today; my parents, my father Henry Berinstein is here visiting from New York; and my in-laws, Myron and Barbara Nordquist, who are your constituents, Senator Cardin. And I have a few friends and colleagues in the audience who are here or watching online today. So thank you, everybody, for your support.

As this committee sees every day, the world faces many difficult and complex issues. These challenge the World Bank Group as never before. The United States has played a leading role in the bank since its founding at Bretton Woods, New Hampshire 75 years ago, and I look forward to keeping the U.S. actively engaged in the bank, using our voice and vote to advance the bank's mission to ameliorate poverty around the globe while also ensuring that the bank works in the best interests of U.S. taxpayers.

I have had a deep interest in responding to poverty ever since I was a graduate student in Chicago, volunteering at Cabrini Green, then one of the nation's most dangerous housing developments. Later, while living and working in Thailand, I helped lead a national health education campaign to stem the AIDS epidemic that was ravaging the country at all socioeconomic levels. Subsequently in government service, I helped work to rebuild the Gulf Coast after Hurricane Katrina, which hit the lowest income residents particularly hard, and I continued to work on related issues while at HUD.

Research into the causes and impact of poverty was a large part of my portfolio at Brookings, where I spent almost 9 years in the economic studies program. In my current role at the Council of Economic Advisers, I counsel on the development of policies that promote opportunity and economic growth based on the latest eco-

nomic research and analysis. I also have a background in macroeconomics, evidence-based policy, and banking and finance regulation, and plan to bring these valuable perspectives to my work, should you confirm me.

Poverty remains an intractable problem. If there were easy policy solutions, they would have been implemented long, long ago. In the U.S., we have made a lot of progress since the War on Poverty was launched over half a century ago. Both bilaterally and through multilateral institutions, such as the World Bank, the U.S. has played a leading role in supporting the progress that the rest of the world has made in lifting people out of poverty and generating economic growth.

The World Bank Group's loans and grants have helped diminish extreme poverty and improve human capital and health outcomes in countless countries, helping establish the necessary ingredients for prosperity. These efforts not only allow people to lead better, more productive and fulfilled lives, but they also open up markets to American firms—40 percent of our exports go to the developing world—not only supporting American jobs, but also promoting stability and, of course, peace.

The World Bank now faces the challenge of promoting development and stability in an environment where other lenders, both bilateral and multilateral, push developing countries into unsustainable debt and dependence, forcing these sovereign borrowers to accept poor quality projects that do not meet high quality environmental and social standards. In that regard, it is difficult to understand how any nation can be both a lender to the developing world while also taking advantage of the taxpayer-supported loans that the bank provides at the same time.

If you allow me the privilege to serve as U.S. Executive Director, my goal would be to ensure the bank rises to these challenges. If Congress approves the capital increase requested in the President's budget, that means implementing the reforms that the U.S. negotiated as part of that package. These include stronger financial discipline, constraints on overhead costs at the bank itself, and focusing resources away from more developed countries and towards the less developed, more vulnerable ones, which is indeed the bank's core mission. These reforms should ensure that the bank does not ask for another capital increase in the near future.

It would be an honor and a privilege to put my background in economic policy and government to work ensuring that the World Bank implements these reforms and develops a laser-like focus on sound, sustainable projects that eliminate extreme poverty, empower women, and help prevent violence and conflict.

Thank you for this opportunity to testify before you today, and I look forward to your questions.

[The prepared statement of Ms. Nordquist follows:]

PREPARED STATEMENT OF JENNIFER D. NORDQUIST

Chairman Rubio, Ranking Member Cardin—as well as full committee Chairman Risch and Ranking Member Menendez—and all distinguished members of the committee, thank you for the opportunity to testify before you today. I'd also like to thank President Trump for nominating me to serve as Executive Director of the International Bank for Reconstruction and Development—which forms a major component of the World Bank.

I would not be sitting here today were it not for the love and support of my family, who are literally and figuratively behind me: my husband and my rock, Nels; our three children—Annika (who flew in from Stanford to be here), Lars and Britt (who are happily missing school today); my parents (my dad is here visiting from New York); and my in-laws.

As this committee sees every day, the world faces many difficult and complex issues. These challenge the World Bank Group as never before. The United States has played a leading role in the Bank since its founding at Bretton Woods, New Hampshire 75 years ago, and I look forward to keeping the U.S. actively engaged, using our voice and vote to advance the Bank's mission to ameliorate poverty around the globe, while also ensuring that the Bank works in the best interests of U.S. taxpayers.

I have had a deep interest in responding to poverty ever since I was a graduate student in Chicago, volunteering at Cabrini Green, then one of the nation's most dangerous housing developments. Later, while living and working in Thailand, I helped lead a large health education campaign to stem the AIDS epidemic that was ravaging the country at all socio-economic levels. In subsequent government service, I helped work to rebuild the Gulf Coast after Hurricane Katrina, which hit the lowest income residents particularly hard. I continued to work on related issues at HUD.

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The World Bank now faces the challenge of promoting development and stability in an environment where other lenders, both bilateral and multilateral, push developing countries into unsustainable debt and dependence, forcing these sovereign borrowers to accept poor quality projects that do not meet high quality environmental and social standards. In that regard, it is difficult to understand how any nation can be both a lender to the developing world while also taking advantage of the taxpayersupported loans that the Bank provides at the same time.

If you allow me the privilege to serve as the U.S. Executive Director, my goal would be to ensure the Bank rises to these challenges. If Congress approves the capital increase requested in the President's Budget, this means implementing the reforms that the U.S. negotiated as part of that package. These include stronger financial discipline, constraints on overhead costs at the Bank itself, and focusing resources away from more developed countries and towards the less developed, more vulnerable ones—which is indeed the Bank's core mission.

It would be an honor and a privilege to put my background in economic policy and government to work ensuring that the World Bank implements these reforms and develops a laser-like focus on sound, sustainable projects that eliminate extreme poverty, empower women, and help prevent violence and conflict.

Thank you for this opportunity to testify before you today, and I look forward to your questions.

Senator RUBIO. Thank you.

Mr. Pedrosa?

STATEMENT OF ELIOT PEDROSA, OF FLORIDA, TO BE UNITED STATES EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR OF THE INTER–AMERICAN DEVELOPMENT BANK FOR A TERM OF 3 YEARS

Mr. PEDROSA. Thank you, Chairman Rubio and Ranking Member Cardin. Thank you to Chairman Risch, Ranking Member Menendez, and all of the members of the Senate Foreign Relations Committee.

I was privileged last year to be advanced by this committee and confirmed by the full Senate to represent the United States on the board of the Inter-American Development Bank as its Alternate Executive Director. Today I am before you again as President Trump's nominee to serve as Executive Director. I was humbled to be nominated and confirmed last year, doubly so now. I want to thank the President and Secretary Mnuchin for their continued confidence in me, and I would like to thank each of the distinguished members of this committee for giving me the opportunity to present my qualifications for your consideration as you discharge your important constitutional role in providing advice and hopefully giving consent on the nominations before you today.

I also want to thank my family for their love and support. My wife Nilda is here with me. She is my inspiration, my hero, and my love. Our 9-month-old twins, Emma Rose Adlin and Elias Augustus, are at home today, and although they are still far too young to watch this hearing live, during the many, many times that I plan to bore them with it when they are older, I have a message for them. Emma Rose, Elias, Mom and Dad love you very much. We are proud of you today, and we will be proud of you every single day as you grow up.

I also want to thank my parents, Elier and Ines, and my in-laws, Ricardo and Nilda, who are live-streaming this hearing back home in Florida. Chairman Rubio and Ranking Member Menendez, my parents, just like yours, risked everything to escape tyranny so that their son could be born and live in the land of freedom and opportunity. This country welcomed my family and yours and thousands like them, offering liberty, equality, and the opportunity for prosperity. I am forever grateful to my family and my country for the life they have given me.

Over the past year, I have had the honor of representing my country on the board of the IDB. During that time and throughout my 18 years of legal practice in the private sector, I was blessed by the opportunity to work with stakeholders throughout the Americas from Mexico down to the Southern Cone. This is a region blessed with incredible promise and opportunity, with rich natural resources, and with warm, dynamic people.

But I have seen firsthand some of the challenges that the region faces. In too many places, weak institutions, unchecked corruption, political instability, and economic uncertainty throttle investment and prevent sustained growth. Since the IDB's founding 60 years ago, millions have been lifted out of poverty, but tens of millions in our region still live below the poverty line. The power of free markets and democratic institutions have together unleashed prosperity on unprecedented levels, but still too many citizens of the Americas are deprived of their basic rights to life, liberty, and eco-

nomic opportunity by corrupt and oppressive governments, violent criminal gangs, and the crushing weight of economic hopelessness.

As Americans, it is in our vital national interest to run towards these challenges, not away from them, and to work to help our neighbors create, nourish, and sustain stable, prosperous democracies in every corner of our shared hemisphere.

If I am fortunate enough to be confirmed again today, I will devote myself to continue to work in partnership with my colleagues both in the executive branch and the Congress and particularly with this committee and your staff to ensure that the IDB continues to be an important part of the solution to regional problems. I firmly believe that American leadership and investment, both public and private, can change outcomes in the region for the better, and I hope to continue to have the opportunity work with you and your staffs to achieve that goal.

Mr. Chairman, Ranking Members Menendez and Cardin, I thank you again for the opportunity to appear before you and the other members of this committee, and I welcome your questions. Thank you.

[The prepared statement of Mr. Pedrosa follows:]

PREPARED STATEMENT OF ELIOT PEDROSA

Chairman Risch, Chairman Rubio, Ranking Members Menendez and Cardin, and members of the Senate Foreign Relations Committee, I was privileged last year to be advanced by this committee and confirmed by the full Senate to represent the United States as Alternate Executive Director of the Inter-American Development Bank. Today, I am before you again as President Trump's nominee to serve as Executive Director.

I was humbled to be nominated and confirmed last year; doubly so now. I want to thank the President and Secretary Mnuchin for their continued confidence in me, and I would like to thank each of the distinguished members of this committee for giving me the opportunity to present my qualifications for your consideration as you again discharge your important constitutional role in providing advice and consent on the nominations before you today.

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I also want to thank my parents, Elier and Ines, and my in-laws, Ricardo and Nilda, who also could not be here today but are livestreaming the proceedings back home in Florida. Chairman Rubio and Ranking Member Menendez, my parents, like yours, risked everything to escape tyranny so that their son could be born and live in a land of freedom and opportunity. This country welcomed my family and yours and thousands like them, offering liberty, equality, and the opportunity for prosperity. I am forever grateful to my family and to my country, for the life they've given me.

Over the past year, I've had the honor of representing my country on the Board of the IDB. During that time, and throughout my 18-year career in private legal practice, I have been blessed by the opportunity to work with stakeholders throughout the Americas, from Mexico down to the Southern Cone. This is a region blessed with incredible promise and opportunity, rich natural resources, and warm, dynamic people.

But I have seen first-hand some of the challenges the region faces. In too many places, weak institutions, unchecked corruption, political instability, and economic uncertainty throttle investment and prevent sustained growth. Since the IDB's founding 60 years ago, millions have been lifted out of poverty, but tens of millions still live below the poverty line. The power of the free market and democratic government have together unleashed prosperity on unprecedented levels, but too many citizens of the Americas are still deprived of their basic rights to life, liberty, and

economic opportunity by corrupt and oppressive governments, violent criminal gangs, and the crushing weight of hopelessness.

As Americans, it is in our vital national interest to run towards these challenges, not away from them, and to work to help our neighbors create, nourish, and sustain stable, prosperous democracies in every corner of our shared hemisphere.

If I am fortunate enough to be confirmed, I will devote myself to working in partnership with my colleagues, both in the Executive Branch as well as the Congress—and particularly in this committee—to ensure that the IDB continues to be an important part of the solution to regional problems. I firmly believe that American leadership and sound investment, both public and private, can change outcomes in the region for the better, and I hope to continue to have the opportunity to work with you and your staffs to achieve that goal.

Mr. Chairman and Ranking Members Menendez and Cardin, I thank you again for this opportunity to appear before you and the other members of the committee, and I look forward to your questions.

Senator RUBIO. Thank you.

Mr. Landau, let me just begin with you. I would start out by saying against some of the conventional wisdom, the relationship with the Obrador administration has been generally friendly. There are still some key issues, however, and trade disputes and tariffs, immigration and border security issues, obviously, the decision to remain neutral in the crisis in Venezuela which are potential or existing irritants.

In fairness, the Mexican government and the Obrador administration has accommodated U.S. migration and border security policies and done so despite significant domestic criticism that it has received for agreeing to allow migrants, asylum seekers to await our immigration proceedings while still in Mexico, and for rapidly increasing deportation.

So in light of all this, if confirmed, what do you view are our priorities in our relationship with Mexico, and what do you view are the areas that we need to improve?

Mr. LANDAU. Senator, I think there are three key priorities that I would focus on, and I was relieved to hear that they were the same three priorities that Senator Cardin mentioned in his opening remarks as well and that you alluded to as well, Senator.

The first is to address the common challenge of migration, particularly the Central American caravans that we have been seeing over the last several months.

The second is drugs and transnational criminal organizations.

And the third is trade.

I think on all of those three issues, Senator, there is a lot of room for us to find common ground with Mexico. I think these are challenges, but I think at the same time, if I am confirmed, my role as a diplomat will be to look for that common ground, to work with the new administration in Mexico, to listen respectfully to what they have to say, to make our case persuasively to them. I am optimistic that we can find common ground that yields mutual benefits.

Senator RUBIO. Ms. Nordquist, a similar question. What would be your priorities, if confirmed as the U.S. Executive Director?

Ms. NORDQUIST. Thank you, Senator.

Well, the most pressing issue before the bank is the capital increase, which I mentioned in my testimony. I think in exchange for the capital increase, which as Senator Cardin mentioned, the United States is a very large share of it, the Treasury has negotiated to put in place some good reforms to ensure that the bank

is not overextending itself, to keep its overhead costs under control, to make sure that there is organic capital accumulation from the loans and that they can be sustained over a 10-year window. So that would be my top priority.

Also, I would like to focus on better coordination between the World Bank Group and some of our bilateral aid organizations within the U.S. government.

Senator RUBIO. Ms. Bates, what role, if any, can the OECD play alongside the WTO, the World Trade Organization, to reduce the growing tensions in global trade?

Ms. BATES. Thank you for that question, Senator.

The OECD has a tradition of data-driven analysis and making neutral policy recommendations.

Senator RUBIO. But that is so boring.

[Laughter.]

Ms. BATES. Well, what I was going to say in the trade context——

Senator RUBIO. I am kidding. I am joking. Somebody might be watching C–SPAN. I am sorry.

[Laughter.]

Ms. BATES. In the trade context, the organization has served in a capacity of allowing a forum where likeminded countries can discuss trade issues that is not a negotiating setting. My understanding is that USTR has found this very helpful to air a variety of issues in the OECD setting and to take a look at OECD recommendations which can then be used to formulate appropriate positions to the trade negotiations that are taking place.

Senator RUBIO. And, Mr. Pedrosa, obviously I am curious as to your views on the massive effort that will be required to help Venezuela rebuild after this catastrophe. They had—I think it was—an 18 percent contraction last year in their economy, projected to be another 25 percent this year. Some estimates are running in the $60 billion-$70 billion range to rebuild a completely archaic and non-functioning electric grid. There is a lot of work to be done. People view Venezuela as a wealthy country with a lot of oil resources, but it requires infrastructure to utilize that to build its future. So what plans are you aware of or what is your view of the role that the Inter-American Development Bank can play in that process?

Mr. PEDROSA. Thank you, Mr. Chairman, for the question.

I entirely agree with you. We have to get the reconstruction of Venezuela right not only for the sake of the Venezuelans, who have been living under a tyrannical and corrupt government for too long and who have suffered inhuman levels of poverty. Estimates are that 90 percent of Venezuelans now live in poverty, down from what used to be the richest country in the hemisphere.

The IDB, I hope, will be a central player in the reconstruction of Venezuela. We are currently the first institution among the multilateral development banks and the IMF that have recognized and accepted a governor and executive director appointed by interim President Juan Guaido. The staff and the teams at the IDB are working closely with Governor Hausmann for Venezuela and his executive director on the planning for reconstruction efforts, and the United States government is working closely to understand the information that the IDB has and its plans so that members of the

administration are fully briefed on what the IDB is thinking and doing. Certainly the IMF will play a critical role, one would hope, but the IDB can move in and help to improve lives, which is ultimately the core function of the institution. We will have the opportunity in Venezuela, I hope, to do it and we have to get it right.

Senator RUBIO. Senator Cardin?

Senator CARDIN. Again, I thank all of our witnesses for your testimony.

Mr. Landau, I want to start first with the statement that you made on border issues, that the Ambassador will be to foster cooperation with the Mexican people and authorities. Neither country can solve the challenge of immigration alone, and I am convinced that we can find common ground.

I can tell you that over recent times when we have had cooperation between the Mexicans and Americans, we have had much more stable circumstances on our border, and the sharing of information, the working together, working with Mexico on its southern border rather than our southern border has all been in our interest in dealing with the migration issues.

But as I said in my opening statement, in my visit to Mexico City, there are some hard feelings between the government officials of Mexico and the United States.

So, can you just share with me some thoughts as to how you can go about finding that common ground between Mexico and the United States?

Mr. LANDAU. Absolutely, Senator. If confirmed, my role would be to be a diplomat, and what a diplomat does is articulates the position of his or her country effectively, communicates that to the people of the host country, and listens respectfully to what the authorities and the people of the host country say to look for common ground on these issues. I do think that public diplomacy is a very important tool in an ambassador's toolbox, and I look forward, if confirmed, to using that tool to the maximum extent I can. I think establishing personal relationships of trust and confidence down there will be absolutely critical and getting out to see the Mexican people and to forming, again, relationships with the new government will be my top priority.

Senator CARDIN. Mexico being our neighbor, I would just urge you to work with Members of Congress and see whether we can assist you in some of these efforts. We are looking at ways of improving OAS and helping with parliamentary dimensions because I do think engaging us can help you with your diplomatic mission. I just make that offer to you.

Mr. LANDAU. Senator, I appreciate those words. I could not agree with you more. Certainly if I cannot find common ground here.I think it will be much harder to find common ground with the Mexicans and with people from other countries if we as Americans cannot find common ground amongst ourselves. And, if confirmed, I can certainly pledge to you that I will do everything I can in that regard, and I certainly look forward to having a very constructive and ongoing relationship with this committee.

Senator CARDIN. And I want to ask all the nominees in regards to basic human rights issues. So let me just start again with Mr.

Landau, and then on my second round, I might get around to the others in regards to human rights.

As I mentioned in my opening statement, Mexico has challenges. Every country in the world has challenges. In our bilateral relationships, we hope that we can advance basic values of human rights, good governance, anti-corruption, rule of law. So will you commit to work with this committee to advance human rights in Mexico particularly the safety of journalists and social activists? And to work to fight corruption in that country so that we can find ways that we can partner with Mexico in order to advance human rights and to fight the corruption?

Mr. LANDAU. One hundred percent, Senator. The human rights and the support for democracy is a basic pillar of American foreign policy and has been so across administrations of both political parties here in our country. And I certainly come to this job, if confirmed, with a passion for the values that you just mentioned in terms of the rule of law. From my own professional background, I have litigated First Amendment cases. I understand the values that you just spoke of, and I am very committed to upholding them.

Senator CARDIN. Thank you.

Ms. Bates, you mentioned in your statement that you will do what you can, reinforcing mechanisms for combating corruption and promoting the openness, integrity, transparency of business and governments. OECD stands for a market economy, stands for democratic values, and yet we are fighting trends of so many countries where we find the rise of corruption and the weakening of democratic institutions.

So how can you use your role to advance those values of open markets and good governance in a way that is consistent with the mission of the OECD?

Ms. BATES. Thank you, Senator, for that question.

As you mentioned, there are a number of issues here on which the OECD can help to play a role in advancing accountable and transparent government.

For OECD members, as I am sure the Senator is aware, the OECD is home to the Anti-Bribery Convention, and all 36 members, plus an additional 4 countries who are not members of the OECD, are a party to that treaty, which uses a peer mechanism to review each other's anti-bribery and anti-corruption efforts.

In terms of developing nations, there is also the Development Advisory Committee, the DAC, which puts out best policy and practices and recommendations that countries can adopt to help improve accountability of their government transparency and efficient functioning of their government. So there are tools and options available that the U.S. participates in currently that can be used to help ameliorate and improve the situation for governments that are facing challenges through these mechanisms at the OECD.

Senator CARDIN. I would ask that you would keep us informed as to how you are using those mechanisms to advance good governance, anti-corruption. We are considering legislation in this committee that would establish certain standards for all countries in regards to fighting corruption, as we do for anti-trafficking issues. And I think if you could keep us informed as to how you are using

the convention in the OECD, it could be very helpful to us in our work.

Ms. BATES. I would be happy to keep the committee informed. Thank you.

Senator CARDIN. Thank you.

Senator RUBIO. Senator Kaine?

Senator KAINE. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

And congratulations to all the nominees. You are very well qualified for the positions to which you have been nominated.

Ms. Bates, since we have kind of a Latin America theme on this panel and that is a passion area of mine, I want to begin with you.

Brazil would like to be an OECD member. Recently Colombia became the third member of the OECD—Colombia, Chile, Mexico—from the Americas.

Talk a little bit about the path to accession for a nation like Brazil. In my view, it is a real positive that the OECD is kind of moving out of sort of just a northern American/European body to include more nations from other parts of the world. So just talk a little bit about that.

Ms. BATES. Thank you, Senator.

Accession at the OECD is a process that is agreed to by the current members of the OECD, and there are several steps to that process. One of the main goals of that process is to ensure that accession candidates are adopting what is called the OECD key, the criteria, the policies the ways of governing that meet OECD standards. So it is very helpful for countries that are moving into a Western democracy type of economy because these road maps are very detailed. I believe the one that was for Colombia had over 200 separate items that Colombia needed to engage upon and complete in order to be able to join the OECD. So it creates best practices, common standards, and a way of doing things that has been tried and true for the most part for the existing members, and it creates likemindedness.

So for the accession process, it is part of the multilateral process within the organization that all members engage on not only in terms of invitations but also in terms of evaluating a country's readiness.

Thank you.

Senator KAINE. I know you have not been confirmed for the position yet and you cannot assume anything about confirmation. I know that President Trump has indicated his desire that Brazil would have that opportunity, and I imagine this will be something that will proceed according to the multilateral process you described. And we would like to continue to sort of stay in touch about that status, that progress.

Mr. Landau, congratulations to you. I want to ask you a question about the U.S.-Mexico-Canada agreement.

The ITC issues a report, and then that kind of triggers a period for Congress to respond. And their report on the pending agreement suggests that the deal will have a marginal positive effect on the American economy. I think marginal because the status quo was NAFTA. And so it was not, you know, should we not do it or do the USMCA. It is like compared to NAFTA, what would the effect be, and I think they say it would be a marginal positive agree-

ment. That is good. But they indicate that that is only the case if the deal is effectively enforced.

If you are confirmed, what might you tell us about how you would—without engaging in Mexico domestic politics, what could you do as the Ambassador to make sure that the commitments made in the agreement, particularly around things like labor and others, are effectively enforced by the Mexican government so that that net positive effect could be realized by Americans?

Mr. LANDAU. Senator, that is a very important question. Certainly the Mexican legislature has just passed very significant labor reforms for Mexico. I think your question highlights the ongoing issue to make sure that those agreements and commitments are implemented. And if confirmed, I will work closely with this committee, with the U.S. Trade Representative, and Ambassador Lighthizer's team to make sure that all of the commitments are in fact fully and fairly implemented.

Senator KAINE. I should know the answer to this question. I do not. Was a general way to describe the labor provisions of the renegotiated NAFTA is that Mexico would be required to have provisions that would accord with the ILO international labor standards?

Mr. LANDAU. Senator, like you, I do not know if they are specifically ILO standards. I know that they are improved labor standards. There are higher wages at least in certain parts of Mexico, and I can get you the answer to that specific question after the hearing.

Senator KAINE. I can find that out on my own, but I appreciate your answer to the general idea that if we do not enforce these, then people not only become cynical about trade deals, they become cynical about trade itself. And we really cannot afford to have that happen when so much of the economy relies on trade.

Last thing, Mr. Pedrosa, talk a little bit about the IDB. Do we have a sufficient competitive alternative to Chinese investments in the Americas in the IDB now?

Mr. PEDROSA. Thank you for the question, Senator.

I think it is a critically important area. It is something that the IDB can do, and it is something that the IDB can do in partnership with the United States. I was thrilled that the House and Senate passed the BUILD Act last year, doubling the capacity of OPIC and transforming it into the DFC. I was actually in Colombia with the then-president of OPIC on the day that the Senate was voting on the bill. They are looking at opportunities for IDB and OPIC to work together.

I think that it is critically that lenders like the IDB, like OPIC that adhere to international best practices, that are committed to transparency, that are committed to making sure that borrowers do not undertake unsustainable debt levels, we got to work together. We got to work together to provide a credible alternative to China and also to help strengthen the institutional capacity in the ministries of the countries that are being approached by China for lending so that they are better able to protect themselves against predatory lending.

Senator KAINE. Great. Thank you.

Thank you, Mr. Chair.

Senator RUBIO. Thank you.

Senator Udall?

Senator UDALL. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

Thank you to all of the panelists here today and the experience that you bring before the committee.

And my question directed to Mr. Landau—I want to thank you for meeting in my office last week. You obviously have a distinguished legal career that has brought you before the Supreme Court many times and you have worked on behalf of your clients to solve many issues.

Now, if confirmed, you will need to bring these skills to the post in Mexico City, a post that I believe is one of the most important, if not the most important, for the United States speaking as a border State Senator. Mexico is our southern neighbor, an important trading partner, a country that we share a long and varied history and culture—the United States and Mexico—and the border States in particular have a long history with Mexico, including a long history of intermingling and cultural sharing.

As a well respected attorney, you have the opportunity to work with Mexican legal officials at all levels as they continue to reform their judiciary. This work will help Mexico address many of the structural issues that were addressed in the past and which continue to haunt many Mexican communities today.

How will you work to leverage those skills to help Mexico during its transformation to an adversarial system, and what do you think should be the biggest priorities in terms of addressing procedure and due process in Mexico?

Mr. LANDAU. Senator, thank you for that question.

I do come to this job, if confirmed, with 30 years of legal practice under my belt and certainly a profound commitment to basic values of due process and fairness and respect for the rule of law. These are issues that Mexico, as you noted in your question, has been working on. They have made some significant steps in recent years to reform their own internal justice system. I think those kind of efforts are critical to increasing the security and prosperity within Mexico and, if confirmed, I would certainly draw on my legal background and my connections in the U.S. legal community, judges, prosecutors, State attorneys general, the entire panoply, to offer Mexico whatever partnership we can as they work to develop their own institutions.

Senator UDALL. It is interesting that you mention also State attorneys general. When I was an attorney general in the 1990s, we actually would detail several people to Mexico. I think other border States did the same thing, of our four border States, in order to try to help them with these issues of moving to a different type of judiciary. So I think they are also a very important partner in this.

The incoming or new Mexican administration has made combating corruption a major issue. This is, of course, a very important issue for U.S. companies doing business or investing in Mexico. How will you address corruption in Mexico?

Mr. LANDAU. Senator, as you noted in your question, the Mexican government itself has focused on issues of corruption that they have had in that country. Certainly I will make it a priority to let the Mexican authorities and people understand that we stand

ready, willing, and able to be a partner with Mexico, if asked, to work with them in this area, which is so important to the development of their economy because corruption issues are a huge deterrent to economic prosperity. At the end of the day, a strong, stable, and prosperous Mexico is very much in the interest of the United States.

Senator UDALL. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Senator RUBIO. Thank you.

Senator Menendez?

Senator MENENDEZ. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Congratulations to all of the nominees and their nominations.

Let me start with you, Mr. Landau. I appreciate you can by and visited with me. We had a good conversation I thought, and I appreciated hearing your Spanish and making sure it is for real.

[Laughter.]

Mr. LANDAU. Esta verdad, Senator.

Senator MENENDEZ. [Spanish spoken.]

[Laughter.]

Senator MENENDEZ. Last month, I cosponsored the Fentanyl Sanctions Act with Leader Schumer because I, like many Americans, are concerned about the massive amounts of fentanyl and heroin that is coming into the United States and the catastrophic effect it is having on Americans.

Now, the President claims that building a wall at the Mexican border will help address the flow of drugs coming into our country, but the problem is—I want to ask you, are you aware that the Drug Enforcement Administration's 2018 National Drug Threat Assessment has repeatedly reported that the majority of illegal drugs coming from Mexico into the United States are coming through our legal points of entry?

Mr. LANDAU. Senator, we need a holistic approach to the border that allows for trade to go, for people to be able to cross, and certainly one of my priorities would be to do what I can to improve the efficiency of the border. Efficiency in a way that also promotes our security. And as you noted, there is a very significant issue of fentanyl coming over the border, as well as other illegal drugs. Certainly I am aware that a large percentage of the fentanyl comes through legal points of entry.

Senator MENENDEZ. Okay. So as such, will you commit, if you are confirmed, to working with me and other members of this committee to advance a comprehensive solution that addresses all the steps in the production and trafficking process so that we can try to meet this challenge?

Mr. LANDAU. Absolutely.

Senator MENENDEZ. Are you aware that Mexico is the second largest market for the United States' goods and services in the world?

Mr. LANDAU. Yes, Senator.

Senator MENENDEZ. In the world.

Mr. LANDAU. In the world.

Senator MENENDEZ. Now, as such, our trade with Mexico then is incredibly important in our economic interests as well. And so that is something I hope you are going to pay attention to.

A group of Democratic colleagues and I introduced the Central American Reform and Enforcement Act which proposes I think responsible solutions to address the root causes driving individuals to flee their home countries and to strengthen our own mechanisms to ensure fairness and efficiency for those who do reach our border.

In that context, I would like to ask you the following. Do you agree that migration from Central America's Northern Triangle is a complex issue that requires a multifaceted solution that tackles both strengthening our own mechanisms while also addressing the root causes that drive individuals to flee?

Mr. LANDAU. Yes, Senator.

Senator MENENDEZ. Do you agree that Mexico plays a key role in addressing issues of migration from Central America?

Mr. LANDAU. Yes, Senator.

Senator MENENDEZ. President Lopez Obrador has expressed an interest in working with the United States to address the root causes driving migration from Central America. Will you work with our partners in Mexico on these issues?

Mr. LANDAU. Absolutely, Senator.

Senator MENENDEZ. Now, I am concerned about the confidence gap that exists. You and I discussed this a little bit. In the poll last year by the Pew Research Center, an overwhelming majority of respondents in Mexico—78 percent, in fact—said they had no confidence at all with reference to what the administration would do when it comes to global affairs. And negative views like this only increase the political costs for Mexican officials to work closely with the United States on a wide range of policies, which we need them to work with us.

How do you plan to address this confidence gap, and how will you convince Mexican officials to cooperate with you and U.S. counterparts when you have this environment which you are walking into?

Mr. LANDAU. Senator, I have tremendous respect for Mexico's history, its culture, its people, and certainly if I were to be confirmed, I would want to very aggressively pursue a program of public diplomacy so that the Mexican people and government would understand our positions, where we are coming from. I see public diplomacy as absolutely critical to the mission of a successful Ambassador and would use all of the tools at my disposal. And certainly my family and I cannot think of anything we would rather do than enjoy living in Mexico and experiencing the country and the hospitality of the Mexican people.

Senator MENENDEZ. And lastly, will you commit to myself and to the committee that if you are confirmed, that you will, when called upon, give honest and accurate information about circumstances in Mexico when you are called upon to do so and work with us when we have some legislative ideas to get your perspectives on it?

Mr. LANDAU. Absolutely, Senator. I look forward, if confirmed, to welcoming you and other members of this committee to Mexico.

Senator MENENDEZ. Mr. Chairman, I have one or two other questions, and I do not know what the timing is.

Senator RUBIO. That is good. Let us go ahead.

Senator MENENDEZ. Thank you. I do not want the rest of you feel that I have left you out.

So, Mr. Pedrosa, earlier this year, an IDB bank meeting in China fell apart when the Chinese government refused to accredit Venezuelan interim President Juan Guaido's governor to attend the meeting. As I understand it, the IDB lost millions of dollars in the last minute cancellation of the event.

What lessons should the United States take away from these events, and what does it say about Chinese engagement in the hemisphere and at the IDB?

Mr. PEDROSA. Thank you for the question, Senator.

I think it says that China is not yet fully committed to playing by international rules. And I think it is an example of a phenomenon that we have seen elsewhere, and it was personified in that decision by the Chinese to refuse entry to a duly acknowledged and accepted governor of an international institution. Their failure to honor their commitment as a host country I think shows that they are not yet willing to abide by the international rules surrounding multilateral organizations, and I think we have seen other examples where they are not willing to abide——

Senator MENENDEZ. And so as such, I hope at the IDB, you are going to take that into consideration. I know we want their money in the bank, but by the same token, they have to live under the rules that all of us live under.

Mr. PEDROSA. Absolutely, Senator.

Senator MENENDEZ. And finally, for Ms. Bates and Ms. Nordquist, I am increasingly concerned that the United States is not well positioned to engage in economic statecraft for the 21st century, including promoting U.S. jobs, businesses, and economic interests, engaging in development financing for infrastructure and other needs, including climate change-related resiliency and setting standards for emergent technologies in the digital economy areas where we lead the world. But if we are not at the table, then others write the standards.

Can you share with me how you view your role and your institution's role, if you are confirmed, in helping to renew and replenish U.S. economic statecraft instruments? What do you see as the biggest challenges? What do you see as the biggest opportunities?

Ms. BATES. Thank you, Senator, for that question.

Economic statecraft, as previously defined and as will be defined as I am sure in ongoing conversations, is extremely important. Good economic policies that we promote to the rest of the world through an institution such as the OECD help to grow the American economy, help create jobs, help create a foundation for strong economic relationships between our country and others.

I look forward to working with the committee in that capacity to look for new ways, as well as to work within the institution, if confirmed, to define the goals that would be appropriate, as I said, in conversation with the committee for economic statecraft.

Within the mission itself, I think there are a number of tools. There are a number of committees within the OECD where we can promote U.S. views on the best practices and best approaches to foster an environment that creates sustainable economic growth.

Senator MENENDEZ. Ms. Nordquist?

Ms. NORDQUIST. Thank you, Senator.

So I am a huge believer in the mission of the World Bank. And the U.S. is the largest contributor to the World Bank, and we have a long history with the bank, one of its founding members, and obviously, the president is an American. And so I hope to continue to represent the United States interests as best as possible and be a good steward of taxpayer dollars while representing the U.S. interests at the bank.

The U.S. also has taken a leading role in the environmental and social framework and pushing for anti-corruption efforts. And I also believe that the reforms that would be part of the increased capital package would really improve things at the bank. I think the bank is not a perfect entity, but it is certainly better than most of the Chinese loans that are out there that are forcing borrowers into bankruptcy and then the Chinese are seizing the assets.

Senator MENENDEZ. Well, I look forward to both of you and your institutions having some sense of how do we meet—you know, Chinese investment is manipulative at best and coercive at worst. And so I look forward to see how we use these institutions not only as a counter to compete successfully against them so they do not undermine countries that ultimately cannot afford what they get from the Chinese under the terms and then go into deep debt, but also how do we use our tools in international financial institutions to ultimately promote the U.S. interests abroad. And I would like to hear a little bit more from you on that maybe for the record.

Senator RUBIO. Senator Cardin?

Senator CARDIN. Thank you.

Ms. Nordquist, let me follow up on this point: the recapitalization reform. You indicate the reform is to concentrate more on the less developed countries, which I agree with completely, carrying out the mission of the bank, which is to make sure we have stable regimes to reduce poverty, to help women—which I strongly support—and to reduce the violence. I absolutely agree with those types of reforms that would lead us to those conclusions.

But it is one thing to say that we are going to do it. It is another thing, in fact, to be able to be accountable in this area.

You mentioned anti-corruption several times. To me, corruption is the fuel for instability in these countries. We have a lot of less developed countries that do not have sophisticated governments. They may even have resources. Those resources are used to fuel corruption rather than to help the people.

So how do you see the reforms at the bank actually being carried out and practiced to help less developed countries develop the type of governance that can benefit the people of that country for a more stable life?

Ms. NORDQUIST. Thank you, Senator.

One thing that I have not really mentioned is that the whole idea of the World Bank is to help stabilize these countries so that private capital can come in. And I think that private capital is not going to come into a country that is endemically riddled with corruption.

So the World Bank actually does have an inspection panel and an ombudsman, that they are actually increasing the funding towards those two entities to make sure that there is accountability and that there is not corruption. I do not know if you are familiar

with the Jam v. IFC case, but obviously that was a project in India that went awry. The same thing happened in Uganda, and the warning signs were there, but there was not enough accountability in the bank to ensure that it did not happen. Right now, I think that those accountability mechanisms are much stronger and should hopefully prevent that in the future.

I would say I am a little bit of a research nerd. There was a great paper last year in the "Journal of Economic Perspectives" that actually compared World Bank loans in Africa to Chinese-led loans in Africa. And they found that the Chinese loans not only had zero positive economic impact on the area, but they were corrupt and they spread the corruption exactly around where that project had taken place.

Senator CARDIN. I think I will challenge you on one point, and that is, there are extractive industries that go into corrupt countries because they know they can work out their deals and get the minerals that they want. And we have tried to take action to prevent that from happening.

So I do not think we can just say that private investment will not go into corrupt regimes because we have seen that happen over and over again. But I do agree with you stable regimes need to be able to fight corruption because they will not stay stable.

So I guess my question is what in the reforms give us confidence that, in fact, we will see a commitment in the less developed countries to deal with good governance?

Ms. NORDQUIST. So I do know that particularly in the African region, the majority of World Bank loans go towards administrative, which is really focusing on developing strong governance tools and teaching these countries how to fight corruption. So there are mechanisms in place. And certainly, Senator, should you confirm me, I pledge to you to work to focus more of the World Bank resources on that issue.

Senator CARDIN. Would you commit to keep this committee informed, assuming the reforms go forward, as to how you are making progress or not making progress in dealing with corruption and good governance in less developed countries as a result of the recapitalization, the result of these efforts?

Ms. NORDQUIST. Absolutely, Senator.

Senator CARDIN. We will hold you to that.

Ms. NORDQUIST. Okay.

Senator CARDIN. Mr. Pedrosa, you mentioned the problems of fighting corruption in our hemisphere, and that goes well beyond Venezuela. We have many democratic governments that are plagued with corruption in our hemisphere.

So how do you see your role in development assistance dealing with rooting out corruption so we have less impunity and more safety for the people in our region? It will also help us, by the way, in regards to the migration issues.

Mr. PEDROSA. Senator, thank you for the question.

I entirely agree with your last statement, that that will help us with the migration issues.

As you know and as you mentioned at the beginning of your opening statement, one of the IDB's signature cross-cutting issues is anti-corruption, transparency, and rule of law. It means that

every project that comes to the IDB board gets scored as to whether or not it is actually having some impact on that issue. I think that is vitally important. I think the work that we do to strengthen institutional capacities at the ministries is vitally important and it is something that we need to continue to do.

I think we stand at a point of enormous opportunity. I think the light that has been shed on corruption in the region by the series of scandals that rocked it from Odebrecht to the Cuaderno scandal in Argentina put us in a position where the governments are finally—many of them willing to face this issue, which is not an easy on for government officials in these countries. Sometimes facing this issue means putting relatives and friends in legal jeopardy, but it is important work that has to be done. And I look forward to continuing to work within the IDB system to make sure that we are a part of that solution.

Senator CARDIN. And again, I would ask, as I have asked other witnesses, please keep us informed as to your success or lack of success in that regard. As I mentioned earlier, we are working on legislation here to try to identify best practices so that countries know that they are being watched on their efforts to fight corruption. And our bilateral relationship should always be aimed at reducing corruption and the mechanisms to provide for stability against corruption.

Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Senator RUBIO. We want to thank all four of you for being here.

The record will remain open for 48 hours. If you get questions for the record, the quicker you can respond to them, the faster the chairman can move on to the business hearing, which is the next step in this process.

But, again, I want to thank you all for giving us the time, for your willingness to serve.

And with that, the hearing is adjourned.

[Whereupon, at 12:18 p.m., the hearing was adjourned.]

Additional Material Submitted for the Record

RESPONSES TO ADDITIONAL QUESTIONS FOR THE RECORD
SUBMITTED TO PAMELA BATES BY SENATOR ROBERT MENENDEZ

Economic Statecraft

Question. As I mentioned during the hearing, I am increasingly concerned that the United States is not well positioned to engage in economic statecraft for the twenty-first century, including promoting U.S. jobs, business and economic interests, engaging in development financing for infrastructure and other needs, including climate change-related resiliency, and setting standards for emergent technologies and the digital economy.

- Can you expand upon how you view your role and your institutions role, if you are confirmed, in helping to renew and replenish U.S. economic statecraft instruments?

Answer. The OECD promotes market-based policies and market-friendly regulations that contribute directly to expanding market opportunities and lowering costs for U.S. firms. By working with the OECD, the United States is able to make sure those recommendations reflect U.S. interests and priorities, and gain agreement on those recommendations among like-minded countries. This helps create and expand

legitimate investment and financing opportunities for U.S. business and promote U.S. job creation.

Question. Where do you see the biggest challenges? Biggest opportunities?

Answer. In a rapidly changing economic, social, and technological landscape, determining policies that will promote the highest sustainable economic growth as stated in the OECD charter is a central challenge. It is important to keep the OECD focused on its strengths of high-quality, unbiased data collection and analysis to make those policy recommendations. U.S. engagement and leadership in the work and the governance of the OECD will ensure that the organization remains an effective, relevant institution and that its work continues to benefit the American people.

Question. Do you agree that any targeting of or retaliation against career employees based on their perceived political beliefs, prior work on policy, or affiliation with a previous administration, is wholly inappropriate and has no place in the federal government?

Answer. Yes. I agree that any targeting of or retaliation against career employees based on their perceived political beliefs, prior work on policy, or affiliation with a previous administration, is wholly inappropriate and has no place in the federal government. I believe that it is important for government decision makers to be presented with an array of different policy views and perspectives, and if confirmed I would seek to encourage rather than stifle the presentation of such views. Moreover, any personal political beliefs of career employees are not relevant as long as they are able to fulfill the needs of their position and remain in compliance with all applicable laws, such as the Hatch Act.

Question. If confirmed, what will you do to ensure that all employees under your leadership understand that any retaliation, blacklisting, or other prohibited personnel practices will not be tolerated?

Answer. If confirmed, I would make certain all employees at the U.S. Mission to the OECD have taken necessary training to support diversity in the workplace and maintain Equal Employment Opportunity principles. I will also work to ensure that supervisors are promoting those principles through example and instruction and are handling any complaints through appropriate channels and mechanisms.

Question. Has anyone ever made a formal or informal complaint or allegation of sexual harassment, discrimination (e.g., racial, ethnic, religious, etc.), or inappropriate conduct against you, in a workplace or any other setting?

Answer. No.

Question. If so, please describe the nature of the complaint or allegation, your response, and any resolution, including any settlements.

Answer. Not applicable.

Question. Have you ever addressed concerns or allegations of sexual harassment, discrimination (e.g., racial, ethnic, religious, etc.), or inappropriate conduct made against any employee over whom you had supervisory authority?

Answer. No.

Question. If so, please describe the outcome and actions taken.

Answer. Not applicable.

FOLLOW-UP QUESTIONS SUBMITTED TO PAMELA BATES BY SENATOR ROBERT MENENDEZ

Question. In your response to my Questions for the Record, you stated: "In a rapidly changing economic, social, and technological landscape, determining policies that will promote the highest sustainable economic growth as stated in the OECD charter is a central challenge. It is important to keep the OECD focused on its strengths of high-quality, unbiased data collection and analysis to make those policy recommendations. U.S. engagement and leadership in the work and the governance of the OECD will ensure that the organization remains an effective, relevant institution and that its work continues to benefit the American people:"

- When you say "It is important to keep the OECD focused on its strengths of high-quality, unbiased data collection and analysis," does that include data and information based on the scientific community's consensus on climate change?

Answer. The OECD should focus on providing data, information and analysis on a variety of technical issues, as agreed by member states, including those related to climate change such as emissions data and financing of low-carbon investments. The OECD provides value to its members by collecting information to produce data

and analysis that informs decision-makers and supports negotiations and cooperation in other fora.

Question. What purpose do you believe is being served by the following policies and actions affecting the quality and integrity of U.S. data?

- the "red team vs. blue team" climate science review proposed by former EPA Administrator, Scott Pruitt;
- limiting the scope of computer-generated climate change impact models used by U.S. government agencies making climate related policy decision to only project through 2040 (rather than through the end of the century as is accepted by the broader scientific community);
- eliminating the publication of "worst case scenarios" from reports on climate change effects;
- or the work within the White House, led by Dr. William Happer, to review the role climate science serves in U.S. national security planning?

Answer. The U.S. Mission to the OECD relies on technical experts from more than 25 U.S. agencies to participate in the sharing of data and information at the OECD. If confirmed, I would work with relevant U.S. government agencies to support U.S. participation in OECD technical committees working on environmental policy and climate change issues. These agencies have the expertise to evaluate technical questions regarding the quality and integrity of U.S. data.

Question. Are you concerned with the effect the actions taken in the question above could have on the quality and integrity of U.S. (produced) climate change data?

Answer. I would defer to subject matter experts from relevant U.S. government agencies to evaluate technical issues affecting the quality and integrity of U.S. data.

Question. What will you do to protect the integrity, impartiality, and quality of the scientific data on climate change the U.S. contributes to the OECD, especially in light of the aforementioned policies and reviews, which appear designed to limit publication and collection of scientific data in the interest of a biased political agenda to minimize, obfuscate, and deny the risks posed by climate change?

Answer. If confirmed, I would support the participation of technical experts from relevant U.S. government agencies in sharing data related to climate change and reviewing technical issues affecting the quality and integrity of U.S. data.

Question. Do you support the findings and agree with the concerns raised by the "OECD Environmental Outlook to 2050: The Consequences of Inaction" report, and would you support the OECD producing more high-quality and unbiased reports on the significant development and security risks associated with climate change?

Answer. I would defer to subject matter experts to comment on the findings of this report and other OECD technical reports. If confirmed, I would support a process for producing high-quality and unbiased reports that have been reviewed by technical experts from the United States and other member states through OECD technical committees.

RESPONSES TO ADDITIONAL QUESTIONS FOR THE RECORD
SUBMITTED TO PAMELA BATES BY SENATOR BENJAMIN L. CARDIN

Question. What is the OECD's role in strengthening democratic institutions and promoting good governance?

Answer. The OECD promotes best practices that support sound democratic institutions and good governance in areas such as rigorous government audits and financial controls, transparency in government contracting and procurement, and combatting bribery. For example, the OECD Anti-Bribery Convention reflects U.S. priorities as encapsulated in the 1977 Foreign Corrupt Practices Act (FCPA) and helps to level the global playing field for U.S. business. U.S. efforts have led to a notable improvement in the legal, regulatory and enforcement efforts of the major trading countries of the world. As of 2018, 44 countries have acceded to the Anti-Bribery Convention, representing more than 60 percent of world GDP.

Question. If confirmed, how would you work to bolster the OECD's efforts in this area (strengthening democratic institutions and promoting good governance)?

Answer. If confirmed, I would support projects that evaluate and improve the recommendations on best practices in these areas. I would also look for ways to encour-

age non-member countries to adhere to these practices, including through active enforcement and potential accession to the Anti-Bribery Convention.

Question. What are the most important actions you have taken in your career to date to promote human rights and democracy? What has been the impact of your actions?

Answer. In my previous work as a career foreign service officer, I promoted market-based policy approaches at the OECD, which advance sustainable economic growth. Strengthening and expanding economic opportunities helps to enhance human rights and democracy by empowering the individual and improving his or her standard of living.

Question. How would you characterize the OECD's engagement with emerging economies that are not members of the Organization, like China, Brazil, and India?

Answer. Brazil, China, and India are all part of the OECD Key Partner program. Key Partners are encouraged to share data and participate actively in mutually beneficial OECD work areas including competition, investment, and taxation. Most of these countries already adhere to at least some of OECD's policy standards and legal instruments, but the objective of the Key Partner program is to help them adhere to more. By encouraging high standards for a wide range of economic policies, the OECD can help level the playing field for U.S. businesses.

Question. What more should the Organization do to involve large non-members such as Brazil, China, and India in its work?

Answer. The OECD should do more to make sure large non-members like Brazil, China, and India are adopting more OECD standards to provide a stronger foundation for economic growth and expand commercial opportunities for U.S. firms. Countries such as Brazil have demonstrated a commitment to OECD-inspired economic reforms while others, such as China and India, have shown less interest in adopting OECD norms. OECD members, including the United States, use the Key Partner program as a way to leverage the OECD to achieve our bilateral policy priorities including by promoting transparency, open markets and investment regimes, and a level playing field for U.S. business.

Question. In recent weeks and months, we have seen some of the initial effects of how disruptive trade disputes can be for the U.S. economy. What role, if any, can the OECD play alongside the World Trade Organization (WTO) to reduce global trade tensions?

Answer. The OECD can complement the WTO by providing evidence-based analysis of the OECD Trade Committee and being a forum that advocates policies aimed at opening markets and promoting free and fair trade. The OECD provides the United States with a forum for building support for initiatives at the WTO such as the digital trade discussions and fisheries subsidies negotiations. The OECD produces the most precise indicators available for monitoring countries' compliance with the WTO Trade Facilitation Agreement.

Question. What will you do to promote, mentor and support your staff that come from diverse backgrounds and underrepresented groups at the OECD?

Answer. If confirmed as the Chief of Mission, I would seek to recruit staff for the Mission from a broad range of backgrounds and to foster an environment of tolerance, respect, and professionalism that complies with U.S. law. As part of the governing Council of the OECD, I would push to make certain the OECD is doing the same.

Question. What steps will you take to ensure each of the supervisors at the OECD are fostering an environment that is diverse and inclusive?

Answer. If confirmed, I would work closely with the OECD on all employment issues, including fostering a diverse and inclusive work environment, and the hiring of American citizens. I would ensure that OECD management understands the importance we place on equal employment opportunity and seek to influence OECD hiring policies to closely match U.S. standards in this area.

Question. Do you commit to bring to the committee's attention any change in policy or U.S. actions that you suspect may be influenced by any of the President's business or financial interests, or the business or financial interests of any senior White House staff?

Answer. If confirmed, I commit to comply with all relevant federal ethics laws, regulations, and rules, and to raise concerns that I may have through the appropriate channels.

Question. Do you commit to inform the committee if you have any reason to suspect that a foreign government, head of state, or foreign-controlled entity is taking any action in order to benefit any of the President's business or financial interests, or the interests of senior White House staff?

Answer. If confirmed, I commit to comply with all relevant federal ethics laws, regulations, and rules, and to raise concerns that I may have through the appropriate channels.

Question. Do you or do any members of your immediate family have any financial interests in any country abroad?

Answer. My investment portfolio includes interests in diversified mutual funds and a diversified Real Estate Investment Trust which may hold interest in companies located outside the United States, but which are exempt from the conflict of interest laws by regulation. My investment portfolio also includes interests in U.S. companies that may have a presence abroad. I am committed to ensuring that my official actions will not give rise to a conflict of interest. I will divest all investments the State Department Ethics Office deems necessary to avoid a conflict of interest, and I will remain vigilant with regard to my ethics obligations.

RESPONSES TO ADDITIONAL QUESTIONS FOR THE RECORD
SUBMITTED TO CHRISTOPHER LANDAU BY SENATOR ROBERT MENENDEZ

Question. The President's repeated and public criticism of Mexico and the Mexican people continue to raise the political cost for Mexican authorities that cooperate with the United States on issues including securing our border, addressing unauthorized migration or challenges related to narcotics trafficking, which are contributing to the heroin and fentanyl epidemic plaguing our country.

- As our principal diplomat for the Americas, do you intend to formulate a strategy to make Mexico pay for a border wall between our countries?

Answer. I understand that a border wall is one part of a comprehensive approach to further improve security on our southern border. I further understand that the State Department is engaged in an ongoing dialogue with our Mexican partners to ensure coordination and to exchange information on joint efforts to secure and modernize the border. If confirmed, I would work with U.S. interagency partners and the Mexican government to improve security for both countries along our common border.

Question. Do you believe that the United States can address border security, migration, and drug trafficking without a productive partnership with Mexican authorities?

Answer. I believe that Mexican cooperation is vital to the success of U.S. policy on issues of border security, migration, and drug trafficking. In fact, that is why I seek this job: I believe that these are shared challenges that neither country can successfully overcome on its own.

Question. The day of your confirmation hearing, the President tweeted—

> I am very disappointed that Mexico is doing virtually nothing to stop illegal immigrants from coming to our Southern Border where everyone knows that because of the Democrats, our Immigration Laws are totally flawed & broken. Mexico's attitude is that people from other countries, including Mexico, should have the right to flow into the U.S. & that U.S. taxpayers should be responsible for the tremendous costs associated w/this illegal migration. Mexico is wrong and I will soon be giving a response!

- What is your assessment of how this tweet was received by the government of Mexico?

Answer. I do not know how this tweet was received by the government of Mexico. I understand that the United States and Mexico are committed to working closely together to address our shared challenges. If confirmed, I pledge to work with our Mexican counterparts to find common ground to advance our important bilateral priorities, including illegal immigration.

Question. During a hearing before the Senate Foreign Relations Committee in 2018, Secretary Pompeo affirmed that presidential statements are official U.S. positions and policy; therefore, is it is your assessment that Mexico is doing virtually nothing to stop undocumented migrants from entering the United States?

Answer. I understand that the United States works closely with Mexico to address illegal immigration. Stopping illegal immigration and promoting safe, legal, and orderly forms of migration is a shared challenge for both countries. I believe that neither country can solve this challenge alone, and that we can find common ground with the government of Mexico on this critical issue.

Question. According to the Center for Disease Control, more than 42,000 Americans lost their lives to opioid overdoses in 2016—more than 20,000 of those deaths were related to fentanyl and more than 15,000 were related to heroin. As you know, the majority of the heroin coming into the U.S. originates from Mexico and much of illicit fentanyl entering the U.S. comes from China and transits through Mexico.

- What is your assessment of the importance of U.S.-Mexico cooperation to address illicit heroin and fentanyl trafficking and transnational organized crime?

Answer. I believe that Mexican cooperation is vital to address illicit heroin and fentanyl trafficking and transnational organized crime and, if confirmed, I will seek to foster our security partnership with Mexico. Neither country can successfully confront transnational organized crime or the scourge of drugs alone.

Question. Do you think the U.S. can address heroin and fentanyl trafficking without Mexico's cooperation?

Answer. No. I believe that neither country can successfully confront transnational organized crime or the scourge of illegal drugs alone.

Question. Are you aware that DEA's 2018 National Drug Threat Assessment states that the majority of illegal drugs coming from Mexico into the U.S. are coming through our legal ports of entry?

Answer. Yes, I am aware of the statements in DEA's 2018 National Drug Threat Assessment.

Question. If confirmed, do you commit to advancing a comprehensive solution that includes addressing all steps in the production and trafficking processes, as well as common sense efforts to reduce demand?

Answer. Yes. If confirmed, I commit to advancing a comprehensive solution that includes addressing all steps in the production and trafficking processes, as well as common sense efforts to reduce demand. I understand that the State Department will continue to coordinate with the Office of National Drug Control Policy, which has the lead on reducing demand in the United States.

Question. Immigration is one of the most complex issues in the national debate. Do you agree that migration from Central America's Northern Triangle through Mexico is a complex issue that requires a multifaceted solution that tackles both strengthening our own mechanisms while also addressing the root causes that drive individuals to flee?

Answer. Yes. I understand that the Department of State is committed to working with Mexico and Northern Triangle countries on shared security and development challenges. If confirmed, I look forward to continued dialogue on these issues.

Question. Do you agree that Mexico plays a key role in addressing issues of migration from Central America?

Answer. Yes. I believe that Mexico plays a key role with respect to migration from Central America, and that continued cooperation between Mexico and the United States is essential to address the security and humanitarian dimensions of such migration from Central America.

Question. President Lopez Obrador has expressed an interest in working with the United States to address the root causes driving migration from Central America; do you commit to working with our partners in Mexico on these issues?

Answer. Yes. I understand that the State Department is committed to working with Mexico on shared security and development challenges. If confirmed, I would seek to continue dialogue on these issues.

Question. Do you believe that toxic rhetoric against Mexicans, Mexican Americans, and Central Americans is helpful in helping address these challenges?

Answer. Our ties to both Mexico and Central America are grounded in our long, shared history. Our commitment to working together to achieve mutual goals of prosperity, security, and democracy is steadfast. If confirmed, I would seek to communicate with our Mexican neighbors in a fashion consistent with that tradition of cooperation and friendship.

Question. What is your assessment of corruption in the federal and state governments of Mexico?

Answer. Corruption is a universal challenge and I understand that the Mexican government is committed to fighting corruption and fostering good governance at the federal and state levels. I understand that Mexico has undertaken an historic transition to an oral accusatory justice system that will provide greater transparency, accountability, and efficiency in the administration of justice. If confirmed, I will be committed to working with the Mexican government to support efforts to fight corruption and enhance the rule of law.

Question. What is your assessment of corruption in the main political parties in Mexico?

Answer. I understand that Mexican voters have repeatedly cited corruption as a major concern and that President Lopez Obrador ran for office on an anti-corruption platform and stated he will not tolerate it in his administration. If confirmed, I will support Mexico's efforts to fight corruption in every context.

Question. What steps will you take to support efforts by the government of Mexico to combat corruption?

Answer. I have dedicated my career to the rule of law. I understand that the United States has supported Mexico's transition to an oral accusatory system that will provide greater transparency, accountability, and efficiency in the administration of justice. If confirmed, I will support this and other good governance and anti-corruption efforts in Mexico.

Question. In a poll last year by the Pew Research Center, an overwhelming majority of respondents in Mexico—78 percent, in fact—said they had no confidence at all that President Trump would do the right thing when it came to global affairs. Negative views like this only increase the political cost for Mexican officials to work closely with the United States on a wide range of policy officials.

- How do you plan to address this confidence gap and how will you convince Mexican officials to cooperate with their U.S. counterparts when they don't trust our President?

Answer. Mexico is one of the United States' closest and most valued partners. Our two countries share unbreakable bonds of geography, history, culture, economy, and family. If confirmed, my job will be to highlight these transcendent bonds, and to find common ground to address our shared challenges. I would use all the public diplomacy and outreach tools at my disposal to ensure that the Mexican people and government understand our positions and interest in fostering an even closer and mutually beneficial relationship.

Question. How can they trust you, when you are his representative?

Answer. If confirmed, I will devote myself to building personal relationships across Mexican society and communicating my deep respect for Mexico's history, culture, and people.

Question. There are currently more than 37,000 missing or disappeared people in Mexico. In 2014, this issue shocked the conscience of Mexico and the world, when we heard of 43 students who disappeared in Iguala, a case that is symptomatic of a much larger issue. Additionally, the Committee to Protect Journalists reported the murder of a fifth Mexican journalist last week and has documented how Mexican journalists feel vulnerable as a result of President Obrador's anti-press comments.

- What is your assessment of the more than 37,000 Mexican citizens that are missing or disappeared?

Answer. The issue of the missing and disappeared people is a major human rights challenge for Mexico. I understand that President Lopez Obrador has pledged that his administration will increase efforts to search for such people and also to identify the remains of the deceased in the possession of authorities. If confirmed, I will explore opportunities to support the Mexican government's efforts to address this challenge.

Question. If confirmed, do you commit to raising concerns about the number of journalists who have been victims of violence?

Answer. Yes. A free press is essential for any democracy. If confirmed, I commit to exploring ways that the United States can assist Mexican efforts to protect journalists.

Question. If confirmed, what steps will you take to provide support in the resolution of the case of the 43 missing students?

Answer. I understand that both the Inter-American Commission on Human Rights and the Office of the U.N. High Commissioner for Human Rights have reached agreements to assist the Mexican government's investigation of the Iguala

case. If confirmed, I would look to continue ongoing U.S. assistance to Mexico's law enforcement and justice sectors to enhance the capability of Mexican authorities to investigate and prosecute cases such as the disappearance of the 43 students.

Violence in Mexico is a serious challenge, and violence against women is a particularly alarming problem. In 2018, 3,580 women and girls were killed in Mexico, three times as many as were killed in 2007, according to Mexican government statistics. During the same period, 14,558 women were raped, a figure that has risen steadily from 12,638 in 2014. In several prominent cases, Mexican authorities have investigated killings of women first as suicides, a practice that places blame on the victim and absolves their killers of responsibility long before the facts of the case have even been determined. Mexican women's rights groups say authorities meet violence against women with indifference and impunity, and even the López Obrador administration admitted in March that it had failed to do enough to protect women and girls.

Question. What is your assessment of violence against women in Mexico?

Answer. Violence against women is an abhorrent crime which unfortunately, occurs in all corners of the world, including Mexico. It is an issue that deeply concerns me. I understand that President Lopez Obrador has made the promotion of human rights and the elimination of corruption and impunity a priority for his administration. I further understand that the U.S. supports Mexican law enforcement with training assistance to be able to better detect, investigate, and prosecute crimes, including violence against women. If confirmed, I will look forward to fostering this close cooperation.

Question. What steps will you personally take to address the challenge of violence against women in Mexico?

Answer. If confirmed, I will work closely with our Mexican partners, including government, civil society, and others, to combat violence against women and other human rights abuses. I will continue Mission Mexico's work to support Mexico's justice sector and other organizations by offering training assistance, engaging in public messaging efforts, and supporting initiatives to help ensure perpetrators of these crimes face justice before the law and victims are able to obtain the services they need.

Question. What are the most important actions you have taken in your career to date to support democracy and human rights? What has been the impact of your actions?

Answer. As a lawyer, I have devoted my career to promoting the rule of law and the civil resolution of disputes. I have handled cases seeking to promote judicial independence, see *Beer* v. *United States,* 696 F.3d 1174 (Fed. Cir. 2012) (en banc), and the First Amendment, see *Boehner* v. *McDermott,* 484 F.3d 573 (D.C. Cir. 2007) (en banc). I have also handled pro bono cases seeking to protect individuals from arbitrary or unlawful government action. See e.g.,*Maslenjak* v. *United States,* 137 S. Ct. 1975 (2017); *Perry* v. *Merit Systems Protection Board,* 137 S. Ct. 1975 (2017). I revere the U.S. Constitution, and if confirmed all my actions as an officer of the United States will be animated by fidelity to that document.

Question. What has been the impact of your actions?

Answer. As a lawyer in private practice, my actions have had the impact of civilly resolving disputes over my clients' rights and advancing their interests. If confirmed, I will seek to advance the interests of the United States, including our interest in promoting democracy and the rule of law in cooperation with our Mexican partners.

Question. What issues are the most pressing challenges to democracy or democratic development in Mexico? These challenges might include obstacles to participatory and accountable governance and institutions, rule of law, authentic political competition, civil society, human rights and press freedom. Please be as specific as possible.

Answer. I believe that institutionalization of the rule of law and addressing corruption are two of the most important challenges facing Mexico. The continued transition to a fair, prompt, effective and transparent justice system is essential to promote public confidence in Mexican institutions and to protect and promote human rights. In addition, the day-to-day safety and security of many Mexicans is threatened by criminal violence perpetrated by powerful transnational criminal organizations.

Question. What steps will you take—if confirmed—to support democracy in Mexico? What do you hope to accomplish through these actions?

Answer. As an initial matter, I believe that it is important to underscore how far Mexico has advanced in this regard over the past generation. For most of my life, Mexico was a one-party state. That began to change in the 1980s and 1990s, and the change really took hold in 2000. During this period, Mexico has made tremendous strides to establish a competitive multi-party democracy, as underscored by the fact that political power has shifted between different parties at both the federal and state levels. Of course, ongoing challenges remain, including finalizing the transformation of the justice system and addressing impunity and corruption. If confirmed, I will work closely with U.S. and Mexican government officials and different elements of civil society to support the consolidation of democracy and rule of law.

Question. What are the potential impediments to addressing the specific obstacles you have identified?

Answer. Mexico's historic efforts to strengthen democracy and the rule of law face impediments ranging from criminal violence to corruption to economic and social inequality.

Question. How will you utilize U.S. government assistance resources at your disposal, including the Democracy Commission Small Grants program and other sources of State Department and USAID funding, to support democracy and governance, and what will you prioritize in processes to administer such assistance?

Answer. I understand that the Department of State and USAID support democracy and governance programs in Mexico at the federal and state levels. If confirmed, I would explore available assistance resources and programs to continue to support Mexico's efforts to counter impunity, protect human rights, promote transparency, and prevent crime and violence, including near the U.S.-Mexico border. I will prioritize efforts that have a direct and lasting impact on our shared security.

Question. If confirmed, do you commit to meet with civil society members, human rights and other non-governmental organizations in the U.S. and with local human rights NGOs, and other members of civil society in Mexico?

Answer. Yes. If confirmed, I commit to meet with civil society members, human rights and other non-governmental organizations in the U.S. and with local human rights NGOs, and other members of civil society in Mexico.

Question. What steps will you take to proactively address efforts to restrict or penalize NGOs and civil society via legal or regulatory measures?

Answer. If confirmed, I would certainly want to hear from civil society and NGOs any concerns they may have about any legal or regulatory measures that they believe might restrict or penalize their efforts.

Question. If confirmed, do you commit to meet with democratically oriented political opposition figures and parties?

Answer. Yes. If confirmed, I commit to meet with democratically oriented political opposition figures and parties, understanding that such meetings do not entail endorsement, but merely underscore our support for meaningful political competition in a flourishing civil society.

Question. What steps will you take to encourage genuine political competition? Will you advocate for access and inclusivity for women, minorities and youth within political parties?

Answer. If confirmed, I will meet with democratically oriented political opposition figures and parties, listen to their concerns, and if appropriate raise those concerns with government officials. I will also use these interactions, as well as exchange programs funded by the USG, to advocate access and inclusivity for women, minorities, and youth within political parties.

Question. Will you advocate for access and inclusivity for women, minorities and youth within political parties?

Answer. Yes. If confirmed, I will advocate for access and inclusivity for women, minorities and youth within political parties.

Question. Will you and your embassy team actively engage with Mexico on freedom of the press and address any government efforts designed to control or undermine press freedom through legal, regulatory or other measures?

Answer. Yes. If confirmed, the embassy team and I will actively engage with Mexico on freedom of the press and address any government efforts designed to control or undermine press freedom through legal, regulatory, or other measures.

Question. Will you commit to meeting regularly with independent, local press in Mexico?

Answer. Yes. If confirmed, I will commit to meeting regularly with independent, local press in Mexico.

Question. Will you and your embassy team actively engage with civil society and government counterparts on countering disinformation and propaganda disseminated by foreign state or non-state actors in the country?

Answer. Yes. If confirmed, I will work with my embassy team and I will actively engage with civil society and government counterparts on countering disinformation and propaganda disseminated by foreign state or non-state actors in Mexico.

Question. Will you and your embassy teams actively engage with Mexico on the right of labor groups to organize, including for independent trade unions?

Answer. Yes. If confirmed, the embassy team and I will actively engage with Mexico on the right of labor groups to organize, including the right for independent trade unions to organize.

Question. Will you commit to using your position, if confirmed, to defend the human rights and dignity of all people in Mexico, no matter their sexual orientation or gender identity?

Answer. Yes. If confirmed, I commit to using my position to defend the human rights and dignity of all people in Mexico, regardless of their sexual orientation or gender identity.

Question. What challenges do the lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender and queer (LGBTQ) people face in Mexico?

Answer. I understand that LGBTQ people face challenges in Mexico, just as in other parts of the world, including discrimination and violence.

Question. What specifically will you commit to do to help LGBTQ people in Mexico?

Answer. If confirmed, I commit to continuing the Mission's outreach to and engagement with LGTBQ organizations, to listening to their concerns, and if appropriate raising those concerns with government officials.

Question. Do you agree that any targeting of or retaliation against career employees based on their perceived political beliefs, prior work on policy, or affiliation with a previous administration, is wholly inappropriate and has no place in the federal government?

Answer. Yes, I agree that any targeting of or retaliation against career employees based on their perceived political beliefs, prior work on policy, or affiliation with a previous administration, is wholly inappropriate and has no place in the federal government. I believe that this is important for government decision makers to be presented with an array of different policy views and perspectives, and if confirmed I would seek to encourage rather than stifle the presentation of such views.

Question. If confirmed, what will you do to ensure that all employees under your leadership understand that any retaliation, blacklisting, or other prohibited personnel practices will not be tolerated?

Answer. If confirmed, I will ensure that prohibited personnel practices, including retaliation and blacklisting, will not be tolerated. As a leader, I will demonstrate by example that I believe that the presentation of different policy views and perspectives should be encouraged, not stifled.May 21, 2019

Question. Has anyone ever made a formal or informal complaint or allegation of sexual harassment, discrimination (e.g., racial, ethnic, religious, etc.), or inappropriate conduct against you, in a workplace or any other setting? If so, please describe the nature of the complaint or allegation, your response, and any resolution, including any settlements?

Answer. No.

Question. Have you ever addressed concerns or allegations of sexual harassment, discrimination (e.g., racial ethnic, religious, etc.) or inappropriate conduct made against any employee over whom you had supervisory authority?

Answer. No.

Question. If so, please describe the outcome and actions taken.

Answer. Given my response to the previous question, this is not applicable.

FOLLOW-UP QUESTION SUBMITTED TO CHRISTOPHER LANDAU BY SENATOR ROBERT MENENDEZ

Question. I posed this question previously, and would ask that you re-answer the following question.

> The President's repeated and public criticism of Mexico and the Mexican people continue to raise the political cost for Mexican authorities that cooperate with the United States on issues including securing our border, addressing unauthorized migration or challenges related to narcotics trafficking, which are contributing to the heroin and fentanyl epidemic plaguing our country:

- As our principal diplomat for the Americas, do you intend to formulate a strategy to make Mexico pay for a border wall between our countries?

Answer. If confirmed as Ambassador to Mexico, I will work to strengthen cooperation between our two countries on a broad range of political, security, migration, and economic issues involving our common border. Like the President, I am committed to improving border security, which is essential for the safety of our people. I believe that a secure and efficient border is in the interest of both countries, as it would facilitate legitimate trade and travel, while preventing the movement of illicit goods and travelers. I further believe that improved border infrastructure, to include walls, is a critical piece of strengthening control of the border, and defer to the President and Congress on funding decisions.

RESPONSES TO ADDITIONAL QUESTIONS FOR THE RECORD SUBMITTED TO CHRISTOPHER LANDAU BY SENATOR BENJAMIN L. CARDIN

Question. Mexican journalists, civil society leaders, and human rights defenders face higher risks than in almost any country in the world. A tragic number have been killed. Your predecessors worked hard to engage with civil society groups across the political spectrum. They also used the Embassy's powerful public platform to highlight human rights defenders who were at risk.

- If confirmed, how would you engage with civil society organizations?

Answer. An active, engaged civil society is a vital part of a vibrant democracy. If confirmed, I would follow in my predecessors' steps by maintaining regular dialogue with civil society organizations, including journalists and human rights defenders, and look for ways to provide appropriate assistance, support, and training.

Question. Do you commit to using the prominent, public nature of your position to help protect those at risk?

Answer. Yes. If confirmed, I commit to using the prominent public nature of my position to help protect those at risk.

Question. What are your most meaningful achievements to date in your career to promote human rights and democracy? What has been the impact of your actions?

Answer. As a lawyer, I have devoted my career to promoting the rule of law and the civil resolution of disputes. I have handled cases seeking to promote judicial independence, see Beer v. United States, 696 F.3d 1174 (Fed. Cir. 2012) (en banc), and the First Amendment, see Boehner v. McDermott, 484 F.3d 573 (D.C. Cir 2007) (en banc). I have also handled pro bono cases seeking to protect individuals from arbitrary or unlawful government action. See e.g., Maslenjak v. United States, 137 S. Ct. 1975 (2017); Perry v. Merit Systems Protection Board, 137 S. Ct. 1975 (2017). I revere the U.S. Constitution, and if confirmed all my actions will be animated by fidelity to that document.

As a lawyer in private practice, my actions have had the impact of civilly resolving disputes over my clients' rights and advancing their interests. If confirmed, I will seek to advance the interests of the United States, including our interest in promoting democracy and the rule of law in cooperation with our Mexican partners.

Question. What are the most pressing human rights issues in Mexico? What are the most important steps you expect to take—if confirmed—to promote human rights and democracy in Mexico? What do you hope to accomplish through these actions?

Answer. I understand that the most pressing human rights issues in Mexico include unlawful or arbitrary killing, forced disappearances, torture, arbitrary detention, impunity, and violence directed against journalists. I believe that the most important steps we can take are to continue to support ongoing Mexican efforts to

strengthen the justice sector to promote accountability for violators of human rights. Enhancing the capability and independence of the police, prosecutors, and the courts is essential to strengthen the rule of law and address impunity. The national search commission holds promise to address the problem of forced disappearances. I believe that my background and experience as a lawyer will enhance my ability to make a positive impact in these areas.

Question. If confirmed, what are the potential obstacles to addressing the specific human rights issues you have identified in your previous response? What challenges will you face in Mexico in advancing human rights, civil society and democracy in general?

Answer. I understand that Mexico is continuing to carry out an historic transformation of its justice system as it completes the transition from an inquisitorial to an accusatorial system and establishes a new Prosecutor General designed to have higher professional standards and greater independence. In addition, I understand that Mexico has also passed major legislation addressing torture and disappearances over the last two years. These changes will take years to fully implement, and at the same time Mexico faces historic levels of criminal violence, largely driven by transnational criminal organizations. In light of these challenges, I believe our continuing support for Mexican efforts is critical.

Question. Are you committed to meeting with human rights, civil society and other non-governmental organizations in the U.S. and with local human rights NGOs in Mexico? If confirmed, what steps will you take to proactively support the Leahy Law and similar efforts, and ensure that provisions of U.S. security assistance and security cooperation activities reinforce human rights?

Answer. Yes. If confirmed, I pledge to meet with human rights groups, civil society and other non-governmental organizations in the United States and Mexico. In fact, if confirmed, I plan to begin meetings with U.S.-based human rights organizations even before I arrive in Mexico. If confirmed, I also pledge to fully support the Leahy Law to ensure that any potential Mexican recipient of U.S. security assistance is thoroughly vetted. Also in this regard, if confirmed, I will explore ways in which we can continue to make human rights training a part of our broader security assistance efforts.

Question. Will you and your embassy team actively engage with Mexico to address cases of key political prisoners or persons otherwise unjustly targeted by Mexico?

Answer. While I am not aware of any credible reports of political prisoners or detainees in Mexico, if confirmed, I will ensure the Embassy takes all appropriate steps to address any such cases. In addition, if I am confirmed, the protection and well-being of incarcerated U.S. citizens will be a top priority.

Question. Do you commit to bring to the committee's attention (and the State Department Inspector General) any change in policy or U.S. actions that you suspect may be influenced by any of the President's business or financial interests, or the business or financial interests of any senior White House staff?

Answer. I commit to comply with all relevant federal ethics laws, regulations, and rules, and to raise concerns through appropriate channels.

Question. Do you commit to inform the committee if you have any reason to suspect that a foreign government, head of state, or foreign-controlled entity is taking any action in order to benefit any of the President's business or financial interests, or the interests of senior White House staff?

Answer. I commit to comply with all relevant federal ethics laws, regulations, and rules, and to raise concerns through appropriate channels.

Question. Do you or do any members of your immediate family have any financial interests in Mexico?

Answer. My investment portfolio includes diversified exchange-traded funds and diversified mutual funds, which may hold interests in companies with a presence in Mexico, but which are exempt from the conflict of interest laws. My investment portfolio also includes sector funds, which may hold interests in companies with a presence in Mexico, as well as financial interests in companies that maintain a presence in Mexico. I am committed to ensuring that my official actions will not give rise to a conflict of interest. I will divest all investments the State Department Ethics Office deems necessary to avoid a conflict of interest, and I will remain vigilant with regard to my ethics obligations.

Question. You will be managing one of our largest missions with more than 2,500 staff spread across the Embassy and consulates in ten cities. You will be responsible

for large numbers of American families and the many Mexican locally engaged staff the Mission depends on to function.

- Can you tell me about your management experience and how you plan to lead such a large, diverse, and geographically scattered team?

Answer. I have been a partner at two of the largest law firms in the world for almost 25 years. In that role, I have led innumerable teams of lawyers on cases, sometimes multiple lawyers at different firms in a single case. I understand the importance of effective leadership, especially in the context of a large and sprawling Mission like Mexico: setting clear priorities, ensuring all members of the team know how they contribute to the success of the mission, and establishing clear channels for communication. If confirmed, I look forward to working with the country team to ensure the success of Mission Mexico.

Having grown up in a Foreign Service family, I am familiar with the operation of an embassy, and the importance of keeping up the morale of all the various team components, including employees of different federal agencies, foreign national employees, and employees at the various consulates throughout the country.

Question. What steps would you take to ensure the continued motivation and morale of the Mission's hundreds of Mexican staff in light of potentially harsh rhetoric between our countries' leaders?

Answer. Managing the diverse workforce of Mission Mexico, to include both Embassy and Consulate staff, multiple U.S. government agencies, contractors, direct-hires, U.S. citizens and Mexican nationals, will be a top priority for me if confirmed as Ambassador. Having grown up in a Foreign Service family, and having worked shoulder-to-shoulder with foreign national staff during my summer breaks, I am keenly aware of the critical contributions of such staff to the embassy's mission.

I believe maintaining a positive work environment, open communication, and respecting the richness that diversity brings to our organization and work is an important part of being a good leader. If confirmed, I look forward to meeting the team in Mission Mexico, learning from them, and working together with that talented staff to strengthen the vital U.S.-Mexico relationship.Research from private industry demonstrates that, when managed well, diversity makes business teams better both in terms of creativity and in terms of productivity.

Question. What will you do to promote, mentor and support your staff that come from diverse backgrounds and underrepresented groups in the Foreign Service?

Answer. If confirmed, I look forward to leading the diverse team at Mission Mexico and to tapping the unique talents of each individual to advance our bilateral relationship and promote U.S. foreign policy objectives. If confirmed, I will prioritize training and mentoring to ensure that all employees have the skills and support necessary for current and future career development.

Question. What steps will you take to ensure each of the supervisors at the Embassy are fostering an environment that is diverse and inclusive?

Answer. If confirmed, I will make clear that a diverse and inclusive work environment is a key priority.

I understand that the State Department is fully committed to equal employment opportunity (EEO) and ensuring the Department's work environment is free from prohibited discrimination and harassment. I further understand this includes improving and enhancing mentorship programs, expanding outreach to managers who make hiring decisions, and encouraging collaboration with external partners. If confirmed, I will ensure that the Department's EEO policies in Mission Mexico are understood and followed, and will take advantage of the variety of programs the Department offers to help supervisors work with a multicultural staff.

Question. Combatting corruption is important everywhere, but in few places more so than Mexico. Eliminating corruption ensures transnational criminal groups do not find safe haven in Mexico and it levels the playing field for U.S. companies doing business in Mexico. President Lopez Obrador was elected in large part due to his pledges to root out corruption, but thus far he has done comparatively little to complete the National Anti-Corruption system or implement promises his promises.

- How do you believe political corruption impacts democratic governance and the rule of law generally, and in Mexico specifically?

Answer. Corruption is a challenge for all countries, including Mexico. Addressing corruption, promoting transparency and abiding by the rule of law are essential to good governance in any country. If confirmed, I commit to working with the Mexican government to support efforts in these areas.

Question. What is your assessment of corruption trends in Mexico and efforts to address and reduce it by that government?

Answer. Corruption is a challenge for all countries, and I understand that the Mexican government is working to fight impunity and corruption and promote good governance at the federal and state levels. I understand that Mexico is in the midst of an historic transition to an open, accusatorial system of justice, and that successful implementation of this effort will require substantial dedication and perseverance. I also understand that President Lopez Obrador ran for office on an anti-corruption platform, stated that he will not tolerate it in his administration, and recently appointed the first independent prosecutor general for Mexico. If confirmed, I will support these and other efforts to help Mexico fight corruption.

Question. If confirmed, what steps will you take to strengthen good governance and anticorruption programming in Mexico?

Answer. I have dedicated my career to promoting the rule of law. If confirmed, I will support good governance and anti-corruption efforts in Mexico. I will continue to work with our partners in Mexico to strengthen an independent judiciary and will be ready to support Mexico's efforts as appropriate with my own professional experience and contacts throughout various branches of the U.S. federal and state governments.

Question. We have worked closely with Mexico to confront shared security challenges. Through the Mérida Initiative, a bilateral security and rule of law partnership, Congress has provided Mexico approximately $3.0 billion since 2008. President Lopez Obrador has been highly critical of Merida and has called for a different approach.

- How do you view the overall security situation in Mexico?

Answer. I understand that Mexico continues to confront the threat posed by transnational criminal organizations. I further understand the United States and Mexico are committed to work together to address our shared security challenges, including confronting transnational criminal organizations, human smuggling and trafficking, the trafficking of illicit drugs, and illegal migration. If confirmed, I will work with our Mexican counterparts to advance these shared priorities.

Question. What are your views on the Mérida Initiative?

Answer. I believe that the Mérida Initiative established a vital framework for ongoing cooperation and dialogue between U.S. and Mexican officials on security matters of mutual concern. As with any such initiative, I believe that it is important from time to time to review whether specific programs are effective and worthwhile. If confirmed, I look forward to engaging in such a review with appropriate U.S. and Mexican officials.

Question. How can we best partner with Mexico on shared security issues of concern?

Answer. I believe that we can best partner with Mexico on shared security issues of concern by identifying such issues and working closely together to develop a strategy that yields mutually beneficial results.

Question. Are adjustments needed in our security partnership?

Answer. I believe adjustments are a fact of life in any partnership. The Merida Initiative has evolved over the years, and I will look for opportunities with Mexico to make additional adjustments where necessary and appropriate to reflect changes in conditions and priorities.

Question. Over-militarizing law enforcement creates human rights concerns and is limited in its effectiveness. President Lopez Obrador pledged to demilitarize policing during the campaign, but he now appears to be backtracking on this pledge.

- hat role do you believe the Mexican military should have in internal security and law enforcement?

Answer. I share the concern about over-militarization of law enforcement. By the same token, I recognize that transnational criminal organizations pose a substantial security threat to both the United States and Mexico, and that, to date, civilian police forces in Mexico have not been able to adequately meet this threat. If confirmed, I look forward to discussions with officials in both Mexico and the United States, including you and other interested Members of Congress, regarding this important issue.

Question. How do you plan to engage the Mexican government on this issue?

Answer. If confirmed, I will prioritize discussing ways in which the United States and Mexico can best align our law enforcement and security cooperation efforts, within the framework of how the Mexican government, through its democratic processes, chooses to organize its public security forces. I will, of course, always work to support Mexican efforts to advance human rights and promote democratic governance, and look forward to discussing the role of the military in internal security and law enforcement activities in this context.

Question. One of the strengths of NAFTA was its incorporation of labor standards. These are critical as they both ensure protections for Mexican workers and a level playing field for American businesses.

- What is your assessment of the labor provisions in the USMCA?

Answer. I understand that the USMCA includes a fully revised labor chapter with the strongest, most advanced, and most comprehensive set of enforceable labor obligations of any U.S. trade agreement, as well as a special annex on worker representation in collective bargaining in Mexico. On May 1, 2019, the government of Mexico—consistent with its 2017 Constitutional reforms and in adherence with its USMCA commitments—approved groundbreaking reforms that will overhaul the country's system of labor justice and provide for the effective recognition of the right to bargain collectively.

Question. In your view, were Mexico's most recent labor reforms sufficient?

Answer. I understand the Mexican labor legislation is fully consistent with the obligations Mexico undertook in the USMCA. I believe that these reforms will promote better working conditions and higher wages for Mexican workers, and create the conditions for fairer competition between U.S. workers and their Mexican counterparts.

Question. If confirmed, how would you help to ensure Mexican compliance with the provisions of the USMCA if the agreement is ratified?

Answer. If confirmed, I look forward to facilitating U.S. government efforts to ensure Mexico's compliance and to working closely with the Mexican government as it implements these important reforms.

Question. In December 2018, the Trump administration announced a new policy, the Migration Protection Protocols, to require asylum seekers who arrive at our southern border to wait in Mexico while United States immigration courts process their cases. Under the "Remain in Mexico" plan, asylum seekers could remain in limbo for a year or more in a country that has offered few details on how it will ensure immigrants adequate protections.

As documented by the American Immigration Council, the American Immigration Lawyers Association, and Catholic Legal Immigration Network in a February 2019 letter to then-Department of Homeland Security Secretary Nielsen, there is substantial evidence that Mexican border towns are "not safe places for asylum seekers" and that the Migration Protection Protocols will cause serious harm to those affected by its implementation.

- So long as the "Remain in Mexico" plan is in place, what specific steps will you take to work with the Mexican government and ensure that asylum seekers are provided protection, as well as the opportunity to obtain a job, adequate housing, and other services?

Answer. I understand that the State Department maintains an ongoing dialogue and close cooperation with Mexico on a wide range of issues, including border security efforts, immigration, and humanitarian assistance.

I also understand that the Department is working with the government of Mexico to provide opportunities within Mexico, including working through multilateral partners such as the U.N. High Commissioner for Refugees to bolster Mexico's Refugee Commission, so that persons in need of international protection can find safety without continuing the journey to the U.S. southern border. If confirmed, I intend to engage the government of Mexico and our international partners on these important efforts.

RESPONSES TO ADDITIONAL QUESTIONS FOR THE RECORD SUBMITTED TO JENNIFER D. NORDQUIST BY SENATOR ROBERT MENENDEZ

Economic Statecraft

Question. As I mentioned during the hearing, I am increasingly concerned that the United States is not well positioned to engage in economic statecraft for the twenty-first century, including promoting U.S. jobs, business and economic interests, engaging in development financing for infrastructure and other needs, including climate change-related resiliency, and setting standards for emergent technologies and the digital economy.

- Can you expand upon how you view your role and your institutions role, if you are confirmed, in helping to renew and replenish U.S. economic statecraft instruments?

Answer. As the largest shareholder at all of the World Bank Group institutions, the United States is well-placed to use its voice and vote to ensure that our long-term economic and security interests are at the forefront of the Bank's mission. The World Bank is already one of the most important sources of financial assistance and policy advice to many of our strategic partners in the developing world and plays a vital role in helping to address many of the biggest economic and development challenges we face, from creating jobs for youth, to building quality infrastructure to help expand markets, investing in health and education, and tackling fragility, conflict, and violence. If confirmed, I look forward to ensuring that the World Bank remains a leader in advancing progress on these issues. To be effective, it is paramount that the Bank adhere to the Environmental and Social Framework, and the many U.S. legislative requirements passed by Congress, to ensure only high-quality projects are approved.

Question. Where do you see the biggest challenges? Biggest opportunities?

Answer. It is critical to address the increasing debt burdens among many middle and low-income countries, which stem in part from the opening of many new sources of finance to these countries, including from non-traditional official creditors. Many non-traditional lenders, specifically China, do not appear to have the same goals as the Bank, or the United States for that matter, because they do not adhere to a rule-based system in any international fora. They underwrite infrastructure initiatives that push developing countries into unsustainable debt and dependence. Many of these projects are of poor quality, with low environmental and social standards, and may indeed be harmful to the countries receiving the loan or grant. As I mentioned at the hearing, research published in the Journal of Public Economics last year found that African countries taking these loans suffered from increased corruption and had zero impact on local economic activity. The opportunity is to show developing nations that the World Bank, with a higher set of standards, has a track record of delivering positive development results with its projects and that the Bank should be among the first place these countries approach for development finance and knowledge, not China.

Administrative

Question. Do you agree that any targeting of or retaliation against career employees based on their perceived political beliefs, prior work on policy, or affiliation with a previous administration, is wholly inappropriate and has no place in the federal government? If confirmed, what will you do to ensure that all employees under your leadership understand that any retaliation, blacklisting, or other prohibited personnel practices will not be tolerated?

Answer. Yes, I agree. I have worked with a great many civil servants and have the highest respect for them. In fact my husband is a civil servant. I pledge to protect all civil servants under me from any of the prohibited practices above, should you confirm me. I was also proud to gain the trust of my colleagues as noted in a letter in support of my nomination which was signed by 38 bipartisan policymakers and scholars, stating that I am "respectful of diverse viewpoints, and accepting of what evidence-based research shows without political bias."

Question. Has anyone ever made a formal or informal complaint or allegation of sexual harassment, discrimination (e.g., racial, ethnic, religious, etc.), or inappropriate conduct against you, in a workplace or any other setting? If so, please describe the nature of the complaint or allegation, your response, and any resolution, including any settlements.

Answer. In my current role, I discovered an anomaly on our books: an employee had taken funds in a questionable way immediately prior to my start date. Because this was highly unusual, I reported it to the Office of Administration counsel who

confronted the employee and began an investigation. The employee then retaliated against me by lodging an informal complaint of discrimination which was then investigated by the EEO staff as well as our ethics officer, who informed me that he did not find evidence of wrongdoing on my part, and the complainant was uncooperative with his investigation. She then withdrew her EEO complaint, with prejudice, as part of an agreement terminating her employment.

Question. Have you ever addressed concerns or allegations of sexual harassment, discrimination (e.g., racial, ethnic, religious, etc.), or inappropriate conduct made against any employee over whom you had supervisory authority? If so, please describe the outcome and actions taken.

Answer. In my current role, some female interns complained of a toxic work environment created by some male interns. Our general counsel and I interviewed the entire intern class to get to the bottom of it. Our investigation concluded that three of our male interns behaved inappropriately, and we removed them from workplace immediately and relieved them of their positions. I also talked to the female interns afterwards to counsel them and further conferred with multiple female members of our staff to determine measures to prevent this from ever happening again; those measures were implemented immediately.

RESPONSES TO ADDITIONAL QUESTIONS FOR THE RECORD SUBMITTED TO JENNIFER D. NORDQUIST BY SENATOR BENJAMIN L. CARDIN

Human Rights and Corruption

Question. What are the most important actions you have taken in your career to date to promote human rights, good governance, and democracy? What has been the impact of your actions?

Answer. To date, I have mainly worked in the macroeconomic space, focusing on academic research within the U.S. government and at the Brookings Institution. However, in prior government service, I worked to ensure good governance in the aftermath of Hurricane Katrina, working with state and local authorities to put systems in place to help rebuild the Gulf Coast and help get those devastated by the storm back on their feet. In addition, while living in Thailand, I did pro-bono work on AIDS education and prevention, doing outreach to sex workers about using protection. From my time living within an emerging market and my background in economic research, I understand how critical it is for countries to establish good governance and improve public service delivery in order to reduce poverty and spur long-term economic growth.

Question. How can the World Bank help to promote good governance and safeguard human rights?

Answer. Multilateral institutions like the World Bank Group (WBG) can help developing countries understand the importance of good governance, rule of law, and human rights for poverty reduction, job creation, and economic growth. governments should protect everyone regardless of their race, creed, color, religion, or sexual orientation. The most successful countries in the world have good governance and protect human rights, while fragility, conflict, and violence are inextricably linked to poor governance and abuse of human rights. The WBG has technical expertise, combined with funds, to help countries advance prosperity for the poorest, especially targeting the least advantaged in these countries.

Question. If confirmed, how would you use this position to advance human rights and good governance?

Answer. If confirmed, I will use my role as the U.S. representative to the WBG to advance these goals, uphold standards that promote transparency and protect human rights, and use the voice and vote of the United States to oppose assistance to governments identified as gross violators of human rights or not taking sufficient steps to combat trafficking in persons, among others.

World Bank Capitalization

Question. On October 12, 2018, World Bank members, including the United States, approved a $60.1 billion capital increase for the IBRD, which would raise its capital from $268.9 billion to $329 billion. While the Trump administration supports a U.S. contribution to the capital increase, Congress must ultimately approve the use of U.S. funds.

- What are the benefits of increasing the IBRD's capital?

Answer. The capital increase package negotiated by the U.S. Treasury institutes significant reforms at the International Bank for Reconstruction and Development (IBRD) in exchange for taxpayer funding of $1.2 billion as our share of the increase over six years. If Congress approves U.S. participation in the increase, it will be my job to ensure that World Bank Management implements the reforms, should you confirm me. The much-needed reforms that are part of the capital increase package include: a financial sustainability framework that prevents the IBRD from over lending; differentiated loan prices that require better-off borrowers to pay more; increasing the proportion of annual lending to the poorest IBRD borrowers; making sure the Bank takes a stronger position on graduating countries that do not need IBRD funds; and constraining overhead costs at the Bank itself, especially by restraining salary growth. The additional funding from shareholders will allow the Bank to maintain its recent levels of support to developing countries in real terms without jeopardizing its triple-A credit rating, while doing more to focus that support on countries without access to other sources of development finance. The Bank needs to be transparent, accountable and focused on sound, sustainable projects that are economically robust and use evidence-based research to ensure results meet the mission of eliminating extreme poverty.

Question. What repercussions would we see if the U.S. does not contribute towards the capital increase?

Answer. Our voting share at the IBRD will be diluted, which makes our voice and vote harder to hear and will make us less effective. Furthermore, it will allow other shareholders such as China to have a larger role, which is not in our national security nor economic interests. The United States was a founding member of the Bretton Woods system that created the World Bank and IMF. We should not cede our leadership role. Further, the IBRD will have fewer resources to provide to it its borrowers. For FY18, the Middle East and North Africa region was the largest recipient of IBRD funds, which provide stability and support U.S. priorities in the region, including through education reforms, increasing youth and women's employment, and establishing more stable, inclusive macroeconomic frameworks.

Diversity

Question. What will you do to promote, mentor and support your staff that come from diverse backgrounds and underrepresented groups at the IBRD?

Answer. I have lived and worked in culturally, religiously, and ideologically diverse environments in Asia, Europe, and the United States and hope to bring that background with me to the Bank, should you confirm me. In particular, I have worked to mentor younger women my entire career, especially at Brookings as a founding member of the Women's Mentoring Network. I have counseled countless women elsewhere in my career as well, including in my current job, encouraging younger women to stay in economic policy, given the dearth of female and minority economists in the United States. Staff diversity in any organization is important, and more so in a multilateral, multicultural institution.

Question. What steps will you take to ensure each of the supervisors at the IBRD are fostering an environment that is diverse and inclusive?

Answer. Should you confirm me, I would like to see what systems IBRD already has in place to foster diversity and inclusion. I would then take that framework and discuss it with staff, particularly those involved in hiring decisions.

Conflicts of Interest

Question. Do you commit to bring to the committee's attention any change in policy or U.S. actions that you suspect may be influenced by any of the President's business or financial interests, or the business or financial interests of any senior White House staff?

Answer. Yes

Question. Do you commit to inform the committee if you have any reason to suspect that a foreign government, head of state, or foreign-controlled entity is taking any action in order to benefit any of the President's business or financial interests, or the interests of senior White House staff?

Answer. Yes

Question. Do you or do any members of your immediate family have any financial interests in any country abroad?

Answer. Other than stock ownership in some international companies, any of which will be divested subject to agreement with OGE, I do not have any interest of which I am aware.

RESPONSES TO ADDITIONAL QUESTIONS FOR THE RECORD
SUBMITTED TO ELIOT PEDROSA BY SENATOR ROBERT MENENDEZ.

Economic Statecraft

Question. As I mentioned during the hearing, I am increasingly concerned that the United States is not well positioned to engage in economic statecraft for the twenty-first century, including promoting U.S. jobs, business and economic interests, engaging in development financing for infrastructure and other needs, including climate change-related resiliency, and setting standards for emergent technologies and the digital economy.

- Can you expand upon how you view your role and your institutions role, if you are confirmed, in helping to renew and replenish U.S. economic statecraft instruments?

Answer. If confirmed, I will work to leverage the United States' leadership position as the largest shareholder of the IDB to promote U.S. interests and its profile in the region. By promoting partnerships between the IDB Group and the newly-created Development Finance Corporation (DFC), the U.S. can magnify its impact throughout the region. In my current role as Alternate Executive Director, I have worked closely with my colleagues at OPIC to enhance cooperation and deal sharing between OPIC and the IDB Group, and if confirmed as Executive Director, I will continue to work with the DFC to expand and deepen this cooperation.

Question. Where do you see the biggest challenges? Biggest opportunities?

Answer. A significant challenge and opportunity will be working to rebuild economies encumbered by unsustainable debt levels, often because of non-market predatory lending by China. The crushing debt burdens faced by countries like Venezuela, Ecuador and Argentina serve as a potent warning to others in the region. The United States, working with responsible partners in the G7 and the IFIs, should use this opportunity to assist regional developing countries to improve the institutional capacity of their ministries, demand transparency from their lenders, and adopt responsible policies that channel borrowing towards investment rather than consumption.

Administrative

Question. Do you agree that any targeting of or retaliation against career employees based on their perceived political beliefs, prior work on policy, or affiliation with a previous administration, is wholly inappropriate and has no place in the federal government? If confirmed, what will you do to ensure that all employees under your leadership understand that any retaliation, blacklisting, or other prohibited personnel practices will not be tolerated?

Answer. I agree and if confirmed will work to ensure that all employees under my leadership are fully and properly trained in all applicable policies and legal and ethical rules and that they abide by their letter and spirit scrupulously.

Question. Has anyone ever made a formal or informal complaint or allegation of sexual harassment, discrimination (e.g., racial, ethnic, religious, etc.), or inappropriate conduct against you, in a workplace or any other setting? If so, please describe the nature of the complaint or allegation, your response, and any resolution, including any settlements.

Answer. No allegations or complaints have been made against me.

Question. Have you ever addressed concerns or allegations of sexual harassment, discrimination (e.g., racial, ethnic, religious, etc.), or inappropriate conduct made against any employee over whom you had supervisory authority? If so, please describe the outcome and actions taken.

Answer. I have not received complaints or allegations of this nature against an employee over whom I had supervisory authority.

RESPONSES TO ADDITIONAL QUESTIONS FOR THE RECORD
SUBMITTED TO ELIOT PEDROSA BY SENATOR BENJAMIN L. CARDIN

Human Rights

Question. What are the most important actions you have taken in your career to date to promote human rights and democracy? What has been the impact of your actions?

Answer. As United States Alternate Director of the InterAmerican Development Bank, I have used my voice and vote on the IDB Board to promote human rights (including the rights of victims of human trafficking, the disabled, and religious minorities), gender equality, democracy, transparency and rule of law. I am particularly proud of our office's work to have the IDB recognize representatives of Interim President Guaidó as the legitimate representatives of Venezuela at the IDB. I also continue to work to restrain IDB assistance to Nicaragua, given the deterioration in respect for human rights and democracy occurring there. Outside the boardroom, I have spoken to groups such as the Council of the Americas and the United States Global Leadership Coalition about the importance of human rights and rule of law and of the important role the IDB and other MDBs can play in their promotion.

Previous to my current role, I worked on projects for the promotion of democracy and human rights throughout my career. As a law student, I had the opportunity to serve as a research assistant for the Harvard Institute for International Development's Central America Project, contributing to the publication of a book on legal reform in Central America. More recently, I spoke as a panelist at Harvard Law School on the continued failure of the Cuban government to respect democracy and human rights. Finally, through my service as Chairman of the Dean's Advisory Council of the Green School of International and Public Affairs at Florida International University, I provided support for the education and scholarship generated under the Green School's umbrella, such as the Vμclav Havel Program for Human Rights & Diplomacy.

Diversity

Question. What will you do to promote, mentor and support your staff that come from diverse backgrounds and underrepresented groups at the IDB?

Answer. If confirmed as Executive Director I will continue to promote, mentor, and support staff who come from diverse backgrounds and underrepresented groups, consistent with fair management practices and relevant U.S. government and IDB policies.

Question. What steps will you take to ensure each of the supervisors at the IDB are fostering an environment that is diverse and inclusive?

Answer. If confirmed, I will continue to use my oversight role on the IDB's Board of Directors to try to ensure that IDB management fosters an environment that is diverse and inclusive. I will also continue to advocate for these issues to be considered, as appropriate, in the implementation and execution of IDB's human resources policies.

Conflicts of Interest

Question. Do you commit to bring to the committee's attention any change in policy or U.S. actions that you suspect may be influenced by any of the President's business or financial interests, or the business or financial interests of any senior White House staff?

Answer. If confirmed, I commit to continue to carry out my duties consistent with applicable conflict of interest laws and policies, and to reporting any potential misconduct of which I become aware to the appropriate authorities.

Question. Do you commit to inform the committee if you have any reason to suspect that a foreign government, head of state, or foreign-controlled entity is taking any action in order to benefit any of the President's business or financial interests, or the interests of senior White House staff?

Answer. If confirmed, I commit to continue to carry out my duties consistent with applicable conflict of interest laws and policies, and to reporting any potential misconduct of which I become aware to the appropriate authorities.

Question. Do you or do any members of your immediate family have any financial interests in any country abroad?

Answer. No.

China in Latin America

Question. Latin America and the Caribbean's economic relationship with China is increasing quickly, with exports to China increasing by 30 percent in 2017 according to IDB data. As China-Latin America trade has increased over the past several years, China has increased its financial contributions to various IDB financing mechanisms and China was chosen as the site for the 2019 IDB annual meetings.

- How can the U.S. respond to China's increasing influence in the Western Hemisphere, especially in light of the U.S. decision to scale back contributions to the IDB?

Answer. The United States should leverage its leading role in the relevant multilateral development banks—especially the IDB—to coordinate multilateral efforts with the efforts of the U.S. private sector and U.S. bilateral financing to provide a credible alternative to Chinese lending to the developing nations of the Western Hemisphere. The United States and the IDB can also provide technical assistance and cooperation to improve the institutional capacities of regional governments so that they can better protect themselves from predatory lending practices.

The economic importance of China to the region has been growing quickly, but its impact has not fairly benefited the region's developing economies. China's demand for commodities positively contributed to Latin America's growth over the past decade, but has also deepened the region's dependence on commodities exports and exposure to volatility. The region must have a clear vision for what it hopes the relationship with China will be and ensure that Chinese trade and investment do not undercut the incentives to improve business environments, governance structures, and macroeconomic policies.

BUILD Act

Question. As you know, The BUILD Act is part of the U.S. policy response to China's growing economic influence in developing countries. It aims to provide an alternative to China's state-directed investment financing model—which many U.S. policymakers view as lacking transparency, operating under inadequate environmental and social safeguards for projects, and employing questionable lending practices that may lead to unsustainable debt burdens in some poorer countries ("debt diplomacy").

- What can you do to make multilateral development bank financing more attractive to developing countries relative to bilateral financing by China?

Answer. Multilateral development banks should focus on their core value proposition to borrowers, which relies on lending that is sustainable and targets development impact in the borrowing country. By pairing sustainable, responsible lending with technical expertise and advice, the MDBs offer full-service development solutions that benefit the borrower, in contrast to Chinese bilateral lending, which primarily benefits China. MDBs should also continue to provide technical assistance and cooperation to improve the institutional capacities of regional governments so that they can better protect themselves from predatory lending practices. Finally, MDBs should continue to promote debt transparency and support their borrowers in demanding transparency from their bilateral lenders as well.

Question. What are opportunities for synergies between the new DFC and the IDB in collaborating on infrastructure and other projects in countries along China's Belt and Road Initiative?

Answer. The synergies between the DFC and the IDB's private sector window, IDB Invest, are vast. The two organizations share common values, common safeguards for environmental, social and governance standards, and a common approach to development effectiveness that makes them natural partners and co-investors. As United States Alternate Executive Director at the IDB, I have been working to increase coordination between OPIC and the IDB Group, and if confirmed as Executive Director, I will continue to work with the DFC towards that goal.

Northern Triangle of Central America

Question. The IDB has worked extensively in Central America's Northern Triangle.

- How would you gauge the effectiveness at these efforts in increasing security, good governance, and prosperity to address the root causes of migration?

Answer. The IDB's work with the Northern Triangle countries—both as a lender and as the technical secretariat of the Alliance for Prosperity—has provided important support for regional initiatives aimed at strengthening all three countries, including for example, strengthening the countries' push towards a customs union and an integrated regional market for electricity. However, much work remains to be

done both on citizen security, rule of law, and creating economic opportunity so that the citizens of the Northern Triangle countries can feel both a sense of personal safety and fair opportunity, which can lower their vulnerability to migration. If confirmed, I will continue to support the IDB's efforts and focus on improving the effectiveness of these programs.

Question. What more can the IDB do to address the root causes of migration?

Answer. The IDB should continue to support the governments of the Northern Triangle countries as they push for greater regional integration, more transparency and enhanced rule of law. In addition, IDB Invest should support the private sector in these countries to help promote greater investment and economic development. Historically, 9 out of 10 new jobs are created by the private sector, and the participation of the private sector in the Northern Triangle is critical to addressing the root causes of migration.

Question. If confirmed, how would you work to ensure the IDB effectively channels resources and technical assistance to the region?

Answer. If confirmed, I will continue to work with IDB management and my colleagues from the other IDB members to ensure that IDB lending is targeted to projects whose impact can improve conditions for those vulnerable populations who are victimized by organized trafficking rings. In addition, I will continue to work to ensure that technical assistance resources are effectively targeted to improve security and rule of law in order to create an environment receptive to investment and economic development.

Venezuela Crisis

Question. What role does the IDB have in ensuring the region is equipped to handle the effects of the Venezuela crisis, including the influx of millions of fleeing Venezuelans?

Answer. Recovery of the Venezuelan economy will require fundamental economic policy change, but also immediate humanitarian assistance and external financing to reactivate severely eroded productive capacity. International participation will be important, including from the IDB and other IFIs, and coordination with the region will be a critical component to any assistance effort. The IDB's role will be central within this broad framework, and the IDB is already engaged in a dialogue with the representatives of Venezuela's legitimate government, appointed by Interim President Juan Guaidó, on the planning for that effort.

In addition, the IDB has an important role to play in assisting Venezuela's neighbors to mitigate the regional impacts of Venezuela's crisis. This year, the IDB—with United States support—authorized the use of up to $100 million in grant resources, to be deployed alongside ordinary lending, to support IDB borrowing members who have been the destination for large and sudden migration of Venezuelans fleeing the crisis in their homeland. As IDB commits and disburses these funds, it will be important that they be used to maximum effect to mitigate the impacts of this regional crisis.

Question. Do you believe the IDB has the resources it needs to respond to the Venezuela crisis?

Answer. The IDB is well-capitalized and operates with a disciplined long-term financial plan, which places it in a strong position to marshal the resources needed to fill this role as part of a coordinated response to the crisis.

NOMINATIONS

THURSDAY, JUNE 20, 2019

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

The committee met, pursuant to notice, at 9:50 a.m. in Room SD–419, Dirksen Senate Office Building, Hon. James E. Risch, chairman of the committee, presiding.

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

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

The CHAIRMAN. The committee will come to order.

Good morning, everyone. We have four nominations to hear this morning.

And just a friendly reminder for our guests in the audience that we invite everyone's participation here as guests. Expressions of approval or disapproval, et cetera, of course, are not permitted. There is an appropriate process for dealing with this. We hope that is not necessary.

So with that, we are going to hear four important positions. Our nominees today are Mr. Andrew Bremberg to be Ambassador to the U.N. mission in Geneva; the Honorable Philip Goldberg to be Ambassador to Colombia; Mr. Doug Manchester to be Ambassador to The Bahamas; and Mr. Adrian Zuckerman to be Ambassador to Romania.

First, we have Mr. Bremberg, nominated to serve as Ambassador to the Office of the United Nations and other international organizations in Geneva. Mr. Bremberg has a long history of public service and currently serves as Assistant to the President and Senior Advisor for Domestic Policy at the White House. He previously worked, as many of us here know, as policy advisor and counsel for Leader McConnell. He has also worked at the Department of Health and Human Services for 8 years in a variety of capacities.

The U.S. Ambassador to the U.N. in Geneva is a critical role, which represents the U.S. at over 20 U.N. agencies based there. These agencies include the World Health Organization, the U.N. Refugee Agency, the International Organization for Migration, and the International Labor Organization, all very important organizations, and others besides.

Right now, the World Health Organization is facing a serious problem with the Ebola outbreak in DRC and Uganda. It is critical

the U.S. continues to work closely with the World Health Organization to prevent the spread of this serious disease. The spread, of course, is also complicated by the political disruptions in the area.

Also, as the world is facing a large refugee crisis now, the U.S. needs to work closely with the U.N. Refugee Agency and International Organization for Migration to ensure that the growing needs are being addressed.

I look forward to hearing from you on these and many other issues during today's hearing.

Next, we have Ambassador Philip S. Goldberg, nominated to serve as Ambassador to Colombia. Ambassador Goldberg is a Career Minister in the U.S. Foreign Service and has received numerous presidential, State Department, and intelligence community awards. Ambassador Goldberg served as U.S. Ambassador to the Philippines and Bolivia, Chief of Mission in Kosovo, and Assistant Secretary of State for Intelligence and Research.

Colombia is a key U.S. ally and the oldest democracy in Latin America with a growing international footprint. Our bilateral relations are anchored in the security framework of the 1999 Plan Colombia and the 2012 U.S.-Colombia Free Trade Agreement. Colombia is going through a significant transformation as it seeks to implement the 2016 peace agreement between the Santos government and the FARC terrorist organization. Colombian peace and prosperity continues to be threatened by criminal organizations inside its territory. Terrorist groups operating from Venezuela such as the National Liberation Army and the massive influx of refugees from the political and humanitarian crisis in Venezuela, which all of us, particularly I think myself and the ranking member, are very concerned.

If confirmed, Ambassador Goldberg would fill a key role in strengthening our diplomatic relations with Colombia.

Next, we have Mr. Doug Manchester, nominated to serve as Ambassador to The Bahamas. Mr. Manchester is a successful businessman and prominent philanthropist in his community. He is the former chairman of the Manchester Financial Group and former chairman and publisher of the San Diego Union Tribune.

The United States has traditionally enjoyed close economic ties and cooperative relations with The Bahamas, which lies 45 miles from Florida. Like other countries in the hemisphere, The Bahamas has become a destination of interest for Chinese investment and engagement. The U.S. has not had an Ambassador in The Bahamas since 2011, the longest gap in nearly 50 years.

Some areas of productive engagement with the Bahamian authorities and people include energy investment, strengthening security cooperation, and support to counter Chinese predatory economic practices.

I look forward to hearing from Mr. Manchester about how he plans to continue U.S. engagement with The Bahamas.

Finally, we have Mr. Adrian Zuckerman of New Jersey, nominated to be the Ambassador to Romania. Mr. Zuckerman is a partner in the international law firm of Seyforth Shaw. A member of the New York Bar, he has practiced law since 1984. Mr. Zuckerman immigrated to the United States from communist Romania when he was 10 years old.

Romania is a key U.S. partner in Europe and currently holds the rotating presidency of the Council of the European Union. While they have been a NATO member since 2004 and an EU member since 2007, rampant corruption still remains an issue in the country. Romania continues to have difficulty with rule of law and has been designated a tier 2 country by the State Department for its continuing problems with trafficking in persons, a serious situation.

Despite these domestic issues, Romania has been an excellent military partner for the U.S. and NATO.

And I look forward to hearing your ideas about how the U.S. can both deepen our bilateral relationship and continue to encourage positive reforms in Romania.

Thank you for being with us here today.

Now I will turn it over to Senator Menendez.

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

Senator MENENDEZ. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

To all the nominees, welcome and thank you for your willingness to serve.

Now, normally I would use this time to praise the nominees before us for their deep knowledge and understanding of the region or institution where they will serve their extensive service to our country and the fine example we expect them to set as representatives of the United States abroad. However, with the exception of Ambassador Goldberg, I have strong concerns about each of these nominees today on this panel from policy grounds and lack of diplomatic experience to concerns on matters of character. And I hope the nominees can convince me today that my concerns are groundless and mistaken.

Let me be clear. While I will be raising concerns about the backgrounds and views of the individual nominees who are here today, my real qualm is with the White House, which continues to send us nominees that, frankly, call into question whether the administration is conducting any due diligence before deciding who should be entrusted with the honor of serving the American people.

Mr. Bremberg, if confirmed, you will represent the United States at the United Nations mission in Geneva at a time when, in some parts of the world, including here in Congress, there is concern about the administration's commitment to multilateral institutions and international organizations and the values they are championing at these forums.

Geneva is home to some of the most important U.N. entities and international organizations, including the International Labor Organization, the International Organization for Migration, the U.N. Office of the U.N. High Commissioner for Human Rights, the Office of the U.N. High Commissioner for Refugees, the U.N. Population Fund, the World Health Organization, and many others. If confirmed, you will be responsible for advancing a wide range of U.S. interests at these organizations.

I have no doubt that you have expertise on a number of domestic policy issues, but I have concerns about your nomination to such

a prominent diplomatic role, given your lack of experience in international diplomacy and on foreign policy issues more broadly.

In addition, I have serious reservations about your suitability for this position based on some of the domestic policies you have advanced. While at the White House, you were involved in a number of troubling policies, including efforts to restrict access to birth control, to add a citizenship question to the Census. You also played a lead role in championing a deregulatory agenda that has repealed measures to protect women's health, retirement security, workplace safety, clean water, and anti-corruption safeguards.

If these are the American values you will seek to championing in Geneva, I believe we are in a world of trouble. As I stated earlier, I hope you can convince me otherwise, and I look forward to hearing from you today.

Mr. Manchester, frankly I am surprised to see you back here. After your last appearance before the committee, you made statements that I could not find fathomable, including that The Bahamas was a protectorate of the United States.

Subsequent to your hearing and committee vote last Congress, information came out about a hostile work environment you fostered towards women at the San Diego Union Tribune.

So I look forward to exploring those issues with you after your testimony.

Mr. Zuckerman, when looking at Romania, I am concerned about the rule of law and corruption. Transparency International ranks Romania as one of the bottom four members of the European Union in terms of corruption, and I have heard from members of the American business community that problems with due process and rule of law hinder U.S. business investments there. The U.S. Ambassador to Romania must press the government of Romania on addressing corruption and strengthening its institutions to create a friendlier climate not only for Romania's people and businesses, but for U.S. companies as well. I intend to raise these and some other issues that I think you are familiar with during your questioning.

Finally, I am pleased that we are considering the nomination for our next Ambassador to Colombia, one of the United States' closest partners in the Americas. Over 2 decades, our countries have built a close-knit partnership, and the U.S. was proud to have stood with Colombia as it signed a historic peace accord in 2016. However, achieving peace requires a strategic vision and enduring commitment.

So I look forward to hearing from Ambassador Goldberg as to how he envisions U.S. support for Colombia at this key moment, especially given the continued counternarcotics challenges and threats to social leaders around the country. I welcome the Ambassador's comments on how the U.S. can best support Colombia as it responds to the humanitarian crisis in Venezuela and the impact of more than 4 million refugees and migrants that are fleeing that country.

Thank you all, and I look forward to your testimony.

The CHAIRMAN. Thank you, Senator Menendez.

We will start with Mr. Bremberg.

STATEMENT OF ANDREW P. BREMBERG, OF VIRGINIA, TO BE REPRESENTATIVE OF THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA TO THE OFFICE OF THE UNITED NATIONS AND OTHER INTERNATIONAL ORGANIZATIONS IN GENEVA, WITH THE RANK OF AMBASSADOR

Mr. BREMBERG. Chairman Risch, Ranking Member Menendez, distinguished members of this committee, thank you for the opportunity to be considered to represent the United States of America to the United Nations and other international organizations in Geneva.

I want to thank the President for nominating me for this position and for the trust he has placed in me.

I would not be here today without the support of my family. My wife Maria; my children, Paul, Lucy, Jane, and Annie; and other members of my family that are here with me today. I cannot thank them enough for their love and support and the sacrifices that they have made on my behalf. In particular, I want to thank my mother Rebecca for coming from New Jersey today. While growing up in Summit, her daily example of love and service to others has been the most formative experience of my life.

Public service to our country has been my life's calling. I have served in government for more than a decade, both in the Senate and during two administrations. I have worked at the Department of Health and Human Services, and most recently I served as the Director of the Domestic Policy Council at the White House where I ran the interagency process for domestic policy issues, similar to the National Security Council.

I have worked on a wide range of domestic and foreign policy issues in these positions, but through all of them, I have learned key skills that have served me well: the importance of consensus building and creating coalitions to support key initiatives: the value our career foreign and civil services can bring to address technical and complex policy issues; and the necessity of putting the American people first at every decision point.

If confirmed to be the U.S. Ambassador to the U.N. in Geneva, I intend to focus on promoting human rights and advocating for key reforms in the U.N. system on behalf of the American people.

American leadership was critical to the formation of the United Nations and adoption of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights. When we consider the ethnic cleansing of the Rohingya in Burma, the detention of 1 million Uighurs in China, and the growing crisis in Venezuela, it is clear that America's voice and moral clarity on human rights is needed to today as much as ever.

Regrettably, the United Nations Human Rights Council in Geneva has not lived up to its noble mission or its name. The only permanent item on the council's agenda is criticism of Israel, which is a beacon of democracy and protection of human rights in a region that has little of either.

If confirmed, I commit to giving voice to human rights issues that the council is either incapable or unwilling to address. I will continue to work productively with the Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights, and I will meet with human rights advocates and ensure that American leadership is consistently present on human rights.

To legitimately fulfill its mandate, the Human Rights Council must be a fair, reliable, and impartial advocate for human rights and fundamental freedom. This is not possible if countries like China are allowed to use its influence campaign to undermine the work of the HRC. For example, we cannot stand for Chinese threats to missions in Geneva urging them to stay away from an event organized on March 13th about China's internment of Uighurs and other Muslim minorities in Xinjiang.

American leadership was essential to the creation of the United Nations and we must pursue reforms to international organizations to protect the universal values these institutions were created to foster and defend in the first place.

If confirmed, I will advocate for reforms at U.N. organizations to protect U.S. sovereignty and the broader world order we have fought so hard to create. We contribute more to the United Nations than any other country. It is our duty to ensure these funds are spent effectively, efficiently, and in a manner consistent with American values and interests.

An example of the kind of reform I am talking about is an effort I spearheaded at the White House to address unfair postal rates in the Universal Postal Union. The UPU sets rates that foreign postal operators, such as the China Post, compensate the U.S. Postal Service for shipping small packages once they arrive in the United States. Under the current system, these rates are set so low that certain foreign shippers pay 70 percent less compared to what a U.S. small business has to pay to ship a package the same distance within the United States. In practice, this allows some Chinese sellers to sell for less their product, including shipping, than an American business must pay for shipping costs alone. The administration is currently seeking to renegotiate the UPU conventions to address this issue, and I am committed to working with our international partners to fix this problem.

If confirmed, I commit to bring the same eye and initiative to other international organizations to seek reforms that will better protect Americans and people around the world.

Thank you again for the opportunity to appear before this committee today, and I will be happy to answer your questions.

[The prepared statement of Mr. Bremberg follows:]

PREPARED STATEMENT OF ANDREW P. BREMBERG

Chairman Risch, Ranking Member Menendez, distinguished Members of the committee. Thank you for the opportunity to be considered to represent the United States of America to the United Nations and Other International Organizations in Geneva. I want to thank the President for nominating me for this position and for the trust he has placed in me.

I would not be here today without the support of my family. My wife Maria, my children Paul, Lucy, Jane and Annie, and other members of my family that are here with me today. I cannot thank them enough for their love and support, and the sacrifices they have made on my behalf. In particular, I want to thank my mother Rebecca for coming from New Jersey today. While growing up in Summit, her daily example of love and service to others has been the most formative experience of my life.

Public service to our country has been my life's calling. I have served in government for more than a decade, both in the Senate and during two administrations. I have worked at the Department of Health and Human Services, and most recently, I served as the Director of the Domestic Policy Council at the White House, where

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I have worked on a wide range of domestic and foreign policy issues in these positions, but throughout all of them I learned key skills that have served me well:

- The importance of consensus-building and creating coalitions to support key initiatives;
- The value our career foreign and civil services can bring to bear to address technical and complex policy issues; and
- The necessity of putting the American people first at every decision point.

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The administration is currently seeking to renegotiate the UPU conventions to address this issue, and I am committed to working with our international partners to fix this problem.

If confirmed, I commit to bring the same eye and initiative to other international organizations to seek reforms that will better protect Americans and people around the world.

Thank you again for the opportunity to appear before this committee today, and I will be happy to answer your questions.

The CHAIRMAN. Thank you, Mr. Bremberg.

Ambassador Goldberg?

STATEMENT OF THE HONORABLE PHILIP S. GOLDBERG, OF THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA, A CAREER MEMBER OF THE SENIOR FOREIGN SERVICE, CLASS OF CAREER AMBASSADOR, TO BE AMBASSADOR EXTRAORDINARY AND PLENIPOTENTIARY OF THE UNITED STATES TO THE REPUBLIC OF COLOMBIA

Ambassador GOLDBERG. Chairman Risch, Ranking Member Menendez, members of the committee, I am greatly honored to appear before you today as the President's nominee to serve as U.S. Ambassador to Colombia.

This is the fourth time I have come before this committee over the past 13 years to ask for your advice and consent to serve in a presidential appointment. I deeply appreciate the vital constitutional role played by the Senate and the Congress as a whole in the foreign policy process. If confirmed, I will work closely with Congress on all aspects of our relationship with Colombia.

30 years ago, I received a miniature flag of Colombia and was informed that I would be assigned to Bogota as a consular and political officer. The country at the time was racked with drug-fueled violence, urban bombings, and political assassinations that threatened the future of democratic governance and stability. Through hard work and perseverance, the Colombian government and people with the assistance of the government and people of the United States, disbanded the drug cartels of that era.

In 2000, I returned to the embassy in Bogota on a temporary assignment to coordinate our contribution to Plan Colombia, an integrated approach to deal with the deteriorating political, economic, and security situation in the country. Through Plan Colombia, the Colombian government and people again organized to address the lawlessness and violence associated with criminal groups and the drug production that sustained them. Kidnapping and homicides were reduced substantially. Drug production and trafficking decreased. Again, the United States stood at the side of the Colombian government and people as they averted the potential collapse of the state.

In both periods, the success of our efforts was the result of unwavering support from successive American administrations and bipartisan backing from the U.S. Congress. In my diplomatic career, Colombia has served as a model for how bipartisan foreign policy can achieve results that serve American interests, American values, and the American people.

Now Colombia has entered a challenging but also very hopeful period in its history. In 2016, the Colombian government reached a historic peace agreement with the FARC. While implementation of the peace agreement has proven difficult and at times uneven, it represents the best opportunity to progress even further in key areas, particularly in extending rule of law and economic development to large areas of rural Colombia where human rights abuses and the plight of the displaced continue to be serious problems.

Another urgent task is reducing the coca cultivation and drug production that increased alarmingly from 2013 to 2017. To reverse this troubling trend, the United States and Colombia agreed in 2018 to a plan that aims to cut cultivation and drug production in half by the end of 2023. Aggressive Colombian efforts under the

Duque government have already led to substantially increased eradication of coca plants and interdiction of coca paste.

And then there is Venezuela where a corrupt and undemocratic regime has driven well over a million desperate refugees and migrants into a generous Colombia, causing social, economic, and budgetary challenges that exacerbate existing problems and create whole new ones.

As the security situation in Colombia has improved over the past 20 years so too has the economy. Colombia has become an important destination U.S. trade and investment. Colombian GDP has almost quadrupled in the past 20 years. Foreign investment has increased during that time almost tenfold, and the poverty rate cut from 64 to 28 percent. Our two-way trade of close to $30 billion supports over 100,000 U.S. jobs and represents a trade surplus in goods in our favor. With improved security, tourism has grown, including to places that 30 years ago would have been unimaginable. If confirmed, I will do all I can to increase this side of our relationship, the economic relationship.

I would be honored to return to Colombia to lead the outstanding men and women who serve at our large and multifaceted mission. If confirmed, I pledge to work with our team to carry out a bilateral agenda rooted in a shared commitment to democracy, security, and prosperity.

I look forward to your questions.

[The prepared statement of Ambassador Goldberg follows:]

PREPARED STATEMENT PHILIP GOLDBERG

Chairman Risch, Ranking Member Menendez, Members of the committee, I am greatly honored to appear before you today as the President's nominee to serve as United States Ambassador to Colombia. I appreciate the confidence shown by the President and Secretary Pompeo in asking me to take on this important responsibility.

This is the fourth time I have come before this committee over the past 13 years to ask for your advice and consent to serve in a presidential appointment. I fully understand and deeply appreciate the vital constitutional role played by the Senate—and the Congress as a whole—in the foreign policy process. If confirmed I look forward to working closely with this committee and the entire Congress on our relationship with Colombia.

Thirty years ago I received a miniature flag of Colombia and was informed that I would be assigned to Bogota as a consular and political officer. The country at the time was racked with drug-fueled violence, urban bombings and political assassinations that threatened the future of democratic governance and stability. Through hard work and perseverance, the Colombian government and people—with the assistance of the government and people of the United States—disbanded the drug cartels of that era.

In 2000, I returned to the embassy in Bogota on a temporary assignment to coordinate our contribution to Plan Colombia, an integrated approach to deal with the deteriorating political, economic and security situation in the country. Through Plan Colombia, the Colombian government and people again organized to address the lawlessness and violence associated with insurgent groups and the drug production that sustained them. Kidnapping and homicides were reduced substantially. The Colombian government established a presence in the 32 departments. Drug production and trafficking were reduced. During this period, the United States stood at the side of the Colombian government and people as they averted the potential collapse of the state.

In both periods, the success of our efforts in Colombia was the result of unwavering support from successive American administrations and bipartisan backing from the U.S. Congress. In my diplomatic career, it has served as a model for how bipartisan foreign policy can achieve results that serve American interests, American values and the American people.

Now, Colombia has entered a challenging but also very hopeful period in its history. Much has been accomplished over the past 20 years but much remains to be done. In 2016, the Colombian government reached a historic peace agreement with the FARC. While implementation of the peace agreement has proven difficult and at times uneven, it represents the opportunity to progress even further in key areas, particularly in extending rule of law and economic development to large swaths of rural Colombia, where human rights abuses and the plight of the displaced have disproportionally impacted the Indigenous and Afro-Colombian populations.

Another urgent task is reducing the coca cultivation and drug production that increased alarmingly from 2013-2017. To reverse this troubling trend, the United States and Colombia agreed in 2018 to a plan that aims to cut cultivation and drug production in half by the end of 2023. Aggressive Colombian efforts under the Duque government have already led to substantially increased eradication of coca plants and interdiction of coca paste. Our assistance continues to be essential in supporting all aspects of the Colombian government's integrated approach.

And then there is Venezuela, where a corrupt and undemocratic regime has driven well over a million desperate refugees and migrants into a generous Colombia—and up to four million to the region—causing social, economic and budgetary challenges that exacerbate existing problems and create whole new ones. Colombia and President Duque have, not surprisingly, been stalwart partners in our diplomatic and humanitarian efforts to restore democracy and provide safe haven to the people of Venezuela. Mr. Chairman, Ranking Member Menendez,

As the security situation in Colombia has improved over the past 20 years, so too has the economy. Colombia has become an important destination for U.S. trade and investment. Colombian GDP has almost quadrupled in the past 20 years. Foreign investment has increased during that time almost tenfold—and the poverty rate cut from 64% to 28%. Our two-way trade of close to $30 billion supports over 100,000 U.S. jobs. We are Colombia's largest trading partner, and in 2018 our bilateral trade in goods created a $1.2 billion surplus in favor of the United States. Meanwhile, Colombia has entered the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development as an upper middle income country, a step that will lead to greater policy alignment with free market economies. With improved security, tourism has grown, including to places that 30 years ago would have been unthinkable. On a festering trade dispute—the so-called "truck scrappage law" that imposed non-tariff barriers for the sale of new U.S. trucks—the Colombian government is committed to resolving the issue and removing those barriers by the end of June.

I would be honored to return to Colombia to lead the outstanding men and women who serve at our large and multi-faceted mission. If confirmed, I pledge to work with our team to carry out a bilateral agenda rooted in a shared commitment to democracy, security and prosperity.

I look forward to answering your questions.

The CHAIRMAN. Mr. Manchester?

STATEMENT OF DOUG MANCHESTER, OF CALIFORNIA, TO BE AMBASSADOR EXTRAORDINARY AND PLENIPOTENTIARY OF THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA TO THE COMMONWEALTH OF THE BAHAMAS

Mr. MANCHESTER. Chairman Risch, Ranking Member Menendez, it is good to be back here, and I will answer your questions.

I am honored to appear before you today as President Trump's nominee to serve as the next U.S. Ambassador to the Commonwealth of The Bahamas. I am deeply grateful to the President and Secretary Pompeo for the support and confidence that they have placed in me. If confirmed, I pledge to work closely with you and this committee and its staff and other Members of Congress to advance our nation's interests in The Bahamas, which is so very, very important.

We live in the greatest country in the world. I am blessed to have been brought up here and born here. And I am blessed with eight children and 13 grandchildren.

I have also been blessed to be in this country to have success in insurance, real estate, medical instrumentation, broadcasting, pub-

lishing, construction, hotel ownership, development and oil drilling. I have operated 27 companies over the last 55 years with a total workforce of 6,000 people, surrounded myself with outstanding and diverse group of employees and advisors. I believe this experience is integral and essential in managing a successful U.S. mission in The Bahamas as well as prepared me for the duties of an Ambassador to the Commonwealth of The Bahamas.

Since its independence as a sovereign nation in 1973, The Bahamas has been a steadfast partner and neighbor of the United States. And given our shared interests—at its nearest point, the country lies barely 50 miles from the coast of Florida—we have cooperated as partners on security, commercial, and cultural and other issues. Together, we are confronting shared challenges such as illicit trafficking in narcotics, arms, and people, as well as the need to bolster the rule of law. If confirmed as Ambassador, I affirm my intention to maintain and strengthen the United States' collaboration with The Bahamas.

If confirmed, I would take charge of the mission that has forged strong diplomatic and political ties with the government in Nassau. The Bahamas has been a leader in our drive to restore democracy in Venezuela, which is so very important. They have bravely staked a position supporting the government there under the leadership of interim President Guaido. The Bahamas has taken the lead in the Caribbean and setting a bold example for the nations in the regions to follow. The Prime Minister of The Bahamas joined President Trump last March at Mar-a-Lago, reinforcing our shared ties and steadfast commitment to democracy and prosperity in this hemisphere.

Through those political, economic, and cultural ties, the United States and The Bahamas has forged a strong bilateral relationship that has served both countries well. Bahamians regularly travel to the United States to visit friends and family and conduct business. Approximately 23,000 United States citizens have residences in The Bahamas and 6 million travel there annually for tourism.

If confirmed, I will strive to ensure the safety and security of American citizens living in or visiting The Bahamas. I will work closely with the Bahamian authorities, civil society groups, and guide the U.S. mission to promote innovative, effective, and whole-of-government efforts to reduce crime and other illegal activities.

I will also continue to promote greater economic ties between the United States and The Bahamas for our mutual benefit. The Bahamas is an attractive destination for U.S. businesses when Bahamian authorities offer stable and transparent regulations for procurement and investment. We can, in fact, provide wonderful business opportunities for U.S. businesses. And we can create the engine for their own development. Earlier this month, the embassy participated in a business conference that highlighted the advantages and opportunities for American businesses to develop investments and export markets in The Bahamas. If confirmed, I intend to support efforts to further U.S. economic interests abroad.

While, generally speaking, geography and history have forced strong bonds between our countries, The Bahamas also maintains close economic ties with other nations. We strongly believe that

American companies can successfully compete with anybody in the world.

In closing, I am confident that I will have the experience, commitment to lead our bilateral relationship with the people and the government of the Commonwealth of The Bahamas. If confirmed, I pledge to uphold the tradition and high standards of public service expected of a U.S. Ambassador. I look forward to the opportunity to continue to serve my country in this new capacity.

Chairman Risch, Ranking Member Menendez, and committee members, I thank you and I am open for questions.

[The prepared statement of Mr. Manchester follows:]

PREPARED STATEMENT OF DOUGLAS MANCHESTER

Chairman Risch, Ranking Member Menendez, and distinguished Members of the committee, I am honored to appear before you today as President Trump's nominee to serve as the next U.S. Ambassador to the Commonwealth of The Bahamas. I am deeply grateful to the President and Secretary Pompeo for the support and confidence they have placed in me. If confirmed, I pledge to work closely with you, with this committee and its staff, and other Members of Congress to advance our nation's interests in The Bahamas.

I would like to take this opportunity to thank my family for all their support over the years. My children and grandchildren could not be here, but it is my family's love and support that has made this possible. I have had the wonderful fortune of success in insurance, real estate, medical instrumentation, broadcasting, publishing, construction, hotel ownership and development, and oil drilling. I have operated 27 companies, with a total workforce of more than 6,000 people, surrounded myself with an outstanding and diverse group of employees and advisors. I believe this experience is integral and essential in managing a successful U.S. mission in the Bahamas and has well prepared me for the duties of Ambassador to the Commonwealth of The Bahamas.

The Bahamas, since its independence as a sovereign nation in 1973, has been a steadfast partner and neighbor to the United States. Given our shared interests—at its nearest point, the country lies barely 50 miles from the coast of Florida—we have cooperated as partners on security, commercial, cultural, and other issues. Together we are confronting shared challenges such as illicit trafficking in narcotics, arms, and people, as well as the need to bolster the rule of law. If confirmed as Ambassador, I affirm my intention to maintain and strengthen the United States' collaboration with The Bahamas.

If confirmed, I would take charge of a Mission that has forged strong diplomatic and political ties with the government in Nassau. The Bahamas has been a leader in our drive to restore democracy in Venezuela. In bravely staking a position supporting a government there under the leadership of interim president Guaidθ, The Bahamas has taken the lead in the Caribbean, setting a bold example for nations in the region to follow. The Prime Minister of The Bahamas joined President Trump last March at a Mar a Lago summit, reinforcing our shared ties and steadfast commitment to democracy, security, and prosperity in this hemisphere.

Through close political, economic, and cultural ties, the United States and The Bahamas have forged a strong bilateral relationship that has served both countries well. Bahamians regularly travel to the United States to visit friends and family and to conduct business. And approximately six million U.S. citizens travel to The Bahamas annually.

If confirmed, I will strive to ensure the safety and security of American citizens living in or visiting The Bahamas. I will work closely with Bahamian authorities, civil society groups, and guide the U.S. Mission, to promote innovative, effective, and whole-of-government efforts to reduce crime and other illegal activities.

I will also continue to promote greater economic ties between the United States and The Bahamas for our mutual benefit. The Bahamas is an attractive destination for U.S. businesses when Bahamian authorities offer stable and transparent regulations for procurement and investment. The Bahamas can offer our businesses a place to grow while we offer them an "engine" for their own development. Earlier this month, the Embassy participated in a business conference that highlighted the advantages and opportunities for American businesses to develop investments and export markets in The Bahamas. If confirmed, I intend to support efforts to further U.S. economic interests abroad.

While geography and history have forged strong bonds between our countries, The Bahamas also maintains close economic ties with many other nations. We strongly believe that American companies can successfully compete with anybody in the world when transparent regulations and practices and steadfast respect for the rule of law prevail. If confirmed, I will continue our work to ensure the United States remains the commercial partner of choice in The Bahamas. I will also prioritize monitoring China's growing engagement in the region.

Expanding educational exchanges is one of the best ways to deepen the already existing cultural and historical ties between the United States and The Bahamas. At present, approximately 2,100 students from The Bahamas study in the United States, and more than 950 students from the United States study in The Bahamas. And in the year ahead, we will resume our sponsorship of Fulbright scholarships for Bahamians, scholarships that allow experts to research and explore more about our two nations, deepening our understanding and cooperation. If confirmed, I will seek to increase levels of educational exchange between our two countries, including through enhancing existing partnerships and the building of new ones to achieve greater understanding and ties between our people.

If confirmed, I look forward to enhancing U.S.—Bahamian relations and exploring every opportunity to engage with the government and people of The Bahamas to advance U.S. and shared interests. I will also work closely with Congress to broaden our engagement under the U.S.-Caribbean Resilience Partnership and U.S.-Caribbean 2020 strategy.

Finally, as a matter of the highest priority, I would like to emphasize that my number one priority as Ambassador will be to protect U.S. Mission personnel, private U.S. citizens, and visiting American tourists throughout The Bahamas.

In closing, I am confident that I have the experience, commitment, and energy to lead our bilateral relationship with the people and the government of the Commonwealth of The Bahamas. If confirmed, I pledge to uphold the tradition and high standards of public service expected of a U.S. ambassador. I look forward to the opportunity to continue to serve my country in this new capacity if confirmed.

Chairman Risch, Ranking Member Menendez, and committee Members, I thank you again for the opportunity to appear before you today, and I welcome your questions.

The CHAIRMAN. Thank you, Mr. Manchester.

Mr. Zuckerman?

STATEMENT OF ADRIAN ZUCKERMAN, OF NEW JERSEY, TO BE AMBASSADOR EXTRAORDINARY AND PLENIPOTENTIARY OF THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA TO ROMANIA

Mr. ZUCKERMAN. Thank you, Chairman Risch, Ranking Member Menendez, and distinguished members of the Senate Foreign Relations Committee.

I am honored to appear before you today as President Trump's nominee to be the United States Ambassador to Romania. I am humbled and very grateful for the confidence President Trump has placed in me. I am also thankful to all of you for your consideration.

Please allow me to introduce my daughter Natalie. She represents our future, and I am fortunate she is with me here today.

My voyage starts with two people who are here in spirit only: my beloved parents, Emil and Aura. Were it not for their courage, wisdom, and sacrifice, I would not be here. Both were teenagers in Bucharest during the Second World War. Like so many of their contemporaries, their families were dislocated and their property was confiscated. Against all odds and against continuing discrimination against Jewish people in the post-war communist regime, they both survived and attended college and medical school.

I was born in Bucharest, Romania. I can read, write, and speak Romanian fluently.

Aware of the brutal shortcomings of the communist regime, my parents decided to emigrate about the time I was born. Some 9 years later, we were allowed to do so with little more than the clothes on our backs.

My parents cherished American values, hard work, and hope for a better future, freedom of speech, and utmost respect for life, liberty, and individual rights. Their proudest day was when they became American citizens. They made sure I always knew and remembered to appreciate and live by these hard fought for principles.

Romania finally shed its horrific communist regime in December 1989, less than 30 years ago, a day I had always hoped for but never thought I would live to see.

Since 1989, Romania established a democratic parliamentary form of government, joined NATO, joined the European Union, and has become a strategic ally of the United States. The strongest aspect of the U.S.-Romania relationship is our military cooperation. There is an American Aegis missile defense battery at Deveselu. U.S. Army personnel are rotationally deployed at Kogalniceanu Joint military base. U.S. Air Force units routinely deploy to Romania, and U.S. naval vessels dock at the Black Sea deepwater port of Constanta.

Romania has stood in solidarity with the United States to condemn Russian intervention and aggression in Ukraine and strongly supports Ukraine's independence, sovereignty, and territorial integrity.

Romania is also a wonderful host and partner to other NATO member state forces. Romania is a robust contributor to NATO missions and operations in Afghanistan, Iraq, and other countries. Romania has committed to meet its financial commitment to NATO.

The Romanian economy has been among the fastest growing in the EU. Our trade and investment relationship has been increasing as well. Romania is rich in timber, agriculture, minerals, oil, natural gas, and other natural resources. Recent exploration in the Black Sea has discovered substantial oil and gas reserves, which have the potential to bolster Romania's and Europe's energy security.

Romania needs to continue to fight against corruption, create a more investment-friendly business climate, invest in infrastructure, health, education, and strengthen public administration.

If confirmed, I would offer continued support for Romania's noteworthy anti-corruption efforts. Fighting corruption and supporting judicial independence are vital to Romania's long-term prosperity and security.

The perils of an aggressive Russia seeking to destabilize democracies in Europe from within and without are substantial and cannot be underestimated. I am confident that with proactive American leadership and assistance to educate, support, and encourage democratic institutions, Romania will meet these challenges and prosper.

If I am confirmed, I pledge to use all of my knowledge and experience to advance our country's interests in Romania.

Thank you for your consideration, which will allow me, if confirmed, the opportunity to serve and repay at least in part the enormous debt of gratitude I have for everything America has given me and my family.

I would be happy to answer any questions you may have.

Senator Menendez, I wish to point out that this morning, unfortunately, due to the endemic corruption issues that you referred to, Romania was downgraded to tier 2 watch status in the TIP Report, which is unfortunate, and if I am fortunate enough to be confirmed, I will make one of my chief priorities. Thank you.

[The prepared statement of Mr. Zuckerman follows:]

PREPARED STATEMENT OF ADRIAN ZUCKERMAN

Thank you, Chairman Risch, Ranking Member Menendez, and distinguished Members of the Senate Foreign Relations Committee.

I am honored to appear before you today as President Trump's nominee to be the United States Ambassador to Romania. I am humbled and very grateful for the confidence President Trump has placed in me. I am also thankful to all of you for your consideration.

Please allow me to introduce my daughter, Natalie. She is a graduate of the University of Edinburgh and has always been interested in our family's Romanian heritage. We traveled there together when she was in high school. To me, she represents our future and I am fortunate she is with me here today.

My voyage starts with two people who are here in spirit only: my beloved parents, Emil and Aura. Were it not for their courage, wisdom, and sacrifice, I would not be here. Both were teenagers in Bucharest during the Second World War. Like so many of their contemporaries, their families were dislocated and their property was confiscated. Against all odds and in the face of persistent anti-Semitism in the postwar communist regime, they both attended college and medical school. Emil became a senior academician and researcher at the University of Bucharest. He achieved international acclaim for his research on epilepsy. Aura pursued research in the field of endocrinology.

Shortly after I was born, my parents, aware of the brutal shortcomings of the communist system, decided their only child should have the opportunity of a better life. Upon filing a request to leave Romania, they were terminated from their elite academic positions. They began a new life on the edge of poverty, living from hand to mouth.

I remember the occasional gratitude of my parents' patients bringing a fish or a live chicken. We lived on the fourth floor of a walk-up building, in two small rooms, each heated by a wood burning terra cotta fireplace. The heat stored in the terra cotta never lasted through morning. Water for bathing was heated in a pot on a bottled gas stove top.

We were finally allowed to emigrate when I was nine years old. We left with little more than the clothes on our backs. We were not allowed to take any valuables or currency, not that we had anything of consequence. Following friends' advice, my parents took two salamis that could be either sold or eaten when we arrived in Rome, Italy.

We remained in Rome for the next nine months while my parents sought work in the United States. My father was finally offered a position as an assistant professor of medicine at Yale Medical School. Arriving in New Haven, Connecticut in May of 1966, we started living the American dream. My parents worked as physicians and I enrolled in third grade and started learning to speak English.

My parents were beyond proud to seek American citizenship. Emil and Aura pursued the American dream with the vigor, zeal, and energy of wide-eyed youngsters. I remember their joy at buying their first car, their first house and the ubiquitous backyard staple—the barbecue. Their proudest day came seven years later when they actually became American citizens. They cherished American values—a belief in hard work and a better future, a regard for freedom of speech, and the utmost respect for life, liberty and individual rights. They made sure I always knew and remembered to appreciate and live by these hard-fought for principles.

Romania shed its horrific Communist regime in December 1989, less than thirty years ago—a day I had always hoped for, but never thought I would live to see. However, the Romanian democratic state is still in its infancy.

Romania is of great economic, military and geo-political strategic importance. Located in southeast Europe, it is an economic entry point to Europe and a staunch American military ally.

Since 1989, Romania has established a democratic parliamentary form of government, joined NATO, joined the European Union, and has become a strategic ally of the United States. The strongest aspect of the U.S.—Romania relationship is our military cooperation. There is an American Aegis Missile Defense battery at Deveselu; U.S. Army personnel are rotationally deployed at the Mihail Kogalniceanu joint military base; U.S. Air Force units routinely deploy to Romania; and U.S. naval vessels dock at the Black Sea deep water port of Constanta.

In addition to being a committed partner of the United States, Romania is a wonderful host and partner to other NATO member states forces. Romania is a robust contributor to NATO missions and operations in Afghanistan, Iraq and other countries. Romania is already the 4th largest contributor to the Resolute Support Mission in Afghanistan, and at the recent NATO Summit in Brussels it pledged additional substantial commitments to the mission in 2019.

Romania has undertaken to meet its financial commitment to NATO and has made major strides toward this goal.

Romania has also stood in solidarity with the United States to condemn Russian intervention and aggression in Ukraine, Romania's neighbor. In addition to supporting American sanctions against Russia, Romania has provided various humanitarian and development aid to Ukraine, and strongly supports its independence, sovereignty, and territorial integrity.

The Romanian economy has been among the fastest growing in the EU, and our trade and investment relationship has been increasing as well. There are approximately five hundred American companies conducting business in Romania, including Fortune 500 companies, numerous smaller companies, and a continually growing number of information technology companies.

Romania is a country of abundant farmland, minerals, oil, natural gas, and other natural resources, and it is blessed with a well-educated, multilingual and industrious populace. In addition to its onshore oil and gas reserves, recent exploration in the Black Sea has discovered substantial off-shore oil and gas reserves, which have the potential to bolster Romania's energy security. The Romanian education system, with high-quality schools and universities, has produced an educated workforce and internationally respected professionals.

Although much has been achieved in Romania, there is still room for improvement. In order for Romania to further the incredible progress it has made over the past 29 years, Romania needs to continue to fight against corruption, create a more investment friendly business climate, invest in infrastructure, health, and education, and strengthen public administration. Investors want a relationship with Romanian decision-makers based on mutual trust. They seek a business climate that enables their businesses to contribute to Romania's sustained economic growth, to create jobs, to earn profits, and to grow their enterprises.

If confirmed, I would offer continued support for Romania's noteworthy anti-corruption efforts. Fighting corruption and supporting judicial independence are vital to the region's long-term prosperity and security, as well as to the extraordinary law enforcement and security cooperation that exists between the United States and Romania.

There is much work to be done to foster, support, and encourage democratic institutions. The perils of an aggressive Russia seeking to destabilize democracies in Europe, from within and without, are substantial and cannot be underestimated. I am confident that with proactive American leadership, assistance, and friendship, Romania will meet these challenges and prosper.

If I am confirmed, I pledge to use all my energy to advance our country's interests in Romania. I will apply all of my experience and knowledge to address the issues and vulnerabilities Romania faces. I look forward to bringing the American values I was lucky enough to be raised with to the country from which I hail.

Thank you for your consideration which will allow me, if confirmed, the opportunity to serve and repay, at least in part, the enormous debt of gratitude I have for everything America has given me and my family.

I would be happy to answer any questions you may have.

The CHAIRMAN. Thank you, Mr. Zuckerman.

We are now going to conduct a round of 5-minute questions, and we will start with Senator Menendez.

Senator MENENDEZ. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Mr. Manchester, when you were last before this committee, you said that The Bahamas was a protectorate of the United States. The Bahamas is a sovereign nation. How do you expect to go to a country who you described as a protectorate and is a sovereign nation with its own democracy, elected leadership, and whatnot and be thought of in a way that will treat them with respect?

Mr. MANCHESTER. Well, I answered that question, and the bottom line was the fact that I have been going there for years. And I know that it is a sovereign, independent country. As I said in my previous testimony, I certainly know the fact that it is a sovereign and independent nation. And what I was referring to was the fact that we have joint defense forces and we are joined at the hip, as we should be, to defending our mutual shores.

Senator MENENDEZ. Well, being a protectorate of the United States—words matter, especially when you are going to be an Ambassador. Being a protectorate of the United States is not about mutual defense. Being a protectorate of the United States is almost like you are a ward of the United States. And so The Bahamas is not a ward of the United States.

Mr. MANCHESTER. I understand that, and I corrected my statement.

Senator MENENDEZ. Well, I did not hear you correct your statement. I just heard you say that now you recognize it is a sovereign nation. I am glad that we have come to that point.

Let me ask you this. I want to talk about your time running the San Diego Union Tribune. A 2018 "Washington Post" article described the environment for women who worked at the paper and its affiliated TV station, U–T TV, as toxic. Speaking of you, one woman said that, quote, you do not want to get caught alone in the elevator with him. Others described the environment as madman style and the hiring meetings were like a boys club, and the boys picked which women they wanted. To be clear, we are talking about 2011 to 2015, not 10, 20, or 30 years ago.

Is this type of culture appropriate?

Mr. MANCHESTER. I have been involved with 55 years of business, 27 different companies, 6,000 employees. And that is a salacious and inaccurate depiction. I have never been accused of sexual harassment ever.

Senator MENENDEZ. So do you have any objection then, if that is the case, to diplomatic security or the FBI examining the accusations related to the workplace environment you fostered or you were alleged to have fostered at the Union Tribune and sharing their findings with members of this committee prior to the committee voting your nomination?

Mr. MANCHESTER. I do not have any objection and never have.

Senator MENENDEZ. Let me ask you this. You were cited in the "Washington Post" article, which you said is salacious—this is an article that was based on the conversations with more than 20 women and men—as saying that you took action to address, quote/unquote, egregious mistakes by the staff at the San Diego Union Tribune. What were those mistakes?

Mr. MANCHESTER. What I was referring to there is the fact that, once again, I have not ever been involved in any kind of sexual harassment, a claim in 55 years of business and 6,000 employees.

I do not know what they are referring to there. That was a salacious——

Senator MENENDEZ. This is your direct quote. You said that you took action to address, quote, egregious mistakes by the staff at the San Diego Union Tribune. Now, I am asking you if you took action to address egregious mistakes, what were those actions. What were the mistakes that you were correcting? Did you institute any disciplinary actions? Did you fire anybody? I mean, you are going to be head, if you are confirmed, of a mission that is going to have a diverse both in gender, race, ethnicity workforce. And we have got to know that at the very beginning, that the person who is heading the embassy is going to create an environment that is worthy of working in. So I want to understand, based upon your own remarks, what were the mistakes that the staff that you hired—what were the mistakes they created, and what did you do to correct those mistakes?

Mr. MANCHESTER. We have instituted policies in every one of the companies that I have been involved with that in fact if somebody, in fact, did something wrong, we in fact fired them.

Senator MENENDEZ. Who did you fire at the San Diego Union Tribune then?

Mr. MANCHESTER. I cannot recall because of the fact that I did not work on a day-to-day basis for the individuals that were running the TV station I think that they are referring to.

Senator MENENDEZ. Well, you are going to have to give me better answers than that.

Mr. Bremberg, this is the problem with four panelists and 5 minutes. So I know there will be another round at least.

In your written answers to my pre-hearing questions about adding a citizenship question to the Census, you stated that you, quote, discussed your opinion on including the citizenship status Census question with other White House staff. What is your opinion on including a citizenship question on the Census?

Mr. BREMBERG. Senator, given my employment in the White House as an advisor to the President, I do not think it would be appropriate for me to discuss the confidential

Senator MENENDEZ. I did not ask you that. I asked you your opinion. I did not ask you what you said to the President. I asked you what your opinion is. What is your opinion?

Mr. BREMBERG. Yes. And I believe disclosing my opinion on the matter would disclose—open up for any further inquiry into advice I may——

Senator MENENDEZ. What type of privilege are you asserting here?

Mr. BREMBERG. Senator, I am not asserting any privilege.

Senator MENENDEZ. Well, if you are not asserting any privilege, then how is it that you failed to answer a question of the committee at your confirmation hearing?

Mr. BREMBERG. Senator, I am happy to discuss any policy or I——

Senator MENENDEZ. This is a policy. You are going to be going to an institution that has, among a wide array of issues, the questions of people in refugee status, the questions of people in a series

of ways in which views such as this are insightful for the committee to understand how you are going to act at that location.

Mr. BREMBERG. I understand. And I am happy to describe the policy. I just want to be careful. I know other nominees who have come before the committee that have served in the White House have not gone down the road of providing their personal opinion, but I am happy to articulate the administration's position. It is not an attempt to distance myself from it. I am just being clear that I am not providing my personal opinion. I can describe the reason behind the policy that the Census department put forward, if that is what you would like to hear, Senator.

Senator MENENDEZ. No. I asked a specific question. You are smart enough to give me a specific answer.

So I am sending a letter to you today, which I ask unanimous consent to be entered into the record.

The CHAIRMAN. It will be.

[The information referred to above is located at the end of this hearing's transcript.]

Senator MENENDEZ. I have to understand, as I continue to ask you questions of this and other nature, if you are going to assert privileges, you are going to tell me what privilege you are asserting because as far as I am concerned, there is no rational basis for a privilege to be asserted when I ask you things that are not directly in conversations with the President of the United States, but that go to insights into the policy views you will hold at a critical institution.

The CHAIRMAN. Thank you, Senator. We will have a second round with enough time.

After that, we will go to Senator Paul.

Senator PAUL. They say beauty is in the eye of the beholder. And I am not saying you are beautiful, but I am saying that each of you seem to have attributes that I think would be good as ambassadors.

I was told by people who jump to conclusions that I could not be a Senator because I had just been a doctor, that a doctor was not somehow smart enough unless I had been a State rep or a State senator or this and that. And I really think we all bring attributes from different walks in life.

I have dealt with Mr. Bremberg in the White House. I find him to be intelligent, forthright, and I think he will do a good job.

I do not know Mr. Goldberg, but his resume sounds impeccable, you know, as a career.

But I think we have career people and we also have political people.

Mr. Manchester has been successful in business. What does that mean? Well, capitalism is very, very selective. Most businesses fail. To succeed with 6,000 employees and 27 companies means that on a day-to-day basis he is running a business and making the decisions that not just please him. Capitalists have to please their customers and everybody that invests in them. They have to make a profit. Capitalism is a very demanding sort of person to work for. And so to have succeeded through all those years meant that Mr. Manchester has made many wise decisions over time.

Mr. Zuckerman, I was impressed not only with your background and your family background, but I think languages are important. The fact that you speak the language will be a big asset to being an Ambassador to Romania.

So I am actually very impressed with the panel, very impressed with the President. People said President Trump could not be President because he had not been a State representative or a governor or this and that. And so I do not think that really intelligence or your ability to figure out problems comes from having a previous position. It comes from your desire, your background, and also to acknowledge sometimes we do not know things and you ask for advice. I get help from my staff on a daily basis who know things that I do not know, and I ask for that advice. And I think it is the same with an ambassador as well.

I do think it is important, though, in an era where people make accusations that are very personal—and I think the accusations against Mr. Manchester are very personal. It does not sound like he had any personal involvement. He was sort of the owner of a company that had probably 10 layers between him and the employees. He has never been accused of anything. But all of a sudden, he is caught up in something that I think is really bad because he is judged without having a chance to defend himself.

And we live in an era where people are making these accusations all the time. 40 years ago, somebody in high school said this. And it is like we live in this world. Do people not deserve some sort of due process before people—you know, Mr. Manchester is well known in San Diego. He is not only a successful businessman and makes a profit at businesses by pleasing customers, but he is a philanthropist. And I think it is wrong to drag his name through the mud particularly for something that there has never been a personal accusation against Mr. Manchester.

So I just hope as we go through this that we will give people the benefit of the doubt and also to consider that people have attributes from their different backgrounds that do not always they have been an ambassador to this or that in the past.

Mr. Manchester, is there anything else you wanted to say about how difficult it is to succeed in business, how you got started in business?

Mr. MANCHESTER. No. I just want to make it clear that I actually am in a position where I really believe that it is important for us to have U.S. representation in The Bahamas because of the Chinese influence and other reasons. And I am volunteering for that assignment, and I recognize that it is going to be a hard job, but it is a needed job. And it is a way in which I can pay back my country for all of the blessings that I have received for my family and myself.

Senator PAUL. Thank you.

No further questions.

The CHAIRMAN. Senator Shaheen?

Senator SHAHEEN. Well, thank you, Mr. Chairman.

You know, Senator Paul, I certainly agree with you—and I think all of us do—that people bring different attributes to the job and that to get to this point, everyone has significant attributes. But I do believe when there are personal allegations made against nomi-

nees, that it is very important to reassure the public about the integrity of the process and the people who will be representing this country, for anyone who is the subject of those accusations to be able to rebut them adequately to persuade the public that they are not true and that they will not influence the ability to do the job. So I think it is very important for the committee to be able to reassure people about the integrity of the individuals we support.

So I hope, Mr. Manchester, that you will be able to rebut those accusations in a way that make it clear that you were not involved.

Mr. MANCHESTER. Once again, I have been involved 55 years of business in 27 different companies, over 6,000 employees, and I have never had a sexual harassment claim against me. And we have hired and promoted to the highest level all ethnic and sexual orientation employees and we are very proud—very proud—of the success that we have had in the companies that we have been involved with.

Senator SHAHEEN. Good. I look forward to hearing more about that.

Mr. Bremberg, for decades, the United States has been the leader in advocating for human rights, especially the rights of women and girls. If confirmed as the U.S. Representative to the U.N. in Geneva, you will lead a team that is responsible for advancing U.S. policy on human rights and global health. Do you recognize reproductive rights and the rights of the LGBT community as human rights?

Mr. BREMBERG. Senator, I do recognize and accept that reproductive rights, as defined by the 1995 Beijing Conference Strategic Objective and under the objective in line with the program of action of the International Conference on Population and Development as important rights. But those state that in no case should abortion be promoted as a method of family planning. So, yes, to your question with that important caveat.

Senator SHAHEEN. I am not asking about abortion, but just that you recognize that reproductive rights are important human rights around the world.

And how about the LGBTQ community?

Mr. BREMBERG. Yes, Senator.

Senator SHAHEEN. You recognize. And if you are confirmed for this position, will you defend those rights in your new position?

Mr. BREMBERG. Yes, Senator.

Senator SHAHEEN. In your capacity as the Director of the Domestic Policy Council, were you ever involved in discussions to expand the global gag rule that restricts foreign assistance to groups that provide a full range of family planning services?

Mr. BREMBERG. Senator, yes, I participated in the development and implementation of the President's expanded Mexico City policy, which you are referring to.

Senator SHAHEEN. Have you seen any of the reports about the impact of that expanded policy on women and families in countries that are affected? And have you made any attempt to get information about what the real impact of those policies have been?

Mr. BREMBERG. Yes, Senator. And I look forward to learning more. In my time in the White House, I was briefed on its implementation I believe approximately a year into its implementation.

One particular question that I and others were asking was was this actually a difficult policy for our grantees and contractors to implement or adopt or was it relatively easy. I am happy to get the number for you, but I recall at the time of hundreds, I believe upwards of 500 entities, I think they only had concerns raised or problem with, I believe, three to five. I do not have the precise number. I am happy to get back to you, Senator.

Senator SHAHEEN. I would very much like to have you get back to me because when I have asked that question of the USAID Administrator and of the Department of State, I have been told by both of those that they are awaiting reports on what the impact is of those policies and that we do not have that information yet. So if that information exists within the White House and it is not being shared, I think that is a huge oversight. So I would very much like to see. Mr. Chairman, I hope that that information will be shared with the full committee.

The CHAIRMAN. Thank you, Senator.

Senator SHAHEEN. Now, Ambassador Goldberg, you talked about the commitment that had been made to Colombia and about the progress that has been made in that country. And I think we would all agree that that has been very important.

But despite that commitment, what we have seen is that Colombia remains an origin of a lot of the poppy growing that we are dealing with and the drug trafficking that has such a huge impact in the United States on States like mine in New Hampshire where we have the third highest overdose death rate in the country.

So I wonder if you can tell me as Ambassador what you will do to try and continue to work with the Colombian government to address this huge problem that is affecting the United States.

Ambassador GOLDBERG. The Colombian government at the moment and we have agreed, as I mentioned in my statement, to a 5-year plan to cut production of coca and interdict coca paste and the finished product. That is underway. And we have seen some progress in that regard. It is a difficult problem, obviously, especially since wide areas of the country remain under control of criminal elements, whether they are the dissident FARC or they are ELN or they are paramilitaries or they are drug cartels. And so the government has this program, and we are assisting with it to try to reduce the production of coca and the drugs that come out of Colombia.

We also have a commitment to reduce demand in Colombia and here, and that is an important element as well. It is an integrated approach. They have a very sophisticated way about going after money laundering. And so as Ambassador, if confirmed, I would want to work very closely with them as they go about carrying out this plan.

Senator SHAHEEN. Well, thank you. I would like to hear more. I am out of time. So we will submit some questions for the record to try and get more information. Thank you very much.

Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

The CHAIRMAN. Thank you, Senator.

Senator Young?

Senator YOUNG. Well, thank you, gentlemen, for your desire to serve our country as ambassadors. I am most grateful.

Ambassador Goldberg, Venezuelans continue to flee into Colombia after the reopening of the border in the past month. Colombia is now hosting more than 1.2 million Venezuelan migrants, as you know, according to most estimates. What do you view as the immediate challenges and priorities for managing the arrival of Venezuelans such as the provision of shelter, food, and emergency health care?

Ambassador GOLDBERG. As the situation has developed, Senator, the population of Venezuelan migrants and refugees has dispersed from the border region into other areas. But it is a problem. It is a huge budgetary requirement for the Colombians. Estimates are anywhere from $1 billion to $1.3 billion this year. So the immediate needs are in health and education, and as you mentioned, shelter. They are huge challenges.

And we have helped very strongly in that regard directing more than half of the humanitarian assistance that we have committed to to help with the Venezuelan situation to Colombia about $143 million, thanks to action in Congress.

So those are the challenges, and the Colombians are going about it. USAID is very much involved in trying to help. But you know, this is ultimately a challenge that the Colombians will have to bear the great brunt of, as well as, by the way, the NGOs that are very active, UNHCR and all of the humanitarian groups that are there. So it is an active and ongoing effort.

Senator YOUNG. So what additional support do you anticipate the multilaterals, those you mentioned and others, needing to provide Colombia and the host communities in the coming months?

Ambassador GOLDBERG. I would not put a figure on it, but substantial. And I was somewhat concerned when I heard the U.N. representative say that the commitments are only resulting in about 30 percent of what was pledged. So we have to continue to try to help the Colombians as they take on this huge burden. And so it is an effort for governments, and we have to do it diplomatically as well as with the Colombians to make sure that they have the resources necessary.

Senator YOUNG. Mr. Bremberg will, of course, need to be working through the United Nations on this and many other matters. That will include the U.N. mission in Geneva.

The United States is currently assessed 22 percent of the U.N. regular budget and 28.4 percent of U.N. peacekeeping operations—the budget there.

So over the years, members of this committee and on the Multilateral Institutions Subcommittee, which I chair, have debated appropriate levels of U.S. support for the United Nations. Are you satisfied with the current process and formulas for determining U.S. assessments?

Mr. BREMBERG. No, Senator. Thank you for the question.

No, and I think the administration has put forward a strong case for transforming the current assessed model of assessed contributions towards a voluntary contribution model. I think that would serve the interests of the United States and in fact I believe over the term, serve the interests of the various U.N. international organizations more by helping to make sure they become more efficient and accountable to member states.

Senator YOUNG. Do you pledge to work with me on that and allow me to be supportive of your efforts on that front, should you be confirmed?

Mr. BREMBERG. Yes, Senator. I would appreciate any support you could provide, and I pledge to work with you on this and other topics.

Senator YOUNG. Thank you much.

I yield back.

The CHAIRMAN. Thank you, Senator Young.

Senator Cardin?

Senator CARDIN. Well, I join in thanking you all for your willingness to serve our nation and thank your families because we know this is a family matter.

Mr. Goldberg, we had a chance to talk as the ranking Democrat on our hemisphere. Having a confirmed Ambassador in Colombia is critically important, and I appreciate your background. And I hope we can move your nomination quickly.

Mr. Bremberg, this committee—I worked on, with Senator Lugar, the transparency in the extractive industries, section 1504 of the Dodd-Frank Act. Regulations took a long time to be promulgated. We ultimately got regulations, and after a long process, in which other nations of the world followed the U.S. leadership in regards to requiring extractive industry companies to disclose their contracts, amounts so that the revenues could go to the country rather than to corruption, we made progress.

And then under President Trump a decision was made to use the CRA to eliminate many of the regulations that were adopted in the previous administration. This, of course, came out of the SEC.

Were you aware of the strategy to use the CRA in regards to section 1504?

Mr. BREMBERG. Yes, Senator.

Senator CARDIN. And the concerns that were expressed at the time that they thought the regulation was overly broad and required information that was proprietary. I disagree with that analysis, but that was the major justification given. And there was a lot of interest to get the SEC to issue a regulation consistent with those concerns.

What efforts have you made to get the SEC to act on 1504?

Mr. BREMBERG. In my time in the White House, after the repeal of the regulation to the CRA, the domestic policy portfolio view did not cover the SEC. The National Economic Council covers the SEC. So that was not something that was in my——

Senator CARDIN. Were you involved at all in the CRA involving 1504? Did you have any conversations with that?

Mr. BREMBERG. Yes, Senator. Can I describe that briefly?

Senator CARDIN. Well, I am interested in your views as to how you are going to represent our nation in multilateral discussions when the extractive industries and dealing with corruption and dealing with the poverty nations that have resource wealth. How do you intend to deal with that if the only action I have seen is to block efforts for disclosure here in America where other countries have already acted on disclosure?

Mr. BREMBERG. Thank you, Senator. I believe the administration worked with Congress to pass the CRA to repeal that regulation

because we and many felt it was overly burdensome of the extraction industry in the United States and would lead to substantial potential job losses in the United States and putting U.S. companies at an unfair disadvantage versus foreign competitors.

Senator CARDIN. And of course, it is up to Congress to make the policy decision. You are supposed to implement it in the executive branch.

Mr. BREMBERG. Absolutely. As a firm believer in the Article 1 power, I am a firm believer in that. In fact—and I could describe a little bit of my work on the CRA.

Senator CARDIN. I would like to know your work on implementing 1504.

Mr. BREMBERG. I believe the CRA is an excellent tool and actually empowered by Congress. It is a way of Congress correcting what they believed——

Senator CARDIN. But you encouraged us to correct this, and then the President signed it. And do you know when 1504 became law? Do you know how many years ago it was?

Mr. BREMBERG. I believe 9 years ago.

Senator CARDIN. And do we have regulations under 1504?

Mr. BREMBERG. This is not an area of my expertise. But I believe the first regulations that were implemented under the Obama administration I believe were challenged in the courts and I believe were struck down, had problems.

Senator CARDIN. For technical reasons, not on substantive.

Mr. BREMBERG. Understood. And I think the final regulation that the CRA actually undid—I mean, the Obama administration I do not believe finalized it until——

Senator CARDIN. What action have you taken to comply with what was said to Congress that you favored 1504. You thought the regulations were wrong. Now we do not have any regulations at all. It has been now almost 2 years since the CRA passed.

Mr. BREMBERG. I do not want to speak just for myself. I think the administration would look forward to working with Congress on amending the law to put in place an appropriate disclosure method.

Senator CARDIN. We do not want to amend the law. We want regulations. We spoke. It is not your job to interpret whether we did the right thing or not. Your job is to implement that.

Mr. BREMBERG. And with respect, Senator, then Congress then spoke again.

Senator CARDIN. On the regulation but not on the law.

Mr. BREMBERG. Right, and amended——

Senator CARDIN. So is it your position that you will not enforce a law passed by Congress?

Mr. BREMBERG. No, Senator. Absolutely not.

And to your specific point about the SEC's rulemaking part—I am not trying to dodge your question, Senator—my role as the domestic policy side—within the White House policy structure, we have the National Security Council. There is a National Economic Council, which was previously headed by Gary Cohn and is now headed by Larry Kudlow. The National Economic Council is the chief policy part of the White House that works with the SEC. The

SEC was never part of my policy portfolio. I am sorry for the confusion, Senator.

Senator CARDIN. Well, Mr. Chairman, I would like to have—I would like you to inform us as to what the administration's policy is in regards to 1504, implementing a law that was passed by Congress 9 years ago. We are not interested in amending the law. We are interested in enforcing the law. Can you get me that?

Mr. BREMBERG. I would be happy to provide a response for the record to a question about what the administration whatever your question is, Senator. What the plan is to move forward? Is that your question?

Senator CARDIN. Yes, to implement the law.

Mr. BREMBERG. I would be happy to provide a response for the record.

Senator CARDIN. Thank you.

Mr. BREMBERG. Thank you.

The CHAIRMAN. Thank you, Senator Cardin.

Senator Rubio?

Senator RUBIO. Thank you.

Thank you all for being here, for being willing to serve our country.

I wanted to focus my questions primarily on the situation with Colombia as it regards Venezuela. I think of all the places we are talking about today, it is the most urgent before us at this moment and has the highest national urgency for our national interests.

Ambassador Goldberg, it is impossible to separate the challenges and the work that we do with Colombia from the conflict in Venezuela. That would be an accurate assessment.

Ambassador GOLDBERG. Yes, it is.

Senator RUBIO. And I think most people are not aware that the elements that threaten the state of Colombia and that are most responsible in many ways for the trafficking of billions of dollars of drugs into the United States, Europe, and around the world operate openly and with impunity and, in fact, with the support and cooperation of the Maduro regime just across the Colombian-Venezuelan border. Right?

Ambassador GOLDBERG. Correct.

Senator RUBIO. I mean, so what we have in Colombia is not just our strongest counter-drug partner in the region, probably our strongest ally on multiple fronts in the region, we have a country that literally has, just on the other side of its border, armed groups that seek to kill their citizens and conduct violent attacks within their territory. We have these armed groups operating in camps and facilities openly with the protection, the assistance, and the cooperation of a neighboring government.

Ambassador GOLDBERG. Largely correct.

Senator RUBIO. The reason why I ask that is because related to that, when you add that to the migrant flow, that is the capability of the ELN and these dissident FARC groups to operate openly with a safe space in a neighboring country, combined with the incompetence, corruption, mismanagement of the Maduro regime leading to the outflow of 4 million of its citizens, including at this point I guess over 1.5 million into one country alone, the combination of these two things—and I think you have alluded to this al-

ready both in your opening statement and your answer to several questions—are placing almost an existential challenge to all of the progress that has been made in Colombia and potentially to the ability of the state long-term.

Ambassador GOLDBERG. As I mentioned, Senator, in fact, I consider that the problems brought by the Venezuela crisis exacerbate everything that Colombia is trying to do and creates whole new issues. So it is a huge problem for Colombia.

I would just add that some of the dissident FARC are also in Colombian territory and, of course, are also involved in some of the drug trade and have returned to that business.

Senator RUBIO. Right, but at least when it comes to—those groups are dangerous as well. But at least when it comes to the groups that are in Colombian territory, the Colombians can get to them and can conduct operations against them.

Ambassador GOLDBERG. Right.

Senator RUBIO. They basically cannot do anything without going to war.

Ambassador GOLDBERG. That is right.

Senator RUBIO. So the point I think when it comes to Venezuela policy, perhaps one of the failures has been, because of how quickly it has moved, I do not think we have done a good enough job of explaining to the American people why it is in our national interest to care about it beyond the fact that we support democracy and the suffering of the people there. But why does it matter to America?

And one of the arguments I have tried and others have as well is this is not just about Venezuela. This is spiraling into a regional crisis that directly impacts the national security and national interests of the United States.

And I would ask, because you have expertise in this part of the world and are going to be serving our country hopefully from Colombia, what would our efforts against the flow of drugs into the United States look like if we did not have a strong partner in Colombia with the capability and the resources that they need to help us confront those challenges?

Ambassador GOLDBERG. Well, as I mentioned to Senator Shaheen, we are now engaged in a very active effort to try to lower the production. It is difficult because of these areas that are not yet under government control. So while that situation continues and if it becomes greater, then there is an almost mathematical proposition that the drugs would be more difficult to eradicate and to interdict. So it would be a worse problem.

Senator RUBIO. I think the Colombians deserve a tremendous amount of credit for all they have done to receive these people who have come across the border, suffering people, people that are scared.

But I would just want to close with this point. I do not think you would disagree with it, and that is the more resources they have had to dedicate to that and the strains it places on the health care system and the like, the less resources that are potentially available to confront this challenge. And that ultimately spills over to us. And so I just do not want us to underestimate what is going to happen to Colombia—I know you do not—in the years to come and the months to come if the situation in Venezuela continues on

the trajectory that it is on now. The situation in Venezuela poses a direct threat not just to Colombia but ultimately to U.S. national interests in the region.

Ambassador GOLDBERG. I agree.

Senator RUBIO. Thank you.

The CHAIRMAN. Thank you, Senator Rubio.

Senator Markey?

Senator MARKEY. Thank you, Mr. Chairman, very much. Thank you for this hearing.

Mr. Bremberg, if you are confirmed, you will be working with the Office of the U.N. High Commissioner for Refugees, UNHCR. Yesterday UNHCR reported that more than 70 million people worldwide have been forced from their homes, the highest number of displaced people on record. Yet, under this administration, as outlined in a report from Amnesty International that was also released yesterday, refugee resettlement in the United States dropped 71 percent over the last 2 and a half years.

I have a copy of the Amnesty International report, Mr. Chairman. I would ask unanimous consent that it be included in the record.

The CHAIRMAN. It will be included.

[The information referred to above is located at the end of this hearing's transcript.]

Senator MARKEY. Thank you.

And the Trump administration has proposed a $2 billion cut to U.N. humanitarian agencies like UNHCR that has helped these displaced populations overseas.

Yes or no, Mr. Bremberg. Do you believe that it is in the United States' national interests to help address this historic humanitarian crisis?

Mr. BREMBERG. Absolutely, Senator. I think I think it is absolutely in the American interest, not just in our security interest, but part of our greater humanitarian/human rights example. And I am proud that the United States is the largest funder of humanitarian efforts around the world.

Senator MARKEY. But again, the Trump administration has proposed a $2 billion cut in U.N. humanitarian agency help. So you wind up with saying the right thing on the one hand and, on the other hand, proposing a cut that would be even more devastating than what we are already living through.

Mr. BREMBERG. So I think part of the issue is that we need to see other countries to step up and do their fair share as it relates to helping address these humanitarian crises around the world. I believe even if you suppose those cuts, I believe that just shows the level of our generosity. I believe the United States would still be the largest single donor for humanitarian efforts around the world. And what we really need to do—and I look forward to doing this, if confirmed—is work with other countries to increase the level of support that they are willing to provide to address these issues.

Senator MARKEY. I appreciate that. But at the same time, we are at a historic high in terms of the number of refugees. So there in my opinion has to be concomitant increase in our commitment not a $2 billion cut.

So even national security officials, whether they be Democrat or Republican administrations, they all agree that our refugee programs help our recruitment of intelligence assets abroad. They counter anti-Western propaganda, promote regional stability in foreign countries hosting large numbers of refugees.

And that is why I recently introduce a bill, the GRACE Act, to prevent this administration from continuing its efforts to slash refugee admissions and dismantle our resettlement infrastructure. There has just been a dramatic reduction in the number of refugees which the United States has accepted over the last 2 and a half years since Donald Trump took over. And this new budget is just a further continuation of that.

So UNHCR has encouraged the United States to maintain its historic leadership role supporting refugees. What do you intend to do about the United States' position if you are handcuffed by having to advocate for cuts in our programs while simultaneously saying to other countries that they should increase? How in the world can you maintain such a contradictory position and hope to be successful in eliciting a response from these other countries?

Mr. BREMBERG. Thank you, Senator, for the opportunity to address that.

The reduction in the refugee cap is only one part of our larger not just humanitarian effort but also our effort to bring in individuals from other countries here into the United States. As we have seen, we face an asylum crisis largely at our southern border. The United States still welcomes more refugees and asylees than any other country in the world. I recognize these are two different legal distinctions. But as we have seen this asylum crisis grow unchecked and we are struggling with resources and legal authorities to address the asylum crisis, I think it makes sense then that unfortunately we are having to pull back on some of our other refugee activities. So I think—I am sorry.

Senator MARKEY. No. I was just going to say there is a humanitarian crisis out there right now. It is unprecedented, and the United States should not be going backwards. We have to step up. We are the wealthiest country in the world. The President says we are the wealthiest country ever right now. So we should just, out of the generosity of our spirit, be reaching out to these people and not waiting for other countries but leading by our example and then saying to the other countries that they should be stepping up. It is just a complete disaster out there, Mr. Bremberg.

My hope is that you could be an advocate internally, but that is not what I am hearing from you. I am hearing you reflecting that philosophy that we have to cut our own aid in order to ultimately see increases from other countries. And I just do not think that is sound thinking.

Mr. Chairman, thank you.

The CHAIRMAN. Thank you, Senator Markey.

Senator Cruz?

Senator CRUZ. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Congratulations to each of you on your nominations.

Mr. Goldberg, I want to ask you some questions about the opportunities and the challenges in Colombia. The country is our largest foreign aid recipient in the region. We have spent upwards of $10

billion since 2000. And Colombia is our only NATO partner in Latin America.

Nevertheless, there are a range of challenges that pose direct threats to American national security from narcotrafficking to the cascading effects of what is happening in Venezuela.

First, I want to ask you just very basically, what do you perceive as our national security interests and our objectives in Colombia?

Ambassador GOLDBERG. Well, I think there are a nexus of interests, Senator Cruz, one of them clearly is the drug problem. Another is what is going on in Venezuela and the dangers that that represents to the United States national security.

There are possibilities and opportunities to move the process in Colombia forward. Part of the problem, as I was discussing with Senator Rubio, is that the Venezuela situation draws resources from what might be used for doing other things that are important on the peace process, on drugs.

But the opportunity is the challenge that has always existed in Colombia and something that we have worked throughout time, at least the 30 years I have been involved with it, trying to make sure that Colombia has the resources and the training and the military cooperation and the police cooperation to extend the state and the state presence in larger parts of the country so that there is more rule of law, there is more economic development. And those are all crucial factors in how Colombia can handle many of the problems that it faces at a much reduced level, thanks to everything that has happened in the last 20 years but still exist and that still need to be dealt with.

Senator CRUZ. One of the many challenges in Colombia is the FARC retains designated as a foreign terrorist organization under U.S. law. How does this impact our government interests and how we interact with the government of Colombia now that FARC is politically represented?

Ambassador GOLDBERG. Well, the FARC, Senator, has representatives in the Congress, in the Senate, and the House that were designated by the peace agreement. So we, in dealing with the political situation, can have some contact. It would be very difficult in most interactions, especially when it comes to U.S. assistance, to deal with the FARC because it is still listed as a terrorist organization.

Senator CRUZ. Mr. Bremberg, the Geneva post is always a challenging and delicate post for our diplomats. It is a place where enormous good work can be done to advance human rights. But unfortunately, many of the U.N.'s human rights organizations have been taken over by people with atrocious human rights records who do not particularly care about protecting human rights.

How do you intend to navigate that challenge?

Mr. BREMBERG. Thank you for the question, Senator.

That is clearly something that the Trump administration has taken on head on. That is largely part of the reason why the administration withdrew from the Human Rights Council 1 year ago last summer and, if confirmed, is why I wish to make advancing human rights one of my priorities in Geneva.

The United States does not need to be a member of the council to lead on human rights. Every country looks to the United States

and our voice on human rights, and if confirmed, I commit to you speaking on human rights in Geneva, building on the good work the mission has already begun to do. Recently our mission in Geneva held a conference to highlight the gross human rights violations going on against Uighurs in China. It was quite disturbing to hear reports of the Chinese mission there threatening other multilateral missions, trying to prevent them from participating and attending. But that type of leadership on that and other human rights issues will be my priority, if I am confirmed.

Senator CRUZ. Well, I certainly encourage you in that regard. And let me, in particular, encourage you the power of highlighting dissidents is something I have tried to do in the Senate of naming and shining a light on courageous heroes who stand up to oppression. And one of the most potent tools against tyranny, against human rights abuses is telling the stories of these dissidents who risk everything. And that has enormous, enormous power, and it is something that tyrannies consistently fear.

Mr. BREMBERG. I certainly agree. I believe the power that dissidents coming here to Congress and meeting with elected members—I think that is a great platform. I also think so many human rights activists come through Geneva specifically, and the importance of having a U.S. Ambassador there that will meet with them, hear their concerns, and then give voice to that both publicly and then privately in bilateral conversations with other countries I think is really important. And, if confirmed, you have my commitment that I will do that. And I would just like to ask you and other members of the committee that if there are individuals that you have already met with or that you know that are in Geneva that would be important for us as the United States to highlight and speak to, I would really look forward to working with you.

Senator CRUZ. Terrific. I appreciate that.

Thank you.

The CHAIRMAN. Thank you, Senator Cruz.

Senator Kaine is going to yield I understand to Senator Menendez.

Senator Menendez?

Senator MENENDEZ. Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Unfortunately I have to go to the floor on the Saudi arms sales shortly.

Mr. Bremberg, I am trying to understand your logic. We have the highest number of refugees in the history of the world, 70 million. You are suggesting that cutting $2 billion is a way to show American leadership. I do not understand that. I know you say you want to get other countries to pay more. Of course, we always want to do that. But cutting $2 billion somehow creates the incentive for other countries to gain more?

And you are wrong about the United States being the greatest recipient of refugees and asylees. Germany alone took a million asylees. So that is not the case.

Let me ask you this. Do you know a gentleman named Thomas Hofeller?

Mr. BREMBERG. I am sorry. Could you repeat that?

Senator MENENDEZ. A guy by the name Thomas Hofeller, H-o-f-e-l-l-e-r.

Mr. BREMBERG. I do not believe so, Senator.

Senator MENENDEZ. You have never had a conversation with him?

Mr. BREMBERG. Could you identify his background or who he is?

Senator MENENDEZ. He is the gentleman who came up with the idea for the Census question. It is a citizenship question on the Census.

Mr. BREMBERG. No, Senator. I do not know nor have I ever met or spoken or communicated with——

Senator MENENDEZ. Let me ask you this. You authored a draft executive order on January 23rd of 2017, 3 days after the President was inaugurated, which would have directed the Census Bureau to add a question on citizenship and immigration status. How did you get the idea to include the citizenship issue in the draft EO?

Mr. BREMBERG. Senator, it would not be appropriate for me to comment on alleged leaked draft White House documents. But I am happy to discuss again the policy issue, if you wish.

Senator MENENDEZ. Well, when you say it is not appropriate, there was a draft—do you deny there was a draft executive order that you prepared?

Mr. BREMBERG. Senator, I do not believe it is appropriate for me to talk about draft deliberative documents.

Senator MENENDEZ. Under what type of privilege are you saying you cannot answer my questions?

Mr. BREMBERG. Senator, I very much wish to answer your question about the policy, but I believe it is the custom, under both Republican and Democrat administrations, that when White House aides come to testify for nominations, they do not——

Senator MENENDEZ. On what type of privilege are you saying you cannot answer my questions?

Mr. BREMBERG. I am not exerting a privilege, Senator.

Senator MENENDEZ. You are not exerting a privilege. So if you are not exerting a privilege, how is that you fail to answer my questions?

Mr. BREMBERG. I would very much like to answer your question.

Senator MENENDEZ. Then please do so.

Mr. BREMBERG. Can you just repeat the policy question, Senator?

Senator MENENDEZ. Where did you get the idea to include the citizenship issue in the draft executive order?

Mr. BREMBERG. Can I just talk about the—I believe you suggested there is a draft executive order dated very early in the administration that you are suggesting I wrote. I cannot comment on this alleged draft. But can I tell you about my work in the transition and right into the immediate context of the administration about what work I did?

Senator MENENDEZ. No. That would take forever.

Mr. BREMBERG. I can be very brief.

Senator MENENDEZ. I want to know about the citizenship question, but you do not want to answer that.

Let me ask you——

Mr. BREMBERG. I answered.

Senator MENENDEZ. You have not answered it.

Let me ask you this. You authored a draft memo to the President which said that, quote, households headed by aliens are much more likely than households headed by native born citizens to use fed-

eral means tested public benefits. Do you agree with that statement?

Mr. BREMBERG. No, Senator, I do not.

Senator MENENDEZ. Okay. So what changed your mind?

Mr. BREMBERG. Nothing has ever changed my mind on that topic. Again, I wish I could talk about it.

Senator MENENDEZ. Do you deny that you authored such a memo?

Mr. BREMBERG. I have never written that sentence, Senator.

Senator MENENDEZ. You have never written that sentence. Did such a memo go under your name?

Mr. BREMBERG. Senator, when I came into the White House, there were many, many memos and draft executive orders that had been prepared for consideration for President Trump during the presidential transition—many memos and executive orders.

Senator MENENDEZ. Let me go to another issue. In my prehearing questions for the record, I asked whether you participated in any meetings related to the administration's decision to terminate TPS designations for El Salvador, Haiti, and Honduras. You said you do not recall participating in any meetings. Yet, the fact is that we have information that the Domestic Policy Council, of which you are the Director, sought repeatedly to influence the decision-making process at the State Department and DHS to ensure that TPS designations for El Salvador, Haiti, and Honduras were terminated. Is that true?

Mr. BREMBERG. I believe you asked did I say was not participating. That is true.

Senator MENENDEZ. Is it true, first of all, that the Domestic Policy Council was actively engaged in trying to influence the results of ending TPS designations for El Salvador, Haiti, and Honduras?

Mr. BREMBERG. I do not believe so, Senator. I had staff that worked on many of these issues——

Senator MENENDEZ. Did you check your calendar records based upon my question to see if you participated in any meetings on TPS?

Mr. BREMBERG. I am happy to do that for the record.

Senator MENENDEZ. Would you please and submit it?

Did you check your email records to see if you had any—expressed an opinion on terminating TPS designations?

Mr. BREMBERG. I would be happy to do that, Senator.

Senator MENENDEZ. Please submit that for the record.

Should victims of sexual violence be able to terminate the pregnancy where legal?

Mr. BREMBERG. Senator, I do not believe abortion is a moral solution to any problem.

Senator MENENDEZ. So the U.S. recently made an egregious and extraordinary threat to veto a U.N. Security Council resolution on gender-based violence in conflict over a reference to survivor's access to sexual and reproductive health. So if in conflict a woman gets raped and ultimately, as a result of that rape, ends up with a child, a pregnancy she did not seek and was forcibly put on her, you are telling me that it will be your position and the position that you will have to say that that woman ultimately cannot have access to a legal abortion?

Mr. BREMBERG. Senator, I am pro-life. I believe that all human life is sacred and that human life begins at conception.

Senator MENENDEZ. So when you are raped, a woman has no rights.

Mr. BREMBERG. Senator, I find that suggestion horrific to suggest that a rape victim has no rights.

Senator MENENDEZ. Well, I find it horrific that a woman who is raped cannot choose what to do with the consequences of that rape. And that is exactly what you are suggesting is acceptable.

Let me ask you this——

Mr. BREMBERG. Senator——

Senator MENENDEZ. No. I have limited time and you are really not being very helpful in answering questions.

Would you, if confirmed, speak out against laws that criminalize same sex relationships and women's personal health decisions in public and private settings as part of your representation of the U.S. at the U.N. abroad?

Mr. BREMBERG. Yes, Senator.

I must say any suggestion that I do not have care for victims of rape I find horrendous. I have had family members that were raped, Senator.

Senator MENENDEZ. And I am deeply sorry.

Mr. BREMBERG. I accept your apology.

Senator MENENDEZ. I am not apologizing.

Mr. BREMBERG. Oh, I am sorry.

Senator MENENDEZ. You should apologize to the women who are raped that you say have to live with the rape. It is pretty outrageous that you at a U.N. organization are going to take that position on behalf of the United States. I do not think that is the view of the United States. Even those who share your view about the question of life very often have exceptions for victims of rape as part of it. You do not suggest that that exception exists. It is very difficult to understand how you are going to promote U.S. views that are broadly held even in that context.

And lastly, Ambassador Goldberg, this position is incredibly important. I have heard some of your answers. Some of the waterfront I am concerned about has been covered very much.

Mr. Zuckerman, I have two questions. One is that U.S. companies keep coming to me telling me how they are abused in Romania, how they arbitrarily and capriciously have their properties confiscated, how their contracts are interceded with. If you are confirmed, I would expect you to make that your highest priority.

Mr. ZUCKERMAN. I will, Senator.

Senator MENENDEZ. And secondly, I will submit for the record some questions I have about a lawsuit that took place. I want a thorough accounting of it so that I understand what took place. I know that you believe that it was wrongfully brought, but I want to have the information as well.

Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

The CHAIRMAN. Thank you, Senator Menendez.

The record will remain open until the close of business on Friday, including for members to submit questions.

I thank all four of you for your patience with us. Thank you for your willingness to serve.

With that, the committee is adjourned.

[Pause.]

Senator ROMNEY [presiding]. The hearing of the Senate Foreign Relations Committee will come to order.

And before we begin, I want to mention that we have votes on the Senate floor that begin at 11:30, and that means that we will probably take a pause from time to time to go out and vote. We have three votes in a row. Votes are usually held every 15 or 20 minutes. So my apology to those of you who are about to testify and also those in the audience. I hope you understand that because of the voting schedule today, we will be having to take two or three pauses or recesses during these hearings. We will come back and finish the process.

Today the committee is going to hold a nomination hearing for three very important issues in a very important part of the world.

First, we are going to hear from Ambassador Richard Norland to be Ambassador to Libya. Ambassador Norland is the Foreign Policy Advisor to the Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff. He previously served as Ambassador to Georgia and Uzbekistan and as the Deputy Chief of Mission in Afghanistan and Latvia.

Among many other diplomatic posts in his lengthy and distinguished career in the Foreign Service, Ambassador Norland was recognized for his service in 2010, receiving the Presidential Distinguished Service Award.

Secondly, we will hear from Ambassador Jonathan Cohen to be Ambassador to Egypt. Ambassador Cohen was the Deputy Ambassador to the United Nations and following the resignation of Ambassador Haley, he became the Acting Ambassador to the U.N.. He served in a number of roles as a career diplomat, including as Deputy Assistant Secretary of State for European and Eurasian Affairs, Deputy Chief of Mission at the U.S. embassy in Baghdad, Iraq, and Deputy Chief of Mission at the U.S. embassy in Nicosa, Cyprus, in addition to in other missions around the world.

Our third nominee is Mr. John Rakolta, Jr., to be Ambassador to the United Arab Emirates. John Rakolta, Jr. is the Chairman and CEO of Walbridge, a global construction firm based in Detroit, Michigan. Walbridge serves clients in a wide variety of industries from automotive, aviation, and manufacturing to government, power, and energy markets. He was also the co-chair of the Coalition for the Future of Detroit School Children and the Chairman of New Detroit, an organization focused on racial equality and the economic revitalization of the city.

We are privileged to be joined by our distinguished colleague, Senator Marco Rubio of Florida, who will be introducing Mr. Rakolta. Therefore, I am going to postpone my opening statement, and I ask the ranking member to do the same after the nominee introduction.

I want to thank all of the individuals for their presence here today, but we are going to begin by recognizing Senator Rubio.

STATEMENT OF HON. MARCO RUBIO,
U.S. SENATOR FROM FLORIDA

Senator RUBIO. Thank you, Mr. Chairman, for convening this hearing today on the nominees to these very important posts around the world.

I want to briefly take a moment to introduce John Rakolta, who is nominated to be the Ambassador to the United Arab Emirates. As you have already outlined, he is a successful business executive and also a leader in the civic community. Since 1993, as you have already said, he is the Chief Executive Officer of a construction firm that has been very successful.

The United States and the UAE have a strong bilateral relationship on a range of issues that are topical even at this very moment, and the two countries have worked together in the past on key security and economic issues. But there is a lot of work to be done.

We must fill this position as quickly as possible, and I have no doubt that Mr. Rakolta will serve his country with great distinction and will represent the United States honorably and effectively in Abu Dhabi, hopefully, once he is confirmed.

So thank you.

Senator ROMNEY. Thank you, Senator Rubio.

Ambassador Norland, Ambassador Cohen, Mr. Rakolta, thank you for your past service to our country and for your willingness to be here today and to accept these assignments. I want to express my gratitude for your willingness to serve the United States of America.

Each of you will be serving in nations that fit with the jurisdiction of the Middle East Subcommittee, but the issues that you face within each of your countries will vary greatly. Your work will be critical in maintaining and strengthening our alliances with key partners in the region.

Ambassador Norland, in Libya, you will face a fractured state with warring parties set on gaining control over the territory. I look forward to hearing your views on how to best address the current situation in Libya, particularly your thoughts on pursuing a ceasefire and supporting a U.N. process.

Ambassador Cohen, while I concur with the administration that we should strive to strengthen our military and trade relationships with Egypt, ongoing human rights abuses are simply unacceptable there. Egypt's government still jails thousands of its political dissidents, including Americans. It must be a high priority to secure the release of these individuals. I look forward to hearing how you will influence the Egyptian government on the issue of egregious human rights abuses.

Let me preface my introduction of Mr. Rakolta by saying that he has been a long-term friend of my family. John has had a long and successful career in the private sector, as I have indicated earlier. I appreciate his achievements in that capacity. I am grateful for his friendship.

He is also someone who has given back to his community, leading economic development and revitalization efforts in Detroit. I am confident that our country will be well served by his experience and leadership.

Mr. Rakolta, as you know, the United Arab Emirates is a critical partner for the United States in the Middle East. The UAE has three U.S. bases, including a significant naval base, and is a key partner for counterterrorism efforts. In addition to security, the UAE is a significant trading partner with the U.S., including with my home State of Utah. I look forward to hearing how you will work to maintain a strong national security and trade relationship with our partner in the Middle East.

As you acclimate in your roles, I hope that you will each remain open and candid with the Senate and our committees to any changes on the ground you witness or ways that we can support you in maintaining and strengthening our relationships with your areas of jurisdiction in the Middle East.

Again, I appreciate you all being here today, and I look forward to hearing from you.

With that, I would like to recognize the distinguished ranking member for his comments, Senator Murphy.

STATEMENT OF HON. CHRISTOPHER MURPHY, U.S. SENATOR FROM CONNECTICUT

Senator MURPHY. Thank you very much, Senator Romney.

Thank you to the nominees and to your families for being willing to serve in the case of our two career public servants not for the first time. And thank you, Mr. Rakolta, for being willing to step up for your country.

Let me just add on briefly to Senator Romney's remarks.

Mr. Norland, if you are confirmed, you are going to confront a country that has essentially tipped into civil war. 8 years after the February 17th revolution that deposed Qaddafi, Libya has yet to find peace or stability, much less attain its aspirations for democracy and prosperity.

Most recently, the renegade commander of the so-called Libyan National Army, Khalifa Haftar, has tried and failed to take Tripoli by force and at great cost, more than 650 killed and 3,500 wounded just since April 5th. And in the wake of President Trump's outreach to Haftar, there is more uncertainty now than ever as to where the United States stands as this chaotic civil war spirals out of control.

Next door in Egypt, as Senator Romney mentioned, we are increasingly seeing authoritarianism and relentless repression in the Arab world's most populous nation. Through a widely discredited referendum this April, President Sisi succeed in amending the constitution to allow for an exception to term limits so that he can stay in office until at least 2030. He has crushed his political opposition, tightened repressive policies targeting the LGBT community, rounded up writers, journalists, artists, and activists for peaceful criticism.

Yet, President Trump has praised Sisi for doing an outstanding job, and Egypt remains the second largest recipient of the U.S. aid in the world. With that much money at stake and, again, with this much confusion about where the United States stands with respect to this campaign of repression, we need strong leadership in our embassy.

And lastly, the United Arab Emirates is one of our most important partners in the region in terms of counterterrorism, political and military cooperation, and trade and investment. But that relationship is also amongst our most challenging. The UAE leadership has asserted an increasingly risky militaristic foreign policy, and many of us have a list of growing concerns with the UAE's conduct in Yemen, its aggressive isolation of Qatar, its role in Sudan, and inhumane and unfair detention practices and trials at home.

It is not insignificant that this will be the first political appointee to represent us in the UAE, a post that has traditionally been reserved for career diplomats, I would argue for good reason. But I look forward to hearing from the nominee.

Thank you for agreeing to accept these very challenging assignments, and I look forward to your testimony.

Senator ROMNEY. Thank you, Senator Murphy.

We will now turn to our first nominee, Ambassador Norland.

Again, we express appreciation to all of you for your willingness to take on these critical roles. Your full statements will be included in the record, without objection. So if you could please keep your remarks to no more than 5 minutes, we would appreciate it so that the members of the committee can engage you with questions.

Ambassador Norland, you may begin.

STATEMENT OF HON. RICHARD B. NORLAND, OF IOWA, A CAREER MEMBER OF THE SENIOR FOREIGN SERVICE, CLASS OF MINISTER–COUNSELOR, TO BE AMBASSADOR EXTRAORDINARY AND PLENIPOTENTIARY OF THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA TO LIBYA

Ambassador NORLAND. Chairman Romney, Ranking Member Murphy, Senators, this hearing will be the subject of immediate attention by the people of Libya as they look for signs of hope that the persistent violence in Tripoli will come to an end and a more secure and prosperous future for all Libyans will be achieved.

The interests of the American people are also at stake with respect to ending innocent suffering, countering terrorism, stabilizing oil markets, stemming the human misery and political de-stabilization of large-scale migration and forging closer economic cooperation.

I am honored by the confidence shown in me by the President and the Secretary of State in nominating me to serve as the next U.S. Ambassador to Libya. If confirmed, I pledge to you that I will do my utmost to bring U.S. diplomacy to bear on stabilizing the situation and promoting these U.S. interests.

The principal task at hand is bringing the latest round of fighting, which started in early April, to an end through an immediate ceasefire in Tripoli. Lasting peace and stability in Libya can only come through a political solution, and halting the current violence is a critical step to create the conditions for a return to political negotiations. Deescalating the conflict requires engagement with a broad range of Libyan stakeholders, including not only Tripoli and Benghazi, but also key constituencies like Misrata, Zawiya, and Zintan. Equally critical is frank U.S. engagement with outside parties that have influence in Libya, some with a presence on the

ground, in an effort to ensure that foreign involvement serves to reduce rather than promote violence.

I am committed to working with a wide array of Libyan and international partners and in support of United Nations Special Representative to the Secretary-General Ghassan Salame to reestablish an effective U.N. mediation process. This effort should build on the constructive talks between Prime Minister al-Sarraj and General Haftar that took place in Abu Dhabi in February.

I would like to stress the United States does not see Libya as the play thing of foreign interests. Libya emerged from colonial rule in 1951, and a strong sense of independence and self-sufficiency still fuels the people of this young and fragile country. We respect this. The United States approach to Libya is pragmatic and rooted in the clear vision of a unified Libyan state that can stand on its own as a force for stability and deliver prosperity to all Libyans from Ajdabiya to Zwara and Awbari to Tobruk.

I have no illusion that the is task will be easy, but if confirmed, I will led my team to build upon the work done by my immediate predecessor, Ambassador Peter Bodde, and the hardworking staff of the Libya External Office temporarily based at the U.S. Embassy Tunis and capably by interim Charge d'Affaires Natalie Baker. I am very conscious—very conscious—that, if confirmed, I would be carrying forward the work of Ambassador Chris Stevens, who gave his life trying to bring peace to the people of Libya. I will do my best to ensure that Chris Stevens, Glen Doherty, Sean Smith, and Tyrone Woods did not die in vain.

I would like to thank my wife, Mary Hartnett, for her unfailing support throughout my career and our children, Daniel and Kate, for their service to our nation growing up as Foreign Service kids. They and their spouses, Jen and Phil, and our four grandchildren, Ellie, Cam, Mary, and Owen, bring great joy to our lives. Mary and Daniel are here today. Daniel came from San Diego. Kate is actually living in the Middle East working on refugee issues.

Chairman, Ranking Member, Senators, in closing, it is perhaps fitting to note that I was born in North Africa in Rabat, my father's first Foreign Service post. His last posting as Ambassador to Chad was cut short when rebels based in Libya advanced on Chad's capital, toppled the government, and forced our diplomats to flee on French military transports after being pinned down for 3 days.

So in my lifetime, I have seen North Africa begin its remarkable transformation. I have also seen it experience the vagaries of self-serving political leadership and the predatory behavior of external forces, including those employing terrorism in their distorted view of Islam. I have seen how instability in Libya can spill over into neighboring countries. In my own Foreign Service career, I have had the opportunity to serve in majority Muslim countries, to work on conflict resolution, and to address the challenges of great power competition.

Taken together, I hope that, if confirmed, serving as Ambassador to Libya will enable me to bring a lifetime of experience to bear in a way that will advance our interests and promote lasting peace and friendship for the United States and Libya.

Thank you. I stand ready to respond to your questions.

[The prepared statement of Ambassador Norland follows:]

PREPARED STATEMENT OF RICHARD B. NORLAND

Mr. Chairman, Ranking Member, Senators: This hearing will be the subject of immediate attention by the people of Libya as they look for signs of hope that the persistent violence in Tripoli will come to an end and a more secure and prosperous future for all Libyans will be realized. The interests of the American people are also at stake, with respect to ending innocent suffering, countering terrorism, stabilizing oil markets, stemming the human misery and political de-stabilization of large-scale migration, and forging closer economic cooperation as Libya looks beyond decades of instability and isolation. I am honored by the confidence shown in me by President Trump and Secretary Pompeo in nominating me to serve as the next U.S. Ambassador to Libya. If confirmed, I pledge to you that I will do my utmost to bring U.S. diplomacy to bear on stabilizing the situation and promoting these U.S. interests.

The principal task at hand is bringing the latest round of fighting, which started in early April, to an end through an immediate ceasefire in Tripoli. Lasting peace and stability in Libya can only come through a political solution, and halting the current violence is a critical step to create the conditions for a return to political negotiations. De-escalating the conflict requires engagement with a broad range of Libyan stakeholders, including not only Tripoli and Benghazi but also key constituencies like Misrata, Zawiya, and Zintan. Equally critical is frank U.S. engagement with outside parties that have influence in Libya, many of whom have a presence on the ground, in an effort to ensure that foreign involvement serves to reduce rather than promote violence.

Stabilizing the situation also requires re-launching a political process that will result in a government that enjoys legitimacy in the eyes of the people of Libya. We are committed to working with a wide array of Libyan and international partners, under the effective leadership of U.N. Special Representative of the Secretary-General Ghassan Salamé, to reestablish such a U.N. mediation process. This effort should build on the constructive talks between Prime Minister alSarraj and General Haftar in Abu Dhabi in February. Achieving a long overdue political solution will not be quick, and ongoing violence has hardened positions on all sides. If confirmed, I would work with the key parties to the conflict in an effort to advance this Libyan-led, U.N. facilitated process and help the Libyans move toward credible and secure elections.

Any political progress will be fleeting without attention to the economic and security dimensions of this conflict. Increasing oil production is a necessary investment in Libya's own future, and if confirmed, I would further support Libyan efforts to develop their country's energy potential and promote greater transparency and accountability in the distribution of Libya's considerable wealth. I would also advocate strongly for the U.S. private sector as we seek to expand trade and investment for the mutual benefit of Libyans and Americans. Reaching the full potential of our economic relationship will require greater security. To this end, if confirmed, I would reinforce our partnerships with a range of Libyan actors to ensure terrorist groups find no safe haven in Libya. We are fortunate to build on an effective counterterrorism partnership with the government of National Accord and its aligned forces, which were instrumental to defeating ISIS in Sirte in 2016, as well as the important contributions of the "Libyan National Army" to the fight against ISIS and al-Qa'ida elements in Libya.

The United States does not see Libya as the plaything of foreign interests. Libya emerged from colonial rule in 1951, and a strong sense of independence and self-sufficiency still fuels the people of this young and fragile country. We respect this. The U.S. approach to Libya is pragmatic and rooted in the clear vision of reinforcing a unified Libyan state that can stand on its own as a force for stability and deliver prosperity to all Libyans, from Ajdabiya to Zwara and Awbari to Tobruk. Our only goal is thus to help Libya establish a stable government with popular legitimacy, enabling the country to counter real threats from ISIS-Libya and Al-Qa'ida, to control its borders and the flow of desperate migrants, to enjoy economic growth for all its citizens, and to respect fundamental human rights.

I have no illusion that this task will be easy, but, if confirmed, I will lead my team to build upon the work done by my immediate predecessor, Ambassador Peter Bodde, and the hardworking staff of the Libya External Office temporarily based at U.S. Embassy Tunis and capably led by interim Chargé d'Affaires Natalie Baker. I am very conscious that, if confirmed, I would be carrying forward the work of Ambassador Chris Stevens, who gave his life trying to bring peace to the people of Libya. I would be determined to ensure that Chris Stevens, Sean Smith, Tyrone Woods and Glen Doherty did not die in vain.

I would like to thank my wife, Mary Hartnett, for her unfailing support throughout my career, and our children, Daniel and Kate, for their service to our nation growing up as Foreign Service kids. They and their spouses Jen and Phil, and our four grandchildren, Ellie, Cam, Mary and Owen, bring great joy to our lives.

Mr. Chairman, Ranking Member, Senators—in closing, it is perhaps fitting to note that I was born in North Africa—in Rabat, my father's first Foreign Service post. His last posting, as Ambassador to Chad, was cut short when rebels based in Libya advanced on Chad's capital, toppled the government, and forced our diplomats to flee on French military transports after being pinned down for three days. So, in my lifetime, I have seen North Africa begin its remarkable transformation. I have also seen it experience the vagaries of self-serving political leadership, and the predatory behavior of external forces, including those employing terrorism in their distorted view of Islam. I have seen how instability in Libya can spill over into neighboring countries. In my own Foreign Service career, I have had the opportunity to serve in majority Muslim countries, to work on conflict resolution, and to address the challenges of Great Power competition.

Taken together, I hope that, if confirmed, serving as Ambassador to Libya will enable me to bring a lifetime of experience to bear in a way that will advance our interests and promote lasting peace and friendship for the United States and Libya. Thank you, and I stand ready to respond to your questions.

Senator ROMNEY. Thank you, Ambassador Norland.

Ambassador Cohen?

STATEMENT OF JONATHAN R. COHEN, OF CALIFORNIA, A CAREER MEMBER OF THE SENIOR FOREIGN SERVICE, CLASS OF MINISTER–COUNSELOR, TO BE AMBASSADOR EXTRAORDINARY AND PLENIPOTENTIARY OF THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA TO THE ARAB REPUBLIC OF EGYPT

Ambassador COHEN. Mr. Chairman, Ranking Member, members of the committee, it is an honor to appear before you today as the President's nominee to be Ambassador to Egypt. I am grateful to President Trump and Secretary Pompeo for their continuing confidence in me, and if confirmed, I look forward to working closely with you and your colleagues to advance U.S. interests in Egypt and the region.

Serving our nation as a Foreign Service officer for the past 33 years has been and continues to be a great privilege. I want to thank my amazing family, who unfortunately could not be here today, for their love and support over the years. And I also want to thank my Foreign Service mentors, ambassadors, deputy chiefs of mission, and assistant secretaries with whom I have served. In particular, I would like to thank Ambassador Ryan Crocker, who encouraged me to join the Foreign Service in the mid-1980s and with whom I had the honor of serving in Baghdad in 2003; my friend, Stuart Jones who, as Ambassador to Iraq, when I was his Deputy Chief of Mission from 2014 to 2016, set an example that I hope to emulate, if confirmed; and Ambassador Jim Jeffrey, a national treasure who has been a steady source of wisdom, strategic thinking, friendship, and support since we first met over 25 years ago.

As I had the honor of telling the committee the last time I appeared before you, I grew up in a California family that paid little attention to foreign affairs, and I began my journey to the Foreign Service in high school through involvement in Model United Nations and as an AFS exchange student. My journey continued in college, studying international relations and near eastern affairs. Serving for the past 6 months as the Acting U.S. Representative to the United Nations has been a remarkable experience that ex-

ceeded what I dreamed possible in my Model U.N. days. However, I joined the Foreign Service with the intention of serving our nation in the Middle East, and I am particularly honored to have been nominated to be the next U.S. Ambassador to Egypt.

America's strategic relationship with Egypt is crucial to our national security interests. The U.S. is affected by Egypt's geostrategic influence on regional political, economic, and military affairs; its governance of the Suez Canal; and its demographic weight as the most populous Arab country. It hosts the headquarters of the Arab League and in February became the chair of the African Union for the year. Egypt continues to meet its obligations under the 1979 Egypt-Israel Treaty of Peace, which is the model for regional cooperation and stability. If confirmed, my primary concern will be to continue to shape our strategic relationship with Egypt in order to advance U.S. interests.

Egypt is a key partner in countering potential threats to the United States and our allies. The Sinai Peninsula is the home to one of the most capable ISIS affiliates, and the Egyptian military campaign against ISIS–Sinai Province continues. In combating terrorism and promoting regional stability, President el-Sisi frequently acknowledges the importance of the U.S. role. If confirmed, I will seek to ensure our counterterrorism partnership with Egypt continues to reduce threats to the United States' interests.

Egypt is the second largest recipient of U.S. security assistance and one of the top 10 of U.S. economic assistance. The Departments of State and Defense ensure that U.S. security assistance is well targeted to achieve bilateral security objectives, including encouraging Egypt to use its defense budget to purchase more U.S.-produced military equipment, supplies, and services. As Secretary Pompeo said during his testimony to Congress in April, we have told Egypt that CAATSA requires sanctions on any person who knowingly engages in a significant transaction with Russia's defense or intelligence sectors. If confirmed, I will carry that message forward. The United States should have greater insight into the Sinai Peninsula to verify that U.S.-provided weapons are being used appropriately. If confirmed, I will request additional travel for U.S. officials into the Sinai as security conditions permit. I will also urge Egypt to grant journalists more access to the Sinai.

I know this committee shares our deep concern about Egypt's restrictions on the freedoms of expression, association, peaceful assembly, and the press; about protecting the rights of vulnerable populations, particularly religious minorities and women; about restrictions on civil society, including the NGO law; and about allegations of abuses by Egyptian security forces. I know that you are concerned about the reasons for and the conditions of imprisonment of U.S. citizens in Egypt. Let me assure you that I strongly share all these concerns. If confirmed, I will emphasize the vital role that protection for fundamental freedoms and rule of law play in the progress of democracies and in building prosperous economies. I will echo the call of Secretary Pompeo from Cairo for President el-Sisi to unleash the creative energy of Egypt's people, unfetter the economy, and promote a free and open exchange of ideas. For that same reason, I will also commend President el-Sisi

for his support of religious tolerance and of the participation of women in politics.

Embassy Cairo is one of our largest embassies, and it offers consular services to more than 68,000 U.S. citizens in Egypt. The embassy staff, both American and Egyptian, is committed to furthering U.S. priorities and strengthening our partnership with Egypt in sometimes difficult conditions. If confirmed, I look forward to joining in their efforts. My highest priority will always be the safety and security or all U.S. citizens in Egypt.

I thank you again for the opportunity to testify before you today, and I look forward to your questions.

[The prepared statement of Ambassador Cohen follows:]

PREPARED STATEMENT BY JONATHAN R. COHEN

Chairman, Ranking Member, Members of the committee: It is an honor to appear before you today as the President's nominee to be Ambassador to Egypt. I am grateful to President Trump and Secretary Pompeo for their continuing confidence in me. If confirmed, I look forward to working closely with you and your colleagues to advance U.S. interests in Egypt and the region.

Serving our nation as a Foreign Service Officer for the past 33 years has been and continues to be a great privilege. I want to thank my wonderful wife, Lidija, and our amazing daughters, Alexandra and Gabriella, for their love and support over the years. I also want to thank my Foreign Service mentors, Ambassadors, Deputy Chiefs of Mission, and Assistant Secretaries with whom I have served. In particular, I would like to thank Ambassador Ryan Crocker, who encouraged me to join the Foreign Service in the mid-1980s and with whom I had the honor of serving in Baghdad in 2003; my friend, Stuart Jones, who, as Ambassador to Iraq when I was his Deputy Chief of Mission from 2014 to 2016, set an example that I hope to emulate if confirmed; and Ambassador Jim Jeffrey, a national treasure, who has been a steady source of wisdom, strategic thinking, friendship, and support since we met over 25 years ago.

As I had the honor of telling the committee the last time I appeared before you, I grew up in aCalifornia family that paid little attention to foreign affairs, and I began my journey to the Foreign Service in high school, through involvement in Model United Nations and as an AFS exchange student. My journey continued in college, studying international relations and near eastern affairs. Serving for the past six months as the Acting U.S. Representative to the United Nations has been a remarkable experience that exceeded what I dreamed possible in my Model U.N. days. However, I joined the Foreign Service with the intention of serving our nation in the Middle East, and I am particularly honored to have been nominated to be the next U.S. Ambassador to Egypt.

America's strategic relationship with Egypt is crucial to our national security interests. The United States is affected by Egypt's geostrategic influence on regional political, economic, and military affairs; its governance of the Suez Canal, through which nearly 10 percent of global maritime trade transits; and its demographic weight as the most populous Arab country, with almost a quarter of the world's Arab population. It hosts the headquarters of the Arab League and, in February, became the chair of the African Union for the year. Egypt continues to meet its obligations under the 1979 Egypt-Israel Treaty of Peace, which is a model for regional cooperation and stability. If confirmed, my primary concern will be to continue to shape our strategic relationship with Egypt in order to advance U.S. interests.

Egypt is a key partner in countering potential threats to the United States and our allies from ISIS and al-Qa'ida and faces serious terrorist threats in its mainland, in its western desert, along its lengthy borders with Libya and Sudan, and in its Sinai Peninsula. Terrorist groups frequently attack Egyptian military and government targets in the Sinai and periodically attack civilian targets there and in mainland Egypt. The Sinai Peninsula is the home base of one of the most capable ISIS affiliates, and the Egyptian military campaign against ISIS-Sinai Province continues. In combatting terrorism and promoting regional stability, President al-Sisi frequently acknowledges the importance of the U.S. role. If confirmed, I will seek to ensure our counterterrorism partnership with Egypt continues to reduce threats to U.S. interests.

Egypt is the second-largest recipient of U.S. security assistance and one of the top-ten of U.S. economic assistance. The Departments of State and Defense ensure

that U.S. security assistance is well targeted to achieve bilateral security objectives, including encouraging Egypt to use its defense budget to purchase more U.S.-produced military equipment, supplies, and services. As Secretary Pompeo said during his testimony to Congress in April, we have told Egypt that CAATSA requires sanctions on any person who knowingly engages in a significant transaction with Russia's defense or intelligence sectors. If confirmed, I will carry that message forward. The United States should have greater insight into the Sinai Peninsula to verify whether U.S.provided weapons are being used appropriately. If confirmed, I will request additional travel for U.S. officials into the Sinai as security conditions permit. I also will urge Egypt to grant journalists more access to the Sinai.

Egypt publicly supports U.S. policy towards Syria; it has played a vital role negotiating repeated ceasefires in Gaza between Hamas and Israel. Egypt can be a strong force for good in the Middle East and Africa. We have encouraged Egypt to play a positive role in resolving the Gulf Rift with Qatar and to join us in developing the Middle East Strategic Alliance. If confirmed, I will press for greater Egyptian support of U.S. efforts to increase regional cooperation.

U.S. exports to Egypt have sustained, in recent years, an estimated 25 thousand U.S. jobs. President al-Sisi has taken bold action on difficult but essential economic reforms that should offer U.S. companies and investors greater opportunities in Egypt. If confirmed, I will encourage Egypt to continue implementing reforms that make doing business in Egypt easier, and I will encourage more U.S. companies to trade with and invest in Egypt as these changes create a more hospitable investment climate.

The defeat of terrorism requires a comprehensive approach that includes preventing others from falling victim to the false allure of violent extremism. In my work at the U.N., I have seen Egypt lead efforts in this regard. I also have witnessed disagreements between the United States and Egypt on human rights issues and peacekeeping reform. Our relationship can be complicated even as we pursue many shared interests. However, our continuing work on counterterrorism and regional stability, despite our disagreements, demonstrates the strength of our enduring partnership. If confirmed, I will strive for achievement of U.S. priorities, as well as objectives the United States and Egypt share.

I know this committee shares our concerns about Egypt's restrictions on the freedoms of expression, association, peaceful assembly, and the press; about protecting the rights of vulnerable populations, particularly religious minorities and women; about restrictions on civil society, including the NGO law; and about allegations of abuses by Egyptian security forces. I know that you are concerned about the reasons for and conditions of imprisonment of U.S. citizens in Egypt. Let me assure you that I strongly share all these concerns. If confirmed, I will emphasize the vital role that protection for fundamental freedoms and rule of law play in the progress of democracies and the building of prosperous economies. I will point out that opportunities for nonviolent political dissent are necessary and can help prevent insecurity and political instability by allowing citizens to participate more in their civic affairs and have a stronger voice in their future. I will echo the call Secretary Pompeo made in Cairo for President al-Sisi to "unleash the creative energy of Egypt's people, unfetter the economy, and promote a free and open exchange of ideas." For that same reason, I also will commend President al-Sisi for his support of religious tolerance and the participation of women in politics.

Embassy Cairo is one of our largest embassies, and it offers consular services to more than 68,000 U.S. citizens in Egypt. The embassy staff, both American and Egyptian, is committed to furthering U.S. priorities and strengthening our partnership with Egypt in sometimes-difficult conditions. If confirmed, I look forward to joining in their efforts. My highest priority will always be the safety and security of all U.S. citizens in Egypt.

I want thank you again for the opportunity to testify before you today, and I look forward to taking your questions.

Senator ROMNEY. Thank you, Ambassador Cohen.

Mr. Rakolta?

STATEMENT OF JOHN RAKOLTA, JR., OF MICHIGAN, TO BE AMBASSADOR EXTRAORDINARY AND PLENIPOTENTIARY OF THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA TO THE UNITED ARAB EMIRATES

Mr. RAKOLTA. Chairman Romney, Ranking Member Murphy, members of the committee, I would like to thank President Trump

and Secretary Pompeo for the trust and confidence that they have shown in me, and I am humbled by this extraordinary opportunity to serve my country. It will represent the interests and values of the United States and strengthen our nation's bonds with the government and the people of the United Arab Emirates. This relationship is critical to our national security interests and is a moderating and stabilizing force in one of the world's most volatile regions.

I would like to thank my family, without whom I would never have been in a position to be considered for this job, particularly without the love, support, and inspiration of my family, especially my wonderful wife Terry for 43 years. She is here today with three of my four children, Eileen, Lauren, and Paige. I also have three of 11 grand children and many friends and extended family who are in the room today, and I could not be prouder of all of them for supporting me.

My grandparents came to America from Romania seeking freedom and a chance for a better life. Our nation's values of hard work and gratitude, combined with love of our country, were instilled in my father. These served him well during World War II when he was held prisoner of war in Germany after his B–26 bomber was shot down. He ultimately moved back to Detroit, acquired a construction company by the name of Walbridge, and I am privileged to lead that company today.

Having grown this regional firm into a multinational enterprise of over 2,000 employees, this experience has allowed me to understand the complexities of international business and commerce. These large and complex projects have given me experiences and insights which will be extremely helpful to U.S. business interests. If confirmed, promoting and developing U.S. business interests in UAE will be one of my top priorities. If confirmed, I will lead the embassy in continuation of efforts to promote and maintain fair and reciprocal trade with the UAE.

The World Expo 2020 in Dubai offers great potential to showcase America's story, ingenuity, and technology in the Middle East. I look forward to advancing American values to millions of visitors, many of them youth, that visit our national pavilion.

If confirmed, my highest priority will be ensuring the safety and security of Americans in the United Arab Emirates, including all private citizens who live and work in the UAE, as well as employees under the Chief of Mission's authority. I also believe that continuing our dialogue with the UAE on human rights and religious freedom represents another priority, which I will work continuously to advance, if confirmed.

I understand that the UAE has been a key security partner for the United States and has joined us in several U.S.-led coalition operations, including against ISIS and al Qaeda. I would work closely with the embassy team, as well as with the members of this committee to ensure that our security partnership remains strong.

If confirmed, I will fully support the U.N.-led peace efforts by U.N. Special Envoy for Yemen Martin Griffiths. The war in Yemen has taken on larger regional implications with the involvement of Iran and has created immense suffering among the Yemeni people. The administration's position on bringing an end to the conflict has

been clear: only a negotiated settlement can end this protracted war and unify Yemen. If confirmed, I will work to continue support for U.N.-led efforts to achieve a lasting end of hostilities and a comprehensive peace agreement in Yemen.

I will also support efforts to address the dire humanitarian consequences of the conflict. I understand that 80 percent of Yemenis are in some need of humanitarian assistance. The international community must remain coordinated and strong in our response and in our efforts. All parties, especially the Houthi authorities, have to commit to lifting unnecessary impediments that slow down deliveries of aid.

The President has been clear. Iran is responsible for the May 12th and the June 13th attacks on six vessels off the coast of UAE and in the Gulf of Oman. The Iranian regime poses a major threat to freedom of navigation and maritime security from the Persian Gulf to the Red Sea. If confirmed, I will work and support the administration's efforts to keep the Straits of Hormuz open where 20 percent of the global petroleum passes.

If confirmed, I will work tirelessly with President Trump, my State Department colleagues, and this committee to protect and advance the interests of the American people. I will passionately and diligently represent our service men and women, business community, tourists, academics, the 50,000 American citizens living in the UAE, and others wishing to engage with the people of the United Arab Emirates.

Chairman Romney, Ranking Member Murphy, and members of this committee, thank you for the privilege and opportunity appear before you today, and I look forward to answering your questions.

[The prepared statement of Mr. Rakolta follows:]

PREPARED STATEMENT OF JOHN RAKOLTA JR.

Chairman, Ranking Member, Members of the committee, it is an honor to come before you today as President Trump's nominee to be the United States Ambassador to the United Arab Emirates.

I would like to thank President Trump and Secretary Pompeo for the trust and confidence that they have shown in me. I am humbled by this extraordinary opportunity to serve my country. If confirmed to serve as the next U.S.Ambassador to the United Arab Emirates, I will represent the interests and values of the United States and strengthen our nation's bonds with the government and people of the United Arab Emirates. This relationship is critical to our national security interests and is a moderating and stabilizing force in one of the world's most volatile regions.

I would like to take this opportunity to thank my family, without whom I would never have been in a position to be considered for this job. Particularly, without the love, support and inspiration of my family, especially my wonderful wife of 43 years, Terry. She is here today with three of our four children, Eileen, Lauren and Paige. I could not be more proud of them.

My grandparents came to America from what is today Romania seeking freedom and a chance for a better life. They raised my father to work hard and be grateful for the blessings our nation made possible. These were qualities that served him well during World War II when he was imprisoned in a German prison camp after the B-26 bomber he was navigating crashed. After the war, he returned to Detroit more optimistic and determined to build his family and career, ultimately acquiring and running Walbridge, the 100-year-old construction company I've had the privilege to lead for the last 39 years.

Having grown this company into a $40 million regional company into a $1.6 billion international enterprise of nearly 2,000 employees, I have successfully managed assets and motivated teams of talented people to achieve great goals in highly competitive global economic environments. Walbridge projects have been completed throughout North and South America, as well as Asia and the Middle East for U.S.

and foreign-based companies. We constructed Maritime City in Dubai, the largest complex for ship repair on the Indian Ocean.

The UAE is the largest market for U.S. goods and services in the Middle East. My experience in the private sector has allowed me to understand the complexities and opportunities of international finance and commerce. Having overseen large and complex international projects has given me insights into foreign business risk, competing on a foreign stage, and dealing with currency volatility, all of which will be extremely helpful to U.S. business interests. If confirmed, I will use my experience in identifying and utilizing local joint ventures as a means and method of entering a foreign market to help American businesses expand into the UAE and beyond. Promoting and developing the expansion of U.S. business interests will be a top priority. If confirmed, I will lead the Embassy in the continuation of efforts to promote and maintain fair and reciprocal trade with the UAE. The U.S. has enjoyed a healthy trade surplus with the UAE for the past nine years, and I would like to see that continue. If confirmed, I will work to promote U.S. business opportunities as well as direct investment in U.S. industries.

The World Expo 2020 in Dubai offers great potential to showcase America's story, ingenuity, and technology in the Middle East. I look forward to advancing American values to millions of visitors—many of them youth—that visit our national pavilion.

If confirmed, my highest priority will be ensuring the safety and security of all Americans in the United Arab Emirates, including all private citizens who live and work in the UAE, as well as employees under Chief of Mission authority. I also believe that continuing our dialogue with the UAE on human rights and religious freedom represents another priority, which I will work continuously to advance if confirmed. I understand that the UAE has been a key security partner for the U.S., and has joined us in several U.S.-led coalition operations including Kosovo, Afghanistan, and Somalia, as well as the ongoing fight against ISIS and Al Qaeda. I would work closely with the Embassy team, as well as with the members of this committee, to ensure that our security partnership remains strong.

If confirmed, I will fully support the U.N.-led peace efforts by U.N. Special Envoy for Yemen Martin Griffiths. The war in Yemen, which began among Yemenis, then drew in neighboring countries, has taken on larger regional implications with the involvement of Iran, and has created immense suffering among the Yemeni people. The administration's position on bringing an end to the conflict has been clear: only a negotiated settlement can end this protracted war and unify Yemen. If confirmed, I will work to continue the administration's support for U.N.-led efforts to achieve a lasting cessation of hostilities and a comprehensive peace agreement in Yemen. I will also support efforts to address the dire humanitarian consequences of the conflict. I will continue to work with the UAE to ensure humanitarian efforts are prioritized, particularly in their role in the Saudi-led Coalition, continuing efforts such as ensuring the Red Sea ports remain open and operational. Other examples of such efforts include when the Saudi-led Coalition worked with the U.S. government to deliver the World Food Programme cranes in December 2017. In this regard, all parties need to increase access so that critical commercial and humanitarian goods reach all areas of Yemen. I understand that 80 percent of Yemenis are in need of some form of humanitarian assistance, and therefore the international community must remain coordinated in our response. All parties, especially the Houthi authorities, have to commit to lifting unnecessary impediments that slow down deliveries of aid.

The President has been clear Iran is responsible for the May 12 attacks on four commercial vessels off the coast of Fujairah, UAE and the June 13 attacks on two vessels in the Gulf of Oman. The Iranian regime poses a major threat to freedom of navigation and maritime security from the Persian Gulf to the Red Sea. If confirmed, I will work to support the administration's efforts to keep the Strait of Hormuz open, the narrow waterway in the Persian Gulf where 20 percent of global petroleum passes.

If confirmed, I will work tirelessly with President Trump, my State Department colleagues and this committee to protect and advance the interests of the American people, passionately representing our service men and women, business community, tourists, academics, the 50,000 American citizens living in the UAE, and others wishing to engage with the people of the United Arab Emirates.

Chairman, Ranking Member, and Members of the committee, thank you for the privilege and opportunity to appear before you today and I look forward to answering your questions.

Senator ROMNEY. Thank you, Mr. Rakolta.

The ranking member and I are going to both yield our time for purposes of voting and letting Senator Kaine offer the first questions.

Senator KAINE. Thank you, and I will do that as long as you tell the floor to keep the vote until I get there.

Senator ROMNEY. I will.

Senator KAINE. Thank you, and congratulations to all of you. These are very, very important nominations. And it is hard to ask all the questions that I want to in 5 minutes before going to vote. I think I am going to focus on Egypt, if I might start with you, Ambassador Cohen. It is good to see you again.

The death of former President Morsi in a courtroom this week has got a lot of attention. There has been significant attention before his death to inadequate treatment of prisoners in Egyptian prisons. This is likely to be an issue of significance. The U.N. has called for an investigation into the circumstances of his death.

Do you believe there should be such an investigation?

Ambassador COHEN. Senator, thank you for raising the issue. It is, of course—prison conditions in Egypt are a broader issue of concern.

Senator KAINE. Right.

Ambassador COHEN. We have American citizens who are incarcerated there, and a top priority has to be insisting that the conditions of their incarceration are decent, humane, meet international standards, and that they are treated fairly under the law.

In the case of President Morsi, I have seen the comments calling for an investigation, and I believe that if there are allegations of abuse anytime, investigations should be pursued.

Senator KAINE. The danger of not having an investigation that would have some credibility would be that this could easily lead to additional political turmoil, violence. A predictable response of folks in the Muslim Brotherhood side would be to try to ratchet up protests, even violent protests against the government. So the idea of an investigation—it is always important to get accountability, but also a credible investigation can be something that can help maintain some order. Would you not agree?

Ambassador COHEN. Yes, sir.

Senator KAINE. Let me ask you about the imprisonment of journalists in Egypt. I was in Egypt and had a very candid dialogue about this with President el-Sisi when he was running for president, before he was president. And I basically expressed to him, look, you have got internal challenges with dealing with terrorism and things like that. And the U.S. will probably give you a great deal of deference in trying to make decisions about how you police internal security. But just friend to friend, we have a very difficult time, because of our culture, understanding journalists being thrown in jail for long periods of time. And these are not just journalists for Egyptian publications. Journalists have been in jail for international publications, wire services like Reuters, and otherwise.

I have been disappointed. We had a pretty candid exchange about it, but I have been very disappointed with the Egyptian government's record of continuing to imprison journalists.

Since this is such a key value to the United States, the First Amendment, as Ambassador what would you do—you cannot dictate internal politics in that country, but what would you do to uphold the important values of freedom of the press and encourage the Egyptian government to up their game in that regard?

Ambassador COHEN. Senator, in public and private, I would make clear that the United States believes and I personally believe that having a strong democracy, having a prosperous country, having a stable country requires creating space for public opinion to express itself, including when that opinion is dissenting, without fear of retribution. And the case of journalism is at the center of that discussion. And if confirmed, I would be very happy to continue a conversation with this committee about how we can work together to advance that agenda with the Egyptians. But I would intend to raise it at the most senior levels on a regular basis.

Senator KAINE. Thank you.

Mr. Rakolta, I want to ask a question about your opening testimony regarding flow of oil through the Straits of Hormuz. Do you know what percentage of American energy comes through the straits? What percentage of American energy comes through the straits?

Mr. RAKOLTA. I am not familiar with exactly the number, but I believe it is low. It is not crucial to our country. We are pretty much self-producing right now.

Senator KAINE. That is correct.

40 years ago, it would have been 70 or 80 percent, you know, nearly existential if there was anything challenging in the Straits of Hormuz to the United States economy. And now it is relatively low because of the good fortunate of American innovation in producing domestic energy.

That said, there is an important global economic effect of problems in the Straits of Hormuz, obviously. But do you think it is the U.S.'s primary responsibility to be the guarantor of safe passage through the straits, or is that more appropriately an international responsibility the United States should play a part in because it is more other countries' energy resources that are at stake in this issue?

Mr. RAKOLTA. I believe both, that the United States plays a very significant role due to the malign activities of Iran today, and we have a special relationship with our allies, both UAE and others, but also there is an international responsibility, given the fact that they consume most of the oil that comes through the straits.

Senator KAINE. I think that is an important point. I just want to make sure that we do not take up on the world's burden of being the guarantor when the Straits of Hormuz are no longer of the same existential importance that they were to the United States a few decades ago. We do have a role. That is an important thing, but we need to call upon other countries to shoulder significant portions of the burden.

Thank you for the testimony.

And, Mr. Chair, I am going to yield it back to the lonely Senator Rubio as I leave and go vote.

Senator RUBIO. Yes. I hope you will tell them that I need to vote as well. And at some point if the folks do not get back in time, we

may have to briefly recess till they get here because we have an important vote.

I wanted just to focus on Libya. I do not think most Americans are aware of what a catastrophe this has turned into and how bizarre it is in some ways. Mr. Norland, I am sure in your current role as an advisor to the Joint Chiefs, you have watched closely a lot of the events there unfold.

You know, briefly, we have a stalemate between the LNA and the GNA, the LNA controlling the vast majority of the territory, but the GNA posing a greater threat to their hold on that. And largely, it is unlike many of the other conflicts in parts nearby. It is not about sectarianism. It is just a raw power calculation.

And then you got all these proxies. And it is kind of a weird standoff. On the LNA side, you have the UAE involved. You have the Russians, who have about $4 billion of oil contracts and are trying to get more. You have the French, and then you have Egyptian help primarily because they are concerned about their border and instability and so forth triggering over to them.

And then on the other side, on the GNA side, you have the Turks who want to position themselves at least as a regional and play big boy as a global power. And then you have the Italians who are apparently involved to thwart the French and vice versa. So I do not fully understand that one.

But our national interest concern there involves what appears to be a growing effort, still nascent, but nonetheless one we have to be very cognizant of, that both al Qaeda and ISIS are taking advantage of this sort of stalemate in fighting to look for an opportunity to reconstitute an area of operation that was eliminated. And they are doing two things now where they are using the conflict as a way to do it, but they are also I believe taking advantage of the fact that because the LNA is now facing off with the GNA, the counterterrorism pressure against them is, at this point, virtually nonexistent.

So if you could share with us some of your insights or views about what we can do from the post to sort of keep an eye on all this.

Ambassador NORLAND. Well, Senator, I think you have characterized the situation extremely accurately. The fact is that the fighting that is underway now cannot possibly produce a successful outcome for any side in this situation. Any victory would be pyrrhic.

And the United States is absolutely committed to working all of the parties both inside Libya and with, as you say, a number of the interested outside countries, some of whom have a presence on the ground, to move with U.N. support and leadership in the direction of a negotiated settlement. The United States does have influence in this situation, both through the vision that we have, the neutral vision—we do not take sides in this equation—but also through economic sanctions and other measures we are able to apply. And if confirmed, it would be my role to do everything, to bring everything to bear that we can diplomatically and otherwise to try to end what, as you say, is a needless and terrible conflict.

Senator RUBIO. Thank you.

And I apologize. We are going to have to recess briefly. So the committee will stand in brief recess until the chair returns.

[Recess.]

Senator ROMNEY. The short recess is over.

Ambassador Norland, given the fighting within Libya and the disarray that exists in that country, what do you believe should be our highest or higher priorities as you look to leading our post there?

Ambassador NORLAND. Senator, I think the highest priority right now is to achieve a ceasefire and to get the key parties on the ground that are currently in conflict to move to the negotiating table and search for a political solution to the situation in Libya.

The United Nations has been playing a very effective role under Ghassan Salame to try to get a process going. There was an initial meeting in Abu Dhabi some months ago that had prospects for success but has not panned out.

And I think, if confirmed, my goal would be to apply all the diplomatic interests and leverage that we can both with parties inside Libya, in the east and in the west, as well as the local parties, and then with outside countries in the region to influence the situation in the direction of a political settlement.

Senator ROMNEY. Thank you.

Ambassador Cohen, Egypt has obviously been a long-term partner of ours and plays a critical role in the region. But Egypt has recently flirted with the possibility of buying fighter jets, as you know, from Russia. Secretary Pompeo notes that if that sale were to happen, the Countering America's Adversaries Through Sanctions Act would require sanctions on the Egyptians. I and 16 of my colleagues have called on President Sisi to reconsider the sale.

How do you believe and how would you approach Egypt on this issue?

Ambassador COHEN. Senator, I think the conversation begins right where you started with CAATSA and the consequences of going forward with it. But it very quickly goes into promoting American goods. I think we have better stuff. We have a better product. And we are right now Egypt's partner of choice across the board, and we need to make sure that we remain a partner of choice. So my engagement would be to underscore for the Egyptians the fact that about half of their military inventory is American is for a good reason because they chose the best they could get, and I think it is important that we continue to encourage them to buy our goods.

Senator ROMNEY. I would presume as well that our continued financial commitment to Egypt, particularly to their military effort, would obviously be influenced by a decision on their part to buy equipment from a geopolitically hostile power.

Ambassador COHEN. The Egyptians have a longstanding and broad relationship with Russia on the commercial side, including military commerce. But the U.S. relationship with them I believe is stronger, and we will continue to strengthen that and grow our side of the account, work with them, and press them, and encourage them to reduce the Russian side.

Senator ROMNEY. Do you have any prospect about how we could encourage them to reconsider their human rights policies, particularly with regard to imprisoning dissidents?

Ambassador COHEN. As I alluded to in my prepared statement, my belief is that we need to underscore for them over and over again at a high level publicly and privately that progress, prosperity, and stability requires them to create space for a variety of views, including dissenting views without fear of retribution. And that will continue to be my theme as I discuss this with the Egyptians.

Senator ROMNEY. Thank you.

Mr. Rakolta, what are your perspectives on the priorities for the U.S. with regard to our security relationship with the UAE, and how might you hope to advance those priorities?

Mr. RAKOLTA. Thank you for the question, Senator.

Our priorities with the UAE continue to revolve around our own national security and the security of the UAE itself. They are being threatened existentially by Iran, and the closer and the deeper that our relationship can be would be advantageous both to us and to them.

Secondly, we have a significant trade relationship with the UAE. Today we enjoy the second largest trade surplus at over $15 billion. And as I said in my opening remarks, if confirmed, I have every intention to see us continue that advantage.

And thirdly, the UAE is a moderating force in terms of human rights and religious freedom in the Gulf and in the broader Mid-East. And I would continue to encourage them at the highest level to continue to make modifications and reforms to join the Western world in terms of the democracies and freedoms that we have as U.S. citizens.

Senator ROMNEY. Thank you.

Senator Murphy?

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

Mr. Norland, thank you for your commitment to the country and taking on this very difficult job. You are going to face a very fluid situation when you arrive in Libya. And as I mentioned in my opening remarks, in April President Trump called Khalifa Haftar, as he was leading his failed offensive on Tripoli, and a public readout of the call made no reference to that offensive. Instead, the President seemed to praise Haftar for his ongoing counterterrorism efforts, a message that deeply perplexed our international partners since he has been actively attacking groups we worked with to dislodge ISIS.

Can you clarify for this committee the U.S. position on Khalifa Haftar?

Ambassador NORLAND. Yes, Senator. Thank you.

As you can imagine, as part of my consultations, I have been exploring that theme. And it is clear to me that we consider the Libyan National Army to be a key player in any effort to produce a political solution to the situation in Libya. And it was I think, as I understand it, in that respect that there was a conversation between the President and Haftar. I understand that discussion revolved around counterterrorism, oil market stability, and the role of the LNA precisely in a political solution.

What I found in the course of my consultations is unanimous consent across the U.S. government. There has to be a ceasefire. There has to be a movement towards a political settlement, that the United Nations' role in this process is key. And if confirmed, that is the path that I will be embarked on.

Senator MURPHY. I am glad you are willing to take on this job. You, I think, can understand how a phone call in the middle of an offensive that does not mention the ceasefire or the offensive would be interpreted by the international community and our partners as an endorsement of that offensive, not a move towards a ceasefire. But that is not your phone call. That is the President's. And I appreciate your willingness to take up this job.

Mr. Cohen, you talk about the importance of our security relationship with Egypt. Let me just ask you a general question. Do you believe that it is appropriate to use U.S. aid and the threat of cutoff of U.S. aid as a means to try to push a human rights agenda in Egypt? The situation is getting worse not better. And I think the fundamental question is, are we willing to deliver a message to el-Sisi that there is a line you can cross, at which point we are no longer comfortable or bound to be a partner with them if they continue to ratchet up this campaign against political dissidents?

Ambassador COHEN. Thank you, Senator. Let me take this in two parts.

The first is that I believe in and, if confirmed, I will, of course, be supporting the law. And the law that the Congress passes that provides the financing has human rights provisions in it, and consequently we currently have a significant amount of money that has not been released because those conditions have not been either met or waived by the administration. So I think the path we have taken is completely appropriate.

I also believe that the counterterrorism assistance that we provide is in our own national security interests. So we need to be sure as we go forward that we are protecting and defending American national security interests which are served by ensuring that the Egyptians can prosecute counterterrorism against ISIS in the Sinai, address the terrorism in their western desert, address terrorism in Egypt's heartland. It is not just Egypt's interests that are at stake there. It is America's.

Senator MURPHY. Let me just sneak in a couple questions for Mr. Rakolta.

You disclosed as part of your process before the committee having some business interests in the UAE that may require you, under UAE law, to keep some of those companies open. Can you just talk about the projects that you have participated in, your company has participated in UAE and the steps that you have taken in coordination with this nomination?

Mr. RAKOLTA. Yes, thank you for the question, Senator.

From 2003 to 2013, my company did a significant amount of business in the UAE. We stopped bidding in 2011. We finished the final project in 2013. All of our staff and everything was removed from the UAE and sent elsewhere in the world.

Secondly, there are contractual obligations and guarantee both contractually and by law that require us to give a corporate guarantee on those projects, if you will, the fact that if something were

to go wrong, they could come back at us. That is the only thing. And we could have closed down our LLC that was working there, but as a practice for tax purposes, we leave those open until the final guarantees are completed.

Senator MURPHY. Have you had other business in the Middle East over that period of time?

Mr. RAKOLTA. We did work in Doha on one project, but the projects were primarily in the UAE and in Doha. And the Doha project was, obviously, back then conducted out of the Dubai office. But everything has been shut down, and we have absolutely no intentions of going back. In fact, I will make it a little stronger. We will not be going back to doing business there.

Senator MURPHY. In the region, in the Middle East.

Mr. RAKOLTA. Yes.

Senator MURPHY. And will you make that commitment once you leave this post as well?

Mr. RAKOLTA. Yes, I would personally.

Senator MURPHY. Thank you very much.

Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Senator ROMNEY. Thank you, Senator Murphy.

Mr. Rakolta, in just a moment Senator Menendez, who is the regular ranking member, will be joining us and wants to ask questions of the three. But anticipating his arrival, let me first ask you.

It is a departure from some precedent to have an individual serve as Ambassador to UAE other than a career Foreign Service representative. What are your thoughts about that assignment? Does it represent a disadvantage not having that Foreign Service background to be able to serve in this regard, or do you believe that your experience will prepare you appropriately to serve in this critical spot?

Mr. RAKOLTA. I think the difference between a career ambassador and a political appointee ambassador are quite different. I think each brings different qualifications to the job. I certainly will be at somewhat of a disadvantage on the career side of all of the experiences that they have, but on the other hand, I bring other experiences that I think will be very, very beneficial.

On the side of perhaps being a bit at a disadvantage, I would submit to you that I will be using the embassy staff and the State Department to probably a greater degree, relying on them, at least in the initial phases, for a lot of advice and guidance. That is pretty much my answer.

Senator ROMNEY. Thank you.

Ambassador Norland, I appreciate that in your opening statement, you made reference to the loss of life associated with those who served in Libya and want to underscore the debt that we owe to them and their families and appreciate your recognition of those individuals.

Now having seen what happened there and recognizing your assignments in other ambassadorial posts around the world, how confident are you in the effectiveness and the sufficiency of our security resources in protecting the lives of our men and women who serve in the Foreign Service in Libya and in this part of the world?

Ambassador NORLAND. Well, thanks for your concern, Senator, and your interest.

In fact, because of the security situation in Libya in the recent few years, our diplomatic activities regarding Libya have been conducted out of our embassy in Tunis for security reasons. Our Chief of Mission has periodically gone into Libya in cooperation with the military forces from AFRICOM on short day trips to try to conduct some diplomatic activity on the ground. But that is a heavy security load to conduct missions like that. And at the moment, I think we are grappling with the question of how do we maintain an effective diplomatic presence with a finger on the pulse of what is going on in Libya but in a way that protects our people. And if confirmed, that is the balance I would need to strike, putting primary emphasis, of course, on the security of our people, but also trying to find a way to maximize the effectiveness of our diplomatic presence.

Senator ROMNEY. Thank you, Ambassador.

I am going to yield the rest of my time to Ranking Member Menendez, who has just joined us. He will ask questions, if you are ready for that, of the panel. And, Senator Menendez, when you finish asking your questions, you can complete the panel. The rest of us have all had our questions, and we have had our opening statements.

I am going to have to run and go vote. But for the benefit of those in my care, I will come back to express my appreciation to each of you if you are still here. It will not take me that long to vote. Thank you.

Senator MENENDEZ. Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Thank you for the courtesy in keeping the hearing open.

STATEMENT FOR THE RECORD ON THE NOMINATIONS OF JONATHAN COHEN TO BE AMBASSADOR TO EGYPT, RICHARD NORLAND TO BE AMBASSADOR TO LIBYA AND JOHN RAKOLTA TO BE AMBASSADOR TO THE UNITED ARAB EMIRATES.

Today we consider three important nominations: Jonathan Cohen to be Ambassador to Egypt, Richard Norland to be Ambassador to Libya and John Rakolta to be Ambassador to the United Arab Emirates.

Egypt, an important security partner and regional actor, has been without a confirmed ambassador for more than two years now. Nevertheless, Mr. Cohen, a career foreign service officer, was only nominated fewer than three months ago.

The UAE, another important security partner, has not had a confirmed ambassador in over a year. Breaking with precedent for ambassador positions to the UAE, Mr. Rakolta is not a career diplomat, and I had some significant concerns about elements of his file, including a number of omissions and inconsistencies in the information he provided to the Committee. Among other things, he failed to fully disclose business ties he held abroad. Mr. Rakolta has been forthcoming in his responses to my inquiries, specifically those regarding his involvement in a non-profit organization from 2009 to 2011, which was involved in questionable payments to a government official. Nonetheless, I am still concerned by some of the facts, including that he did not initially disclose that he served on the board of the organization and that he approved payments to an official who was involved in selecting his company as the recipient of a county contract.

The United States and Egypt have a longstanding and important strategic partnership. From Libya to the Sinai, Egypt faces a number of serious and legitimate security threats that we in the U.S. are committed to helping Egypt overcome. However, this partnership is complicated by the continuous erosion of political and human rights in Egypt, as well as Egypt's openness to pursuing deals with strategic adversaries like Russia and China. I am particularly concerned about Egyptian efforts to purchase Russian military equipment, which would trigger negative consequences laid out in U.S. law. Furthermore, I am concerned that repression that stifles all legitimate means of dissent is itself a threat to Egyptian peace and prosperity, as are misguided military and counter-terrorism operations. While the Egyptian government took the promising step of announcing the repeal of its problematic NGO law, I am concerned about the lack of response from this Administration to

the overall downward trend for civil society in Egypt. Arrests of political dissenters, civil society activists, attacks on press freedom, and the targeting LGBTQ people have become more common in recent years.

In Libya, fighting between various factions amid the war and chaos is having significant negative impacts on regional security across North Africa, the Middle East, and Southern Europe. The ongoing military offensive by Khalifa Haftar and his Libyan National Army threatens civilians and could reignite a more violent civil war that destabilizes the rest of North Africa. Meanwhile, regional actors, including Egypt and the UAE, have converged on the country, pouring in significant resources to support various political actors and militias across the country, sometimes at cross-purposes with United States efforts. U.S. engagement on Libya has been hampered by the lack of a permanent diplomatic presence in the country since the deadly attack that resulted in the deaths of Ambassador Christopher Stephens, Sean Smith, Glenn Doherty and Tyrone Woods in Benghazi in September, 2012. More recently, U.S. engagement has been muddied by President Trump's April 15 telephone call with General Heftar, which appeared to embolden the General in his advance on Tripoli, in spite of the U.S.'s previously established support for the internationally recognized government of National Accord as well as the U.N.-brokered political process. Finally, I remain gravely concerned by the plight of the thousands of refugees and nearly 700,000 displaced Libyans and migrants.

In the UAE, America has an important security partner but one with whom we've had a range of challenges and even countermanding policy objectives around the region. I placed a hold on a proposed sale of Precision-Guided Munitions in response to the UAE's participation in the Saudi-led coalition in Yemen that has resulted in civilian casualties from airstrikes and as well as disturbing reports of detainee abuse at UAE-run detention centers. I am also deeply troubled by credible reports of illicit transfers of U.S. origin weapons and armored vehicles to armed Yemeni groups, some of which the United States considers terrorist organizations. The Trump Administration is now trying to circumvent that hold and the entire Congressional review process for arms sales using an emergency declaration that fails the smell test. In Libya, Emirati support, including airstrikes, for General Haftar emboldened the General in his ill-considered assault on Tripoli. In Sudan, UAE support for the Transitional Military Council has emboldened the delay to a civilian-led transition, facilitating a violent crackdown on peaceful protesters.

I believe it is imperative that we have strong, empowered ambassadors across the world to promote our interests and to advocate for Americans and American values.

Gentlemen, congratulations on your nominations.

I was delayed on the floor because of votes that we are having on rejecting Saudi arms sales. So I had to be there for that.

Mr. Cohen, I appreciate your distinguished service to our nation, most recently at the United Nations.

This assignment to Egypt is one of the critical ones in my view. I have serious concerns about the erosion of political and human rights in Egypt, the systematic choking off of avenues for legitimate dissent and the threat that poses for Egyptian stability. I am concerned about Americans who seem to be arbitrarily and capriciously imprisoned. I am concerned about the ability of Egyptian civil society to speak. I am concerned about the protection of Coptic Christians inside of Egypt. I am concerned about Egypt's moves through changes to its constitution in a way that seeks to extend indefinitely almost the time in which President el-Sisi can be in office. And I am seriously concerned about what Egypt is doing with General Haftar in Libya, which I think sends us in all the wrong direction. So this is an incredibly important assignment.

So speak to me about what points of leverage do you see the United States being able to use with the Egyptian government to improve its human rights record. If you are confirmed, will you commit to publicly raising concerns regarding political and human rights in Egypt and meet with Egyptian civil society actors?

Ambassador COHEN. Yes, Senator, I do.

Senator MENENDEZ. Okay. You have not perfected the State Department's endless answers. So I appreciate that.

[Laughter.]

Senator MENENDEZ. That works great.

Will you help us address challenges facing the Coptic community in the context of broader human rights concerns in Egypt?

Ambassador COHEN. I will, Senator, and let me say this about the Coptic community. We have seen some progress. There is a way to go, but President el-Sisi has undertaken a reform of public school textbooks. He has instituted a national committee to combat incidents of sectarian violence. He has granted permits to some 900 previously unlicensed Coptic churches and has permitted the construction of some new—14 new churches I believe over the last couple of years. So there is some progress. There is more work to be done but this will be a high item on my agenda.

Senator MENENDEZ. Thank you.

With the recent amendments to Egypt's constitution eroding the independence of Egypt's judiciary, giving President el-Sisi the power to hand select the heads of judicial bodies and allow him to extend his rule, which also expand the military's influence over government politics and society, what avenues are left for free and transparent political processes? What implications does that kind of political repression have for long-term stability?

Ambassador COHEN. Senator, my personal goal, if confirmed, will be to promote a prosperous and stable Egypt, and a prosperous and stable Egypt needs to be one where, as I have said several times today—excuse me for repeating myself—one that makes space for a range of opinions, for dissenting voices that can be expressed without fear of retribution, for a marketplace that has a more level playing field between public and private sectors, for one where abuses by security forces are met with accountability. I share many of the concerns that you outlined in your initial statement, and if confirmed, I will work tirelessly and make statements both in public and private along these lines.

Senator MENENDEZ. Thank you.

Let me ask you finally, at least in this public session. I will have some questions for the record. But how will you engage the Egyptian government, as well as your colleagues on this panel in neighboring countries, if they are confirmed, to push for a ceasefire and a political solution in Libya?

Ambassador COHEN. Senator, in my work at the U.N., we have been pushing for this for many months. And if confirmed and if by the time I get to post, we are not back at a political track, I will continue to push the Egyptian officials at a high level and try and rally as much support from my colleagues in Washington, including on this committee, to do so.

Senator MENENDEZ. So let me ask you one overarching question. So, yes, we have some interests aligned with Egypt. They are doing some critical work particularly in our collective fight against terrorism. They seem to have a good relationship with our ally, the State of Israel, at least in the Sinai. They have the opportunity for exploration in oil that could be a game changer with others in the region to help diversify particularly European energy and move it away from Russia.

By the same token, I am deeply concerned that we have an Ambassador who will, yes, understand those interests, but at the same time not be hesitant to urge President el-Sisi and the Egyptian government to move in a different direction on civil society, on political freedoms, on the lack of repression, on not the arbitrary detention of U.S. citizens, on all of these things and our interests as it relates to Libya. Will you feel free to do that?

Ambassador COHEN. Absolutely.

Senator MENENDEZ. Mr. Rakolta, we are concerned about the United Arab Emirates in a whole host of ways. Part of it has been they are part of a coalition that has created an unprecedented humanitarian disaster inside of Yemen. There are credible reports about Yemeni detainee abuse allegations. I have real concerns about their transfer of weapons that we have sold to them to entities we consider terrorist organizations. Are you familiar with these issues?

Mr. RAKOLTA. I am. Thank you, Senator. I am familiar.

Senator MENENDEZ. And so talk to me about what you will do, if confirmed, on the detainee abuse allegations and about the weapons transfers.

Mr. RAKOLTA. Well, let us start with torture. I am very, very aware and I would press for a credible, transparent, and open investigation to the highest levels of the Emirati government. I am not a hesitant person. I have very strong beliefs and will make both my personal voice and the voice of our nation heard loud and clear as far up as I can possibly make it.

Would you please remind me what the second part of your question was?

Senator MENENDEZ. The weapon transfers.

Mr. RAKOLTA. Yes.

Senator MENENDEZ. There are published reports that weapons that we sold to the United Arab Emirates have then been transferred illegally to entities and individuals who we have on our list of terrorists. That is not what an ally does when we are trying to help them with weapons sales.

Mr. RAKOLTA. I agree with you. Weapons sales and the misuse is a very serious allegation. I would again press for very in-depth investigation, prompt, thorough, and I will uphold the law of the United States of America in the strongest possible way and will work with my colleagues and the Senate to bring this to the attention of the Emiratis and to hold them accountable.

Senator MENENDEZ. I hope this will be two of your major undertakings. We have allies, but those alliances are not carte blanches. It is not carte blanches to violate human rights. It is not carte blanches to take our weapons, sophisticated as they are, like precision-guided missiles and other weapons, and then transfer them to entities that may be in the Emiratis' interest but is not in the interest of the people of the United States of America.

So I have your commitment that, if confirmed, you will vigorously pursue both of these issues.

Mr. RAKOLTA. You have my commitment.

Senator MENENDEZ. There is also a question of the hiring of U.S. mercenaries. I am very concerned by reports that the UAE has hired a U.S. firm with retired military personnel to conduct assas-

sinations in Yemen and has hired former National Security Agency employees to build a mercenary espionage hacking unit that has targeted dissidents and opposition figures, including United States citizens. Are you familiar with this information?

Mr. RAKOLTA. I am sorry, Senator. I am not aware of those allegations.

Senator MENENDEZ. I would ask you to become familiar with it because we need to take steps to investigate the role of U.S. citizens that may be playing in this mercenary context and particularly in the spying of U.S. citizens.

Lastly, are you familiar with the challenge that we are having in the Gulf of Qatar and the GCC rift?

Mr. RAKOLTA. I am.

Senator MENENDEZ. What steps do you think you can have the UAE take to resolve this conflict? Because at this point, all we are doing is pushing Qatar into the hands of the Iranians.

Mr. RAKOLTA. I would agree, first, that this is not in the U.S.'s best interest. The quad blockade is, secondly, not working. And thirdly, I will commit to you that I would work tirelessly to solve what the underlying issues may be and to try to bring the Emiratis and the Qataris to a closer and better solution for both of them.

Senator MENENDEZ. I have other questions for the record. I ask you to respond to them substantively.

Ambassador Norland, what do you think you will be able to do, if confirmed, to promote the prospects of a ceasefire and resumption of the U.N.-led political process? And particularly, I share in this regard the administration's concern about General Haftar. I had a conversation with the Secretary of State the other night on this and Egypt's role in this. What do you think you will be able to do, if you are confirmed, in this regard?

Ambassador NORLAND. Well, that is a really important question, Senator.

Senator MENENDEZ. I only ask important ones.

[Laughter.]

Senator MENENDEZ. At least I like to think so. You have to have humor here.

Ambassador NORLAND. I can tell you that I would try to lend the voice of the United States firmly and clearly in support of a ceasefire, rededicate ourselves to that process in support of the U.N. Special Representative to the Secretary-General, Mr. Salame.

This process involves engagement not just with the parties in Libya, east and west, but also with outside actors whose involvement needs to be shaped to pursue a positive outcome and to promote a reduction in violence rather than promoting it. And so I think we are talking about a full court press, which I detect across the U.S.

government an interest in pursuing that. And I think having an Ambassador in the region in Tunis next door, until we can get on the ground in Libya, can lend added impetus to that process.

Senator MENENDEZ. I have several other questions for you, but there is a new vote going on on these resolutions. So I would ask you to substantively answer the questions I am going to pose to you. It would be helpful for me in terms of agreeing to move your process forward.

And with that, in accordance with the chairman's request, the record will close at the close of business tomorrow for members to ask any questions. If questions are posed to you, I would ask you to answer them expeditiously so your nominations can be considered at a business meeting.

And with that, the hearing is adjourned.

[Whereupon, at 12:30 p.m., the hearing was adjourned.]

Additional Material Submitted for the Record

RESPONSES TO ADDITIONAL QUESTIONS FOR THE RECORD
SUBMITTED TO ANDREW BREMBERG BY SENATOR ROBERT MENENDEZ

PRE-HEARING QUESTIONS AND RESPONSES

Sexual and Reproductive Health/Human Rights

Question. The United States has joined the international community in identifying reproductive rights as human rights, including in connection with the 1994 International Conference on Population and Development, the 1995 Beijing World Conference on Women, and through its ratification of the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights (ICCPR). Implicit in the right to reproductive health is the right of men and women to be informed and to have access to safe, effective, affordable and acceptable methods of family planning of their choice, including information and access to the full range of modern contraceptive services such as hormonal contraception, condoms and barrier methods, and long-acting reversible contraception.

- Do you believe that the United States and other countries should work to ensure that women, young people and LGBTI individuals receive accurate information about, and access to a full range of information and services about their sexual and reproductive health? If so, how? If not, why?

Answer. The United States is the most generous funder of maternal and child health, including family planning programs, in the world. I agree that this strong record of leadership should continue, and that it should continue to do so within the longstanding ethical parameters that govern our foreign assistance today. Those parameters include the decades-old protections against taxpayer support for abortion, and the preservation of parental rights when it comes to the information and care provided to children, including the provision of culturally sensitive, age-appropriate, optimal health-focused sex education.

Question. Should the U.S. government leverage its diplomatic and assistance tools to promote, protect, and defend the sexual health and reproductive rights of women and girls? If so, how? If not, why?

Answer. The United States leads the world in the forceful use of diplomatic tools and funding measures to advance women's equality, protect the civil and human rights of women and girls, promote women and youth empowerment programs, and support women's health across their lifespan. The United States is the largest donor of women's health and family planning assistance. We support and fund women's health initiatives inclusive of, but not limited to, needs related to maternal health, voluntary family planning, and HIV and HPV prevention and treatment. We fund programs to prevent and address systemic sources of human trafficking, violence against women and girls, female genital mutilation, and other human rights abuses. If confirmed, I will continue this strong leadership.

Question. Over the last two years, the Trump administration has re-imposed and expanded the Global Gag Rule, withheld funding from UNFPA, and deleted reporting on reproductive rights from the State Department's Country Reports on Human Rights Practices by narrowing discussion to coerced abortion, involuntary sterilization or coercive population control methods. Additionally, the State Department has instructed American diplomats to withdraw support for programs and language supporting sexual and reproductive health.

- Do you support the expansion of the Mexico City Policy? If so, how do you reconcile that with the repeated recognition by the U.S. government that human rights includes reproductive rights?

Answer. The Mexico City Policy is a critical protection for taxpayers and for the women and girls that we support around the world against collusion with the global abortion industry in the guise of foreign assistance. Taxpayers expect us to use the billions of dollars managed by our maternal and child health, family planning, HIV/AIDS, malaria, child nutrition and many other programs to save lives, not take them.

Question. If confirmed, will you support maintaining the ban on UNFPA funding and the continued reduction of support to sexual and reproductive health programs and language?

Answer. The administration made a determination that UNFPA's work with Chinese population authorities violated statutory funding restrictions. This is not new, and previous Administrations have made similar determinations. If confirmed, I will continue to examine closely the activities of UNFPA in the context of the funding decision, and will take every opportunity to remind other nations that the United States is and will be at the forefront of improving women's health across the lifespan, including continued access to family planning methods and preventing maternal and child deaths

Question. According to the Washington Post, you played a lead role in drafting and overseeing the policy process for May 2017 Executive Order "Promoting Free Speech and Religious Liberty," which encouraged federal agencies to expand exemptions to the Affordable Care Act's preventive services guarantee, allowing virtually any employer or insurer with religious or moral objections to deny women access to birth control.

- Please describe your role in developing policy across federal agencies in relation to those exemptions. If confirmed, will you use your position to further policies that deny access to birth control?

Answer. As the Director of the DPC, I helped coordinate the development and drafting of several Executive Orders, including Executive Order 13798 "Promoting Free Speech and Religious Liberty." The order required certain cabinet officials to "consider issuing amended regulations, consistent with applicable law, to address conscience-based objections to the preventive-care mandate promulgated under section 300gg-13(a)(4) of title 42, United States Code." The order could not and did not contradict any statutes or controlling case law with respect to employee access to birth control provided or covered by employers. This administration has advanced policies in support of women's access to comprehensive family planning services in accordance with law. If confirmed, I will not use my position in a manner that departs from these policies.

Question. Should health care providers in developing countries who receive U.S. funds be allowed to refuse to provide women, girls, and LGBTI individuals with information about modern contraception? If so, why?

Answer. The United States is the most generous supporter of global health assistance, including family planning programs. When it comes to HIV/AIDS, there is no program on earth that has saved more lives than the President's Emergency Plan for AIDS Relief—a program started by President Bush and the leaders of this committee. You can be assured that I stand strongly in favor of continuing the unmatched leadership of the United States in ensuring access for all people living with or at risk of HIV/AIDS to life-saving and lifeenhancing healthcare including women, girls, and LGBTI individuals. Some of our strongest and most cost-effective partners in delivering these programs are faith-based organizations. The United States has led the world in showing that partnerships with faith-motivated organizations can simultaneously deliver world-class compassionate care, while also honoring their faith traditions and protected conscience rights.

Question. Should health care providers who receive U.S. funds be allowed to discriminate against LGBTI people, unmarried adolescent girls, or other minority groups in the delivery of services? If so, why?

Answer. This administration has and will continue to support policies furthering the health and well being of all people, including minority groups, unmarried adolescent girls, and LGBTI individuals. Congress has passed numerous federal laws prohibiting discrimination by recipients of federal funds on the basis of race, color, national origin, disability, age, sex, religion, the exercise of conscience, and other

protected classes. I intend to continue the Administration's policy on this question and abide by all applicable laws if confirmed.

Question. Should health care providers who receive U.S. funds be allowed to deny providing information to LGBTI people information about condoms, pre-exposure prophylaxis, or methods to prevent transmission of HIV? If so, why?

Answer. This administration has and will continue to ensure that all people living with or at risk of HIV/AIDS, including women, girls, and LGBTI individuals, have access to comprehensive information on how to prevent transmission of HIV. Congress has passed numerous federal laws prohibiting discrimination by recipients of federal funds on the basis of race, color, national origin, disability, age, sex, religion, the exercise of conscience, and other protected classes. I intend to continue the Administration's policy on this question and abide by all applicable laws if confirmed.

Question. In your role as a senior advisor on health policy for the transition team at HHS and your leadership of the White House Domestic Policy Council, you played a lead role in championing a deregulatory agenda that has resulted in cutbacks on public health and consumer safety protections. This zeal for deregulation has not extended to the area of reproductive health care however, as this administration has introduced burdensome new regulations and policies imposing new barriers to accessing essential health care services like family planning and abortion.

- Please describe your views on access to fundamental reproductive health care and services including contraception and abortion.

Answer. The United States is the leading funder of maternal and child health and family planning programs internationally. I support women's health throughout the life cycle, as is also reflected in the 1995Beijing Conference Strategic Objective C.1. Furthermore, under that objective and in line with the Program of Action of the International Conference on Population and Development, ″[i]n no case should abortion be promoted as a method of family planning.″

Question. Do you support the Trump Administration's regulations and policies that have expanded restrictions on accessing essential health care services like family planning and abortion, effectively creating new barriers, and if so, how do you reconcile that with your support for deregulation in other sectors?

Answer. I am unaware of any policies that restrict access to essential, life-saving, life-affirming healthcare. On the contrary, the United States taxpayers are the most generous in the world when it comes to providing access to a broad range of family planning methods and any number of life-saving and life-enhancing services, such as STI testing and treatment, HPV and cervical cancer screening, treatment for other gynecological and urological conditions, prenatal care, attended labor and delivery, and newborn care for moms and babies, as well as medical and mental health care for survivors of sexual assault. Throughout my government service, I have consistently supported regulatory reform to ensure that the government achieves important public policy outcomes through the least restrictive means possible.

Question. You have stated your first priority in Geneva will be advancing human rights.

- What does the term "human rights" mean to you?

Answer. Human rights are those rights which are endowed by our Creator—usually expressed as freedoms that no government anywhere may abridge, which the U.S. Declaration of Independence speaks of as "unalienable" and can also be found in our Bill of Rights. One definitional source that many look to is the 1948 Universal Declaration of Human Rights, which includes rights of conscience, expression, religious exercise, freedom of movement, to marry, to form families free from government coercion, to be free from slavery and torture, to own property, and to due process applied equally to all.

government respect for the universal human rights of all citizens fosters free and open societies in which all people can flourish. Advancing human rights means committing to defend the human rights and dignity of all people, no matter who they are. For example, as Secretary Pompeo has said: ″standing up for human rights is hardwired into who we are as Americans. Promoting human rights is in the best interests of the United States. Societies that respect human rights and the rule of law are more stable, and make better allies.″

In accordance with international human rights treaties, if confirmed, I will vigorously advocate to protect the inalienable rights that all people share because of our shared human dignity.

Question. How did you use your role as Director of Domestic Policy at the White House to advance human rights in the United States?

Answer. During my time as the Director of the Domestic Policy Council, I worked on several issues that speak to human rights: advocating for the right to life of every human being, protecting religious liberty, reforming our Federal criminal justice system, the successful removal from the U.S. of former Nazi labor camp guard Jakiw Palij to Germany, expanding treatment for mental health, and calling for the eradication of new HIV infections in the U.S. I am proud to have helped President Trump advance the cause of unalienable human rights, particularly in his commitment to protecting the sanctity of life and human dignity around the world, including his impressive record on religious liberty and support for persecuted religious minorities.

Question. Would you characterize access to healthcare as a human right?

Answer. The United States supports the right to the enjoyment of the highest attainable standard of health. Likewise, the United States recognizes the importance and challenges of meeting basic needs for water and sanitation to support human health, economic development, and peace and security.

Question. What about access to clean water?

Answer. The United States is committed to addressing the global challenges relating to water and sanitation and has made access to safe drinking water and sanitation a priority in our development assistance efforts. While not legally binding, the United States believes that everyone should have a standard of living adequate for his or her health and well-being, one component of which is safe drinking water and sanitation.

Immigration

Question. In a meeting with SFRC staff on March 06, 2019 you stated that you could provide data supporting the assertion that "the unlawful employment of aliens has had a devastating impact on the wages and jobs of American workers, especially low-skilled, teenage, and African-American and Hispanic workers."

- Please provide the data supporting that assertion.

Answer. *U.S. Commission on Civil Rights 2010 Report* "The Impact of Illegal Immigration on the Wages andEmployment Opportunities of Black Workers"

> "Illegal immigration to the United States in recent decades has tended to depress both wages and employment rates for low-skilled American citizens, a disproportionate number of whom are black men. Expert economic opinions concerning the negative effects range from modest to significant. Those panelists that found modest effects overall nonetheless found significant effects in industry sectors such as meatpacking and construction.

The bottom line here is that immigration is predicted to raise native wages in the case where immigrant and native workers are complements, meaning their productivity rises from working together. Native workers who are substitutes for immigrants, however, will experience negative wage effects.

Question. Do you agree with the statement that "households headed by aliens (legal and illegal) are much more likely than households headed by native-born citizens to use federal means-tested public benefits?" If so, please provide the data supporting that assertion.

Answer. No, I do not.

Question. The Domestic Policy Council has reportedly proposed changing how several categories of visas are processed, allocated, or monitored, including B-1, E-2, H-1B, H-2A, J-1, and L-1. Not on that list are two visa categories, H-2B and EB-5, which have been used by the Trump Organization and Kushner Companies for seasonal workers at real estate properties and foreign investment in real estate properties, respectively.

- Did any private business interests of any individuals in the White House play any role in not proposing reforms or enhanced monitoring of H-2B and EB-5 visas, similar to the other six categories listed above?

Answer. I am not aware of any private business interests of any individuals in the White House that played any role regarding reforms for any visa categories.

Question. If not, why were these visa categories not considered for similar reforms or enhanced monitoring?

Answer. As has been publicly reported, these visa categories are being considered for reforms.

Question. Secretary of Commerce Wilbur Ross testified to Congress in March 2018 that, in December 2017, the Department of Justice "initiated the request" for census questions about immigration and citizenship status in a letter to the Census Bureau. A federal judge found that assertion was "potentially untrue" and, in a June 2018 litigation filing, Secretary Ross admitted that he considered adding a citizenship question to the census ″soon after″ his February 2017 confirmation. According to a federal court filing, you proposed adding census questions to determine immigration and citizenship status in January 2017, before Secretary Ross's confirmation.

- Did the Domestic Policy Council play any role in advocating for or coordinating the addition of census questions about immigration and citizenship status? If so, please describe.

Answer. Yes, I discussed my opinion on including the census question with other White House staff. In light of the confidentiality interests that attach to executive branch decision making, I am unable to further answer this question.

Question. Did you have any contacts or communications with officials from the Department of Commerce, the Department of Justice, Steve Bannon, Kris Kobach, or Stephen Miller in 2017 about adding questions about immigration and citizenship status to the census? If so, please describe.

Answer. Yes, I discussed my opinion on including the census question with other White House staff. In light of the confidentiality interests that attach to executive branch decision making, I am unable to answer this question.

Question. According to a deposition of Kathy Kovarik, a senior official at USCIS, officials from the Domestic Policy Council attended regular immigration meetings that also included White House Senior Advisor Stephen Miller, as well as officials from the Department of Justice and, occasionally, the Department of State. According to Kovarik's testimony, Temporary Protected Status (TPS) was discussed at these meetings. In addition, an SFRC Democratic staff investigation "determined that the White House Domestic Policy Council sought repeatedly to influence the decisionmaking processes at the State Department and DHS in order to ensure a pre-determined outcome: the termination of TPS designations for [El Salvador, Haiti, and Honduras]."

- Did you supporting terminating the TPS designation for El Salvador, Haiti, and Honduras? If so, why?

Answer. I do not recall having or expressing an opinion on this subject.

Question. Did you participate in meetings at the Domestic Policy Council related to the administration's decisions to terminate the TPS designations for El Salvador, Haiti and Honduras? If so, please list the dates and a description of the meetings.

Answer. I do not recall participating in any meetings.

Question. Did you participate in meetings or phone calls between members of the Domestic Policy Council and then Secretary of State Tillerson's personal staff related to the administration's decisions to terminate the TPS designations for El Salvador, Haiti and Honduras? If so, please list the dates and a description of the meetings.

Answer. No.

Question. Did you participate in meetings or phone calls between members of the Domestic Policy Council and the Department of State's S/P office related to the administration's decisions to terminate the TPS designations for El Salvador, Haiti and Honduras? If so, please list the dates and a description of the meetings.

Answer. No.

Question. Did you participate in meetings or phone calls between members of the Domestic Policy Council and the State Department's Bureau of Western Hemisphere Affairs (WHA) related to the Administration's decisions to terminate the TPS designations for El Salvador, Haiti and Honduras? If so, please list the dates and a description of the meetings.

Answer. No.

Question. Did you participate in meetings or phone calls between members of the Domestic PolicyCouncil and the State Department's Bureau of Populations, Refugees and Migration Affairs (PRM) related to the Administration's decisions to terminate the TPS designations for El Salvador, Haiti and Honduras? If so, please list the dates and a description of the meetings.

Answer. No.

Question. As you know, TPS statute (8 USC 1254a) requires the U.S. to assess whether "foreign state that prevent aliens who are nationals of the state from returning to the state in safety." Do you believe that the governments of El Salvador, Haiti and Honduras have the capacity ensure the safety of returning TPS beneficiaries?

Answer. The TPS statute (Immigration and Nationality Act [INA] 244, 8 U.S.C. 1254a) commits TPS designations and extensions, and associated findings, to the Secretary of DHS, after consultation with appropriate agencies. Without prejudice to any determinations made by the Secretary of DHS, the governments of El Salvador, Haiti, and Honduras have the ability to facilitate the return of their citizens who have benefitted from TPS. As a part of its review, DHS decided on a delayed effective date of 18 months for all three countries to permit an orderly transition, both for those returning home and for the country receiving them. The phase-out period has provided time for TPS beneficiaries to arrange for their departure and for the governments to prepare for the reception and reintegration of their citizens.

Question. Are you aware that then Secretary of State Tillerson's letter to then Acting DHS Secretary Duke recommending the termination of the TPS designations for El Salvador, Haiti and Honduras recognized that ending these designations could 1) have negative consequences for U.S. national security interests, 2) increase unauthorized migration to the United States from Central America, and 3) leave TPS beneficiaries and their U.S. citizen children vulnerable to violence, extortion and gang recruitment if they are returned to these countries. Do you agree with then Secretary Tillerson's assessment?

Answer. I have never seen this letter, so I cannot say if I agree with it or not.

U.N. Special Rapporteurs

Question. According to publically available data, the United States has failed to respond to any requests for official visits from U.N. monitors since January 20, 2017, and as of May 7, 2018, has ceased responding to formal queries from U.N. Special Rapporteurs altogether.

- Please describe your assessment of the work that is conducted by U.N. Special Rapporteurs.

Answer. With 44 thematic and 12 country specific mandates created by the Human Rights Council alone, the relative value and appropriateness of U.N. Special Rapporteurs and their human rights mandates is not uniform.

Several of these special rapporteurs had mandates created with the express support and advocacy of the United States. For example, in March and April 2019, we hosted well-received events in Geneva to raise awareness of the dire human rights situations in Xinjiang, China; Nicaragua; and Venezuela. These are some examples where special rapporteurs' execution of their mandate—and where the actual mandates—advance the cause of human rights, bringing credit upon both the mandate holders and the U.N. system.

There are other special rapporteurs whose mandates contradict directly U.S. values and policies. One example of a flawed mandate is that of the Special Rapporteur on the Negative Impact of Unilateral Coercive Measures on the Enjoyment of Human Rights Idriss Jazairy. Mr. Jazairy's mandate and work presupposes that targeted human rights sanctions such as those provided under the Magnitsky Act (Pub.L. 112-208) harm, rather than benefit the overall state of human rights. We strongly disagree with this position.

Question. Do you support the U.S. government's blocking access by U.N. Special Rapporteurs to the United States?

Answer. The United States has not blocked U.N. Special Rapporteurs' access to the United States. In February 2019, the Department met separately with Special Rapporteur for Extrajudicial, Summary or Arbitrary Executions Agnes Callamard and Special Rapporteur on the Rights to Freedom of Peaceful Assembly and of Association Clément Voule at their request. In March 2019, the Department met with the Independent Expert on Sexual Orientation and Gender Identity Victor Madrigal. In line with the United States principled withdrawal from the Human Rights Council in June 2018, the U.S. has worked to prioritize carefully interactions and responses to HRC-created mandates, preferring to communicate with and respond to those requests that most clearly align with U.S. priorities and internationally recognized rights.

Deregulation

Question. In 2017, Congress used the Congressional Review Act (CRA) to repeal fifteen regulations, including measures to protect women's health, retirement security, workplace safety, clean water, and anti-corruption safeguards.

- Did you have any role in developing the CRA strategy?

Answer. Yes.

Question. Did you have any role (including coordination, strategy, advocacy, etc.) in the effort to repeal the SEC rule required by Section 1504 of the Dodd-Frank Act (P.L. 111-203), also known as the Cardin-Lugar anti-corruption provision? Did you agree with the removal of this regulation that promoted transparency in global payments by oil, gas, and mining companies? If so, why?

Answer. Yes. President Trump signed into law House Joint Resolution 41 that repealed the Extraction Payment Disclosure Rule that the last administration had put in place in 2016. This eliminated a burdensome regulation that threatened to put domestic extraction companies and their employees at an unfair disadvantage. By halting this regulation, the President has removed a costly impediment to American extraction companies helping their workers succeed.

Question. Before you began work at the White House's Domestic Policy Council to roll back regulations, one of your clients at Right Policy LLC was the Freedom Partners Chamber of Commerce, which advocates a deregulatory agenda.

- During your time at the White House, have you had any contact or communications with representatives or agents of the Freedom Partners Chamber of Commerce? If so, what did those contacts or communications consist of?

Answer. I participated in several meetings that were open to all interested parties (roundtable and listening session) as part of the President's Prison Reform agenda. At several of these meetings, Mark Holden participated in his capacity as the Senior Vice President and General Counsel for Koch Industries. While Mr. Holden holds a position with Freedom Partners, he was not there to represent Freedom Partners.

POST-HEARING QUESTIONS AND RESPONSES

Question. On May 30, 2019, a notice of intent to establish a State Department Commission on Unalienable Rights appeared on the Federal Register. From its charter, the commission's duties include providing "advice and recommendations, for the secretary's approval, to guide U.S. diplomatic and foreign policy decisions and actions with respect to human rights in international settings." According to Secretary Pompeo, he is trying to quote "make sure that we have a solid definition of human rights upon which to tell all our diplomats around the world:" Has the State Department not had a solid definition of human rights in its work so far, including in its annual human rights reports?

Answer. The United States has been and remains the world's guiding force for human rights around the world. This leadership takes many forms, including through constructive public advocacy, such as the State Department's annual human rights and religious freedom reporting. The new Commission on Unalienable Rights extends that leadership by refreshing our discourse on human rights, including where that discussion may have departed from our nation's founding principles of natural law and natural rights.

Question. What would be a solid definition of human rights in your view?

Answer. Human rights are those rights which are endowed by our Creator—usually expressed as freedoms that no government anywhere may abridge, which the U.S. Declaration of Independence speaks of as "unalienable" and can also be found in our Bill of Rights. One definitional source that many look to is the 1948 Universal Declaration of Human Rights, which includes rights of conscience, expression, religious exercise, freedom of movement, to marry, to form families free from government coercion, to be free from slavery and torture, to own property, and to due process applied equally to all.

government respect for the universal human rights of all citizens fosters free and open societies in which all people can flourish. Advancing human rights means committing to defend the human rights and dignity of all people, no matter who they are. For example, as Secretary Pompeo has said: "standing up for human rights is hardwired into who we are as Americans. Promoting human rights is in the best

interests of the United States. Societies that respect human rights and the rule of law are more stable, and make better allies."

In accordance with international human rights treaties, if confirmed, I will vigorously advocate to protect the inalienable rights that all people share because of our shared human dignity.

Question. Should women's human rights, including the right to be free from domestic violence and to access reproductive healthcare, be a part of a quote "solid definition of human rights?"

Answer. I believe all human beings, including women, are endowed with the same fundamental rights and liberties. This includes the right to be free from all forms of violence, including domestic violence, and to access voluntary reproductive healthcare, to exclude abortion.

Question. Did you consult or discuss with anyone in the State Department the creation of this Commission?

Answer. No, I was not involved in the creation of the Commission.

Question. What is your opinion on establishing such a Commission?

Answer. I support this initiative, and do not believe we should be afraid of discourse surrounding our nation's founding principles.

Question. In your role as the Director of the Domestic Policy Council, were you involved in any discussions about the zero-tolerance policy that resulted in family separation?

Answer. I had no role in setting the zero tolerance policy. Subsequently, I was involved in discussions and meetings regarding the reunification of children and their parents, and in the implementation of Executive Order 13841 that states "the policy of this administration to maintain family unity, including by detaining alien families together where appropriate and consistent with law and available resources" and specifically directed "The Secretary of Homeland Security, shall, to the extent permitted by law and subject to the availability of appropriations, maintain custody of alien families during the pendency of any criminal improper entry or immigration proceedings involving their members."

Question. Did you ever participate in any meetings regarding the administration's zero tolerance policy on immigration? If so, how many? What was the extent of your role?

Answer. After the zero tolerance policy was established, I was involved in discussions and meetings regarding the reunification of children and their parents, and in the implementation of Executive Order 13841.

Question. Would you recommend re-instituting the administration's zero tolerance policy that forcibly separated nearly 2,800 children from their parents and maybe thousands more that have yet to be identified?

Answer. I support the President's policy as stated in Executive Order 13841.

Question. Will you refuse to endorse or defend any future family separation policy and will you encourage other countries to similarly refuse to adopt these cruel policies as a means to deter families seeking legal asylum protection?

Answer. I support the President's policy as stated in Executive Order 13841.

Question. What message do you think the zero tolerance policy has sent to other nations around the world?

Answer. There is a humanitarian crisis on our southern border. The U.S. needs additional cooperation from other countries and additional resources and changes to the law from the Congress to address it.

Question. Do you think this policy has affected other countries' approaches on immigration? How so?

Answer. The President encourages all nations to embrace their sovereignty and manage their national security interests accordingly.

Question. Can you explain the how UNFPA has violated Kemp-Kasten because I have not been able to get a clear answer how the administration went about making the determination against UNFPA?

Answer. The determination to withhold funding from UNFPA was made based on the fact that China's family planning policies still involve the use of coercive abortion and involuntary sterilization practices and that UNFPA partners on family planning activities with the Chinese government agency responsible for these coer-

cive policies. The Secretary has determined that UNFPA therefore "supports or participates in the management of a program of coercive abortion or involuntary sterilization."

If confirmed, I will continue to examine closely the activities of UNFPA in the context of the funding decision, and will take every opportunity to remind other nations that the United States is and will be at the forefront of improving women's health across the lifespan, including continued access to family planning methods and preventing maternal and child deaths.

Question. The U.S. sits on UNFPA's Executive Board, which approves country programs. If the U.S. was really concerned about UNFPA's China country program, wouldn't it use its position to bring the program into compliance of U.S. statutory funding restrictions?

Answer. The United States remains engaged with UNFPA leadership to discuss its country-based programs, and as noted by Ambassador Kelly Craft in her June 19 confirmation hearing, the administration will continue to examine UNFPA's compliance with U.S. statutory requirements.

Question. During the hearing, you seemed to suggest that switching to a voluntary funding model towards the U.N. was in the U.S. interest. Separating out the violation of our treaty commitments, as you may know, assessed funding structures require other countries to share in the financial burden. All U.N. member states, no matter how big or small, rich or poor, are required to help shoulder the U.N.'s regular and peacekeeping budgets at specified levels. This, in turn, prevents U.S. taxpayers from being saddled with the majority of these expenses. Successive administrations and outside experts have recognized the limitations inherent in voluntary funding structures. In June 2005, the House passed The United Nations Reform Act of 2005 which would automatically withhold dues from the U.N. unless certain specific reforms are met, including switching to a voluntary system. The Bush administration issued a Statement of Administration Policy (SAP) which said that it has "serious concerns" about the legislation because it "could detract from and undermine our efforts," and "asks that Congress reconsider this legislation." In addition, the 2005 Congressionally-mandated Newt Gingrich-George Mitchell report on U.N. reform, for example, noted that such schemes are often slow and lead to U.S. priorities being underfunded: Are you aware that the U.S. often pays more under voluntary funding arrangements?

Answer. Yes.

Question. Are you aware that Congress and previous Republican and Democratic administrations have counselled against because it that would slow down funding and undermine our interests?

Answer. I certainly appreciate the importance of assessed funding as a means of ensuring that all member states are invested in U.N. organizations. However, I also believe that, where possible, the United States should look for ways to shift to a voluntary funding model. Such a model has numerous benefits, including targeting U.S. resources to specific priorities and objectives.

Question. During your confirmation hearing, you talked about the importance of meeting with dissidents and highlighting their work, and pledged to do so if confirmed. As you may know, U.N. treaty bodies-which monitor international implementation of a number of human rights treaties that the U.S. is party to, including conventions banning torture and extrajudicial killings, as well as requiring countries to protect fundamental civil and political rights-provide a critical forum for dissidents and victims of human rights abuses to register complaints against individual countries. In FY'18, the administration unilaterally withheld $18.9 million from its U.N. regular budget payments in order to target the Office of the U.N. High Commissioner of Human Rights (OHCHR). Partially as a result of these withholdings, OHCHR was almost forced to cancel the meetings of six of these human rights treaty bodies, which would have, in the words of the International Commission of Jurists (ICJ), "allowed violators of human rights to avoid scrutiny and accountability." In fact, the well-respected ICJ organized a letter that hundreds of organizations signed onto, which stated, "It is with a sense of urgency that we convey our deep concern regarding the critical funding situation affecting the U.N.'s human rights mechanisms and OHCHR. Against the worrying background of a global pushback against the promotion and protection of human rights, we urge all U.N. member states to pay their assessed contributions without further delay:"

Given your expressions of support for dissidents and human rights defenders, can you explain how it is in our interest to effectively silence U.N. bodies that provide a platform to challenge their governments?

Answer. The U.S. voluntary contribution to OHCHR activities remains one of, if not the, largest voluntary contribution to OHCHR activities. Our aim is to focus voluntary funding on OHCHR activities that advance U.S. policy objectives and priorities, such as work to address continuing egregious human rights violations in Burma, the DRC, and South Sudan, and to support fundamental freedoms such as the freedoms of expression, association, and religion and belief, among others. We are no longer funding work that is not in the interest of the United States or our allies. While the United States earmarked funds for many of the areas we support, we did not earmark voluntary funding for all activities we support in recognition that OHCHR receives funding from various sources. We look forward to continued engagement on critical human rights issues of importance to the United States and the entire international community.

Question. Why would you advocate for something that so many human rights organizations are vehemently opposed to and allow violators of human rights to avoid scrutiny and accountability?

Answer. There is no more active proponent of human rights accountability than the United States. We withdrew from the U.N. Human Rights Council to underscore that very truth—nations with clear records of human rights abuses should not allowed to become members of such a body. I would also question whether routine meetings of treaty bodies is the most effective means of promoting meaningful accountability.

Question. How exactly do you plan to promote the issue of human rights in Venezuela-and follow up on the September 2018 UNHRC resolution-from the outside looking in?

Answer. The United States has and will continue to strongly advocate for recognition for the legitimate interim government and for involvement of the United Nations in both documenting the crimes perpetrated against the Venezuelan people by the former Maduro regime, and in easing the effects of the humanitarian crisis caused by the regime's employment of violence, oppression, and malign neglect.

If confirmed, I will press this issue forcefully with Geneva-based organizations actively involved in work on the ground, both in Venezuela and neighboring countries, including the U.N. offices of the High Commissioners for Human Rights and Refugees, the World Health Organization, and the International Organization for Migration. U.S. efforts will continue in other pertinent bodies as well, including both in New York and in the Organization for American States.

Question. Yesterday, Agnes Callamard, the U.N. special rapporteur on extrajudicial, summary or arbitrary executions, released a much anticipated report on the murder of Jamal Khashoggi. In it, Ms. Callamard supports evidence suggesting premeditation for the killing at the highest levels of the Saudi government, noting that "[it is] inconceivable that an operation of this scale could be implemented without the Crown Prince being aware, at a minimum, that some sort of mission of a criminal nature, directed at Mr. Khashoggi, was being launched." In her confirmation hearing on June 19th, President Trump's nominee to be U.S. Ambassador to the U.N., Kelly Craft, stated that she had "full confidence in the special rapporteur:" Do you share her view?

Answer. I have not read the rapporteur's report, and cannot speak to its elements or conclusions. I can say that the United States remains committed to full accountability for the murder of Jamal Khashoggi, and the administration has indicated that it will continue to assess related evidence.

Question. Ms. Callamard's report also calls on the Human Rights Council to establish a "Standing Investigatory and Accountability Mechanism" to investigate violence or targeted killings against journalists and human rights defenders: Do you support such a proposal? If so, how will the U.S. Mission in Geneva go about pushing for its adoption, given our absence from the Council?

Answer. I support press freedom and the protection of journalists, and the United States is a longstanding leader in promoting both. While I have no immediate reaction to the idea of a standing mechanism, if confirmed I look forward to exploring all options to strengthen international accountability for violence against journalists and human rights defenders.

Question. Last June, the Trump administration withdrew the U.S. from the U.N. Human Rights Council (UNHRC), citing anti-Israel bias and concerns over the composition of the Council's membership. While the UNHRC is certainly not a perfect institution, U.S. engagement with and membership on the Council did deliver a number of positive results over the years. The Council voted to dispatch a team to

investigate atrocities committed by ISIS in Iraq; continues to scrutinize and bring attention to the dire human rights situation in Iran; authorized a groundbreaking investigation into human rights violations in North Korea; and has taken action on a variety of other human rights crises in Myanmar, Yemen, South Sudan, DR Congo, Burundi, and Eritrea, to name a few. At the same time, U.S. membership on the Council helped us more effectively push back against instances of anti-Israel bias. According to the American Jewish Committee's Jacob Blaustein Institute for the Advancement of Human Rights, there was a 30 percent decline in country-specific resolutions on Israel during U.S. membership versus the period when we were off the Council. The number of special sessions on Israel also dropped significantly-six during the three years before we joined the Council in 2009 versus one in the last four years. In March 2018, the State Department itself reported that the UNHRC saw "the largest shift in votes towards more abstentions and no votes on Israel related resolutions since the creation of the [Council]:" Do you agree that there is a positive correlation between U.S. engagement and policy outcomes that reflect our nation's interests and values?

Answer. The United States withdrew from the U.N. Human Rights Council (UNHRC) because of concerns related to its focus and composition, We noted then that "Countries that aggressively violate human rights at home should not be in a position to guard the human rights of others" and that the Council's persistent, unfair bias against Israel detracts attention and resources away from the HRC's mandate to promote universal respect for the protection of human rights and fundamental freedoms. If meaningful reforms are undertaken by member states that address our longstanding concerns with the Human Rights Council, we would consider the possibility of re-engaging at that time.

The United States has, for decades, led global efforts to promote human rights, including through multilateral institutions. We will continue to pursue a robust human rights agenda at the United Nations General Assembly's Third Committee as well as other U.N. bodies, as we did during other periods we were not a HRC member. We will also redouble our efforts to bring human rights issues to the attention of the Security Council, as we did during our 2018 presidency, when we held the first ever session on the linkage between human rights abuses and threats to international peace and security.

Question. The UNHRC was established in 2006 to replace a previous U.N. human rights body which had been criticized as ineffective, politicized, and biased against Israel. During its first several years, the U.S. refused to run for a seat on the Council, fearing it would be no better than its predecessor. This became a self-fulfilling prophecy: in 2007, the Council voted to place "the human rights situation in Palestine and other occupied Arab territories" on its permanent agenda, in effect making Israel the only country subject to scrutiny under a stand-alone agenda item (also known as "Item 7"). More than a decade later, the U.S. is once again side-lining itself in Geneva, with a familiar pattern of consequences: during the Council's most recent regular session, a representative of a pro-Israel NGO was prevented from completing a speech at the Item 7 debate after several member states, including Cuba, challenged his remarks on procedural grounds. Had the U.S. actually been in the room and able to intervene, it's unlikely this incident would have played out the way it did. Unfortunately, it seems as though history is repeating itself: just like in 2006, the U.S. is forfeiting its seat at the table, and as a result, Israel is left even more isolated and exposed to criticism than before. What makes this all the more frustrating is that, during the years when we engaged constructively with the Council (2009-2018), UNHRC actions targeting Israel actually declined. Clearly, the current policy of disengagement and isolation is less than helpful: The U.S. is the strongest country in the world-shouldn't we fight for our allies?

Answer. When the United States made the decision to withdraw from the U.N. Human Rights Council, the Israel government called it a "courageous decision against hypocrisy and lies."

Question. In response to the decision to withdraw from the UNHRC, 12 civil society organizations sent a letter to Secretary Pompeo urging the Department of State to review this decision, to seek reelection to the UNHRC in 2019, and to continue to advance reforms in the Human Rights Council. These groups noted that the "decision is counterproductive to American national security and foreign policy interests and will make it more difficult to advance human rights priorities around the world. In fact, a 2017 study by the Council on Foreign Relations found that two successive terms of U.S. membership on the U.N. Human Rights Council improved its performance in several ways. First, U.S. involvement strengthened the Council's commitment to action within specific countries like Burundi, Iran, Myanmar, North Korea,

and Syria fortifying norms like freedom of association, assembly and religion as well as the protecting the rights of at-risk populations. Second, the CFR Report noted a significant decline in anti-Israel resolutions during U.S. membership and concluded that U.S. participation in the UNHRC can advance U.S. interests and lessen anti-Israel bias while supporting measures to avert and de-escalate human rights crises, thus reducing the likelihood of costly military interventions:" Do you agree that being part of body that enhances our interests and reduces anti-Israel bias is a good outcome?

Answer. The administration made a concerted effort to encourage Human Rights Council members to undertake significant reforms to improve its membership guidelines and end its history of anti-Israel bias. When those reform recommendations fell on deaf ears, the United States decided the time had come to withdraw.

Question. Given the recent attack on human rights globally, shouldn't we pursue policies that human rights organizations deem in our interest?

Answer. The United States is the global leader in promoting and defending human rights and liberties. Membership in a defective international body would not complement that effort.

Question. Since the outbreak of the Syrian civil war in 2011, Russia has repeatedly used its Security Council veto to block efforts to refer war crimes and crimes against humanity committed by the Assad regime to the International Criminal Court. The UNHRC, by contrast, has been at the forefront of efforts in the U.N. system to hold parties accountable for international crimes in Syria. The U.N. Commission of Inquiry (COI) on Syria, first established by the UNHRC in 2011, has assiduously documented human rights violations carried out by all parties to the conflict-including the Syrian government and its Russian and Iranian allies-over the years. At the most recent regular session of the UNHRC earlier this year, the COI reported that it is actively assisting countries pursuing accountability for war crimes committed in Syria, including processing 15 requests for evidence it has gathered for prosecutorial and other investigations in five countries. The U.S. strongly supported the creation of the COI and the reauthorization of its mandate throughout its time as a member of the UNHRC:

Now that the administration has withdrawn from the Council, what is it doing to support the work of this vital body?

Answer. The United States is pleased that Council members overwhelmingly renewed the mandate of the COI in March 2018 for another year. The United States has and will continue a strong working relationship with another critical body: the U.N. International, Impartial and Independent Mechanism to Assist in the Investigation and Prosecution of Persons Responsible for the Most Serious Crimes under International Law Committed in the Syrian Arab Republic since March 2011 (Syria IIIM). U.S. support of the Syria IIIM is both practical and material; the most recent announcement of U.S. funding for the mechanism was made on March 14, 2019, in Brussels, Belgium. This support exemplifies the United States' commitment and ongoing support for justice and accountability in Syria.

Question. Do you think it is important to have an independent and impartial entity like the COI investigating and publicly reporting on serious violations of human rights in Syria?

Answer. The United States supports, on a case-by-case basis, U.N. investigatory mechanisms designed to enhance accountability for human rights violations and to end impunity. In particular, the United States believes that the Syria IIIM is a critical component of overall efforts to achieve justice for those murdered, missing, and abused by the criminal Assad regime.

Question. Over the last few years, the U.N. has played an important role in the fight against opioids and synthetics. For example, in 2017, the U.N. Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC) voted to put international controls on two primary ingredients that are used to produce fentanyl. As the State Department made clear at the time, "This action will make it harder for the criminals that are illicitly producing fentanyl to access the necessary resources," while simultaneously making it easier for countries to monitor suspicious orders and transactions:" The State Department and U.N. are working together on this issue—will you continue to support this work and ensure that funding levels are not cut which may make progress more difficult?

Answer. If confirmed, I will be actively engaged on this important matter, as I was during my tenure at the Domestic Policy Council.

Question. You praised the U.S. decision to pull out of the Universal Postal Union (UPU). Besides that it may lead to higher costs for U.S. consumers, pulling out of

this will set back our efforts to combat the opioid crisis. By pulling out of the UPU, the White House would negate U.S. Postal Service ability to access the (AED) shared by all those within the UPU. Such a move would harm individuals and businesses across the country: Given the severity of the opioid crisis, why pursue an approach that could make the situation worse?

Answer. The administration is hopeful that its efforts to reform international postal rates will result in our continuing membership in the Universal Postal Union. Should those efforts prove unsuccessful, any and all resulting postal agreements established on a bilateral basis would unquestionably include required access to advanced electronic data.

Question. How will you work toward Universal Health Coverage that ensures that no one, including women and girls, is left behind?

Answer. The United States believes that health care systems must be accessible by all in a country, including through access to primary healthcare for women, men, boys and girls, and strong health systems. We applaud efforts to accelerate progress toward universal health access, understanding efforts to expand access do not imply government-centric solutions or mandates, and countries will choose to pursue universal health coverage (UHC) in line with their national contexts and priorities. Pathways to achieving UHC can include strengthening the role of private markets and infusing competition and innovation; efficient financing; enhancing consumer choice; and promoting the appropriate role for regulations and governance. If confirmed, I will work with other members states, and the WHO to explore how partnerships with the private sector and civil society could help other countries achieve UHC.

Question. For some time, the United States has been the leading funder of global health and, specifically, of family planning and reproductive health. However, this administration has repeatedly proposed catastrophic reductions of funding to family planning/reproductive health programs (zeroing out the program in the first budget and this year requesting an over 55% reduction compared to enacted levels), while also pursuing policies, including the Mexico City Policy/Global Gag Rule, that numerous studies have shown make contraception and family planning harder and most costly for women to access: Do you believe that the United States can continue to be a leader on global health if we scale back financial commitments to programs that have proven critical to promoting the health of women and girls?

Answer. The United States is the most generous funder of maternal and child health, including family planning programs, in the world. I agree that this strong record of leadership should continue, and that it should continue to do so within the longstanding ethical parameters that govern our foreign assistance today. Those parameters include the decades-old protections against taxpayer support for abortion, and the preservation of parental rights when it comes to the information and care provided to children, including the provision of culturally sensitive, age-appropriate, optimal health-focused sex education.

Question. The Trump administration has actively sought to expand protections for healthcare providers who cite moral or religious objections to providing certain services or serving certain populations: Do you believe that the personal views of a medical provider should affect an individual's right to access quality and affordable healthcare?

Answer. As the Director of the DPC, I helped coordinate the development and drafting of several Executive Orders, including Executive Order 13798 "Promoting Free Speech and Religious Liberty". The order required certain cabinet officials to "consider issuing amended regulations, consistent with applicable law, to address conscience-based objections to the preventive-care mandate promulgated under section 300gg-13(a)(4) of title 42, United States Code." The order could not and did not contradict any statutes or controlling case law with respect to employee access to birth control provided or covered by employers. Congress has passed numerous federal laws prohibiting discrimination by recipients of federal funds on the basis of race, color, national origin, disability, age, sex, religion, the exercise of conscience, and other protected classes. I intend to continue the administration's policy on this question and abide by all applicable laws if confirmed.

Question. Should providers who refuse to provide critical services to women, or to LGBTQ persons, or any other population be allowed to continue to receive U.S. funding?

Answer. This administration has and will continue to support policies furthering the health and wellbeing of all people, including women, and LGBTI individuals. Congress has passed numerous federal laws prohibiting discrimination by recipients

of federal funds on the basis of race, color, national origin, disability, age, sex, religion, the exercise of conscience, and other protected classes. I intend to continue the administration's policy on this question and abide by all applicable laws if confirmed.

Question. Does that include a full range of contraceptive methods?

Answer. The United States is the most generous supporter of global health assistance, including family planning programs that provide a broad range of family planning methods and services. Congress has passed numerous federal laws prohibiting discrimination by recipients of federal funds on the basis of race, color, national origin, disability, age, sex, religion, the exercise of conscience, and other protected classes. I intend to continue the administration's policy on this question and abide by all applicable laws if confirmed.

Question. The Trump administration continues to request that Congress completely cut funding to International Organizations and Programs Account and severe cuts to the Contributions to International Organizations Account. While even allies of the administration continue to call these budget cuts dead on arrival, they do represent this administration's priorities. As you said in earlier conversations, the U.S. is the most generous country in the world but how will you be able to confidently work with our allies in multilateral forums when the administration continues to threaten the stability of these bodies with these massive funding cuts?

Answer. The President's budget requests underscore his determination to reduce the financial burden on the American taxpayer by encouraging other member states to do more. For far too long, the United States has shouldered an outsized burden on behalf of the international community, and the President simply feels that it is time that this burden be more equitably shared.

Question. In addition to threatening funding cuts, the United States has taken a hard-line against long-standing agreements on sexual and reproductive health at the United Nations. Specifically, U.S. negotiators at the U.N. have repeatedly sought the removal of agreed language on sexual and reproductive access for communities worldwide. If confirmed, how will you work to ensure that the U.S. upholds and advances international commitments on sexual and reproductive health and rights globally, rather than seeking to roll them back?

Answer. The administration has concerns about the terms "sexual and reproductive health services" and "sexual and reproductive rights". Over the years, these references have become associated with support for abortion as an alleged right. The administration will do all it can do to protect and respect the sanctity of life around the globe.

In its advocacy for women, the administration continues to hold to the commitments laid out in the 1995 Fourth World Conference on Women's Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action as well as in the 1994 International Conference on Population and Development's Programme of Action. The United States moreover remains the largest bilateral donor of women's reproductive health and family planning assistance worldwide.

Moving forward at the U.N., the administration seeks to find consensus with a wide group of Member States on clear terminology that would better promote women's health without promoting abortion. We are committed to meeting the health care needs of women, men, girls, and boys, as well as the health-education needs of children and adolescents around the globe, and avoid issues that offend human dignity.

Question. The U.S. recently made an egregious and extraordinary threat to veto a U.N. Security Council Resolution on gender-based violence in conflict over a reference to survivors' access to sexual and reproductive health care. Media reports also suggest that during negotiations, the U.S. sought to remove a mechanism that would have provided funding for survivors of sexual violence in conflict with services over fears it could be used by survivors for abortions, where legal. These negotiations at the U.N. have real world impact on women and girls around the world:

Do you believe victims of sexual violence should be able to terminate the pregnancy, where legal?

Answer. I have tremendous sympathy for any woman victimized by sexual violence and support the U.S. efforts to help victims of sexual violence become thriving survivors. The United States will not support abortion services, but that does not equate to denying women who have been raped access to legal medical care. The U.S. opposition to the resolution in question was intended to ensure that U.N. organizations did not interpret that language to begin assuming a right to abortion as a method of family planning.

Question. The global gag rule allows international organizations who receive U.S. global health funding to provide abortions in the case of rape, incest, and life endangerment of the woman with non-U.S. funding: Do you support these exceptions or would you recommend and seek to close them?

Answer. Yes, I support the existing Mexico City policy, which includes these exceptions.

Question. In countries around the world, LGBTQ people are criminalized for who they love. There are also women who are in jail in places like El Salvador and Senegal for having miscarriages or abortions. These are gross human rights violations:

If you are confirmed, will you speak out against laws that criminalize same-sex relationships and women's personal health decisions in public and private settings as part of the United States human rights and diplomacy agenda?

Answer. The United States has made clear its commitment to protecting and defending the human rights of all, including LGBTI persons, and has condemned the fact that in many parts of the world, LGBTI individuals and their supporters continue to face violence, arrest, harassment and intimidation for standing up for their human rights, participating in peaceful marches and rallies, and expressing their views. As Secretary Pompeo has stated, LGBTI persons—like all persons—must be free to enjoy their human rights and fundamental freedoms, including freedom of expression, peaceful assembly, and association, without fear of reprisal.

Question. For the past two years the State Department's annual human rights report failed to highlight the full range of abuses and human rights violations experienced most especially by women, girls, LGBTQI people, and other marginalized peoples around the world. Human rights are indivisible and universal. Threats to the human rights of women and LGBTQI people cannot be stricken from the report without sending a broader message to abusive governments that the United States will not hold them to account for such violations. Scaling back discussion of discrimination and women's health issues, such as access to contraception and abortion and rates of preventable maternal deaths, undermines the credibility of the Human Rights Reports as a whole and signals to the rest of the world that the United States does not value the human rights of all people. It also undermines the integrity of the State Department as a whole and further emphasizes statements that have been made by yourself and others in this administration that human rights are "obstacles" to development and prosperity as opposed to their bedrocks:

Do you recognize reproductive rights and the rights of LGBTQ people as human rights? Do you believe that States have human rights obligations to eliminate gender-based violence, including domestic violence, sexual violence and harassment, in public and private life?

Answer. The Department has been clear and consistent in affirming that human rights are universal, and that no one should face violence, criminalization, or severe official discrimination because of who they are. We will continue to stand up and speak out in support of the human rights and fundamental freedoms of all people, including LGBTI persons in all corners of the globe, and to press for perpetrators of human rights violations and abuses to be held accountable.

Question. The Trump administration has twice expanded the global gag rule—implementing a version of the policy that is unprecedented in scope. Recent research indicates the global gag rule is disrupting health care services, weakening civil society, and halting national policy progress on health and human rights:

Were you involved in decisions to expand the global gag rule?

Answer. I was involved in President Trump's decision to reinstate the Mexico City policy through his Protecting Life in Global Health Assistance policy.

Question. Have you made any efforts to understand the impact of these decisions in terms of access to a range of health services, effective partnership in the field, and the silencing of medical professionals and advocates?

Answer. After implementation of the Protecting Life in Global Health Assistance policy, the administration conducted a review at all affected departments and agencies. This review found that only four prime partners declined to agree to the conditions of the policy out of 733 awards.

Question. Do you believe the policy should be expanded even further?

Answer. I support the existing policy.

Question. In your written answers for the Committee, you stated that, "The administration made a determination that UNFPA's work with Chinese population authorities violated statutory funding restrictions:"

Can you explain the how UNFPA has violated Kemp-Kasten because I have not been able to get a clear answer how the administration went about making the determination against UNFPA?

Answer. The determination to withhold funding from UNFPA was made based on the fact that China's family planning policies still involve the use of coercive abortion and involuntary sterilization practices and that UNFPA partners on family planning activities with the Chinese government agency responsible for these coercive policies. The Secretary has determined that UNFPA therefore "supports or participates in the management of a program of coercive abortion or involuntary sterilization."

If confirmed, I will continue to examine closely the activities of UNFPA in the context of the funding decision, and will take every opportunity to remind other nations that the United States is and will be at the forefront of improving women's health across the lifespan, including continued access to family planning methods and preventing maternal and child deaths.

Question. The U.S. sits on UNFPA's Executive Board, which approves country programs. If the U.S. was really concerned about UNFPA's China country program, wouldn't it use its position to bring the program into compliance of U.S. statutory funding restrictions?

Answer. The United States remains engaged with UNFPA leadership to discuss its country-based programs, and as noted by Ambassador Kelly Craft in her June 19 confirmation hearing, the administration will continue to examine UNFPA's compliance with U.S. statutory requirements.

Question. Emergency contraception can prevent pregnancy up to five days after a rape has occurred, yet is it illegal in some countries, such as Honduras. A United Nations treaty body has recommended, such as in the case of Honduras, that such bans on emergency contraception be lifted. Human Rights Watch recently issues a report on the impact of this ban, and the ban on abortion. It cited government data that in 2017, 820 girls ages 10 to 14 gave birth in Honduras. Many of these girls became pregnant from rape. Do you believe victims of rape have a right to access emergency contraception?

Answer. The United States is the most generous supporter of global health assistance, including family planning programs. All people have a right to compassionate and appropriate medical care. The United States has led the world in showing that partnerships with faith-motivated organizations can simultaneously deliver world-class compassionate care, while also honoring their faith traditions and protected conscience rights.

Question. According to the World Health Organization, approximately 16 million girls aged 15 to 19 years and 2.5 million girls under age 16 years give birth in developing regions. A United Nations agency released technical guidance on comprehensive sexuality education last year, focused on ensuring adolescents have access to evidence-based information: Do you believe that youth have a right to access to evidence-based information about sexual and reproductive health and rights?

Answer. The United States is the most generous funder of maternal and child health, including family planning programs, in the world. I agree that this strong record of leadership should continue, and that it should continue to do so within the longstanding ethical parameters that govern our foreign assistance today. Those parameters include the decades-old protections against taxpayer support for abortion, and the preservation of parental rights when it comes to the information and care provided to children, including the provision of culturally sensitive, age-appropriate, optimal health-focused sex education.

Question. In your testimony Thursday, you stated clearly that you do not believe victims of rape have a right to access abortion: Do you believe women and girls forced to continue pregnancies should receive compensation from the state to raise children born from that pregnancy?

Answer. Yes.

Question. Do you believe that governments should provide financial and legal assistance to women and girls who deliver children born of rape to seek payment from the men responsible for the rape?

Answer. Yes.

Question. In the context of conflict, how do you believe this would work in practice?

Answer. The U.S. is the most generous funder of services for women and girls who have been victimized by conflict, and I strongly support continuation of that funding. At the same time, we must continue to work to prevent such conflicts from occurring.

Question. Returning to the U.S.'s threat to veto a U.N. Security Council Resolution on gender-based violence in conflict over a reference to survivors' access to sexual and reproductive health care: What exact services do you believe survivors of sexual violence in conflict should have a right to access?

Answer. The United States is the most generous funder of maternal and child health, including family planning programs, in the world. I agree that this strong record of leadership should continue, and that it should continue to do so within the longstanding ethical parameters that govern our foreign assistance today. Those parameters include the decades-old protections against taxpayer support for abortion, and the preservation of parental rights when it comes to the information and care provided to children, including the provision of culturally sensitive, age-appropriate, optimal health-focused sex education.

Question. In your pre-hearing QFRs, you wrote about "collusion with the global abortion industry in the guise of foreign assistance:" Please describe how you believe such "collusion" has taken place in the past and define what you mean by the "global abortion industry."

Answer. The Mexico City Policy is a critical protection for taxpayers and for the women and girls that we support around the world. Foreign assistance overseas raises concerns about the fungibility of resources that could be used to indirectly support abortion services, particularly when given to foreign NGOs that perform and promote abortion as a core part of their work. Taxpayers expect us to use the billions of dollars managed by our maternal and child health, family planning, HIV/AIDS, malaria, child nutrition and many other programs to save lives, not take them.

Question. In your hearing, I asked you repeatedly what your opinion is on including a citizenship question to the census. You initially stated that "I don't think it would be appropriate for me to discuss the confidential interactions," yet you admitted that you were "not asserting any privilege." Please provide your opinion on including a citizenship question to the census, and please answer the question fully. I am not asking about your conversations with the president, or for any deliberative discussions in the White House.

Answer. My current, personal opinion is that the inclusion of the citizenship question will provide a more accurate and detailed accounting of where U.S. citizens live within the United States.

Question. In your opinion, is there any added value? Are there any risks?

Answer. Yes, there is added value. Inclusion of the question will provide a more accurate and detailed accounting of where U.S. citizens live within the United States. Yes, there is some risk the inclusion of an additional question makes the survey longer and could potentially reduce the initial response rate, which would require additional outreach and follow up by the Census.

Question. As I stated in your nomination hearing, I would like more information about your response to questions I submitted to you in advance of your nomination hearing.

Specifically, I asked, "Did you have any contacts or communications with officials from the Department of Commerce, the Department of Justice, Steve Bannon, Kris Kobach, or Stephen Miller in 2017 about adding questions about immigration and citizenship status to the census? If so, please describe."

You answered: "Yes, I discussed my opinion on including the census question with other White House staff. In light of the confidentiality interests that attach to executive branch decision making, I am unable to answer this question." On what basis are you claiming such communications would be confidential? Please be specific.

Answer. As I stated during my hearing, I discussed my opinion on including the census question with other White House staff at the time. I did not have any communications with Mr. Kobach about adding questions about immigration and citizenship status to the census. I also did not participate in any meeting with the Department of Commerce, the Department of Justice, Steven Bannon, or Stephen Miller about the census question. I did discuss my personal opinion on including the census question with Mr. Miller.

Question. Did you ask the President or White House Counsel whether the President was seeking to exert any privilege over any such communications?

Answer. No.

Question. On what basis are you claiming that any communications with Kris Kobach, who is neither a White House nor a government official, would be subject to any executive branch protections? I note that an OLC opinion the White House has cited for such broad privilege claims involved communications regarding a 'quintessential and nondelegable Presidential power,' such as the authority to nominate or to remove U.S. Attorneys"—here, the subject in question is a statutorily-designated function delegated to a federal agency, not a core Presidential power. Please be specific.

Answer. I did not have any communications with Mr. Kobach about adding questions about immigration and citizenship status to the census.

Question. Your answer indicates that the White House was engaged in decision-making on adding a citizenship question to the census. Is that the case? Please note that the fact of any decision-making is not subject to any claim of privilege.

Answer. Not that I am aware of.

Question. Did you participate in any meetings with the Department of Commerce regarding adding a citizenship question to the census?

Answer. No.

Question. Did you participate in any meetings with the Department of Justice regarding adding a citizenship question to the census?

Answer. No.

Question. Did you participate in any meetings with Steve Bannon regarding adding a citizenship question to the census?

Answer. No.

Question. Did you participate in any meetings with Kris Kobach regarding adding a citizenship question to the census?

Answer. No.

Question. Did you participate in any meetings with Stephen Miller regarding adding a citizenship question to the census?

Answer. No, however, I did discuss my opinion on including the census question with Mr. Miller.

Question. In response to my question regarding a draft memo purportedly authored by you, you stated that "you had never written" the sentence, "households headed by aliens are much more likely than households headed by native-born citizens to use federal means-tested benefits."You also stated that, "when I came into the White House there were many, many memos and draft executive orders that had been prepared for consideration for President Trump during the presidential transition. Many memos and executive orders." Was the sentence cited above drafted before the President took office?

Answer. In light of the confidentiality interests that attach to executive branch decision-making, I am unable to answer this question. Moreover, it would be inappropriate for me to comment on an alleged draft internal White House document.

Question. Who wrote it?

Answer. In light of the confidentiality interests that attach to executive branch decision-making, I am unable to answer this question. Moreover, it would be inappropriate for me to comment on an alleged draft internal White House document.

Question. Did you work, draft, consult, or advise on any draft memos or executive orders during the transition? If so, which ones?

Answer. Yes, I worked on several draft memos and executive orders during the transition that dealt with domestic policy issues, but did not include immigration.

Question. Did you ultimate finalize or submit a memo on means-tested benefits?

Answer. It would be inappropriate for me to comment on alleged draft internal White House documents.

Question. Did memos go out with your name on it that you did not review?

Answer. No.

Question. At your hearing, you stated that you would check your calendars to confirm whether you ever participated in any meetings regarding TPS (Temporary Protected Status). Have you consulted your calendars?

Answer. Yes.

Question. Did you have any record of participating in any meetings regarding TPS?

Answer. Yes, I participated in one meeting regarding TPS.

Question. Did you review your notes and files to see if you had any documents related to TPS? Did you?

Answer. Yes. I do not have any documents related to TPS.Question 72:Do you commit to respond promptly to all requests for information by Members of this committee?

Answer. Yes.

Question. Do you commit to appear before this committee upon request?

Answer. Yes.

Question. If you become aware of any suspected waste, fraud, or abuse in the Department, do you commit to report it to the Inspector General?

Answer. Yes.

Question. Please list any outside positions and affiliations you plan to continue to hold during your term of appointment.

Answer. If confirmed, I do not intend to hold any positions or affiliations that would constitute a breach of my ethics agreement.

Question. Have you ever been an officer or director of a company that has filed for bankruptcy? If so, describe the circumstances and disposition.

Answer. No.

Question. If you leave this position before the completion of your full term of the next presidential election, do you commit to meeting with the Committee to discuss the reasons for your departure?

Answer. Yes.

Question. Has anyone ever made a formal or informal complaint or allegation of sexual harassment, discrimination (e.g., racial, ethnic, religious, etc.), or inappropriate conduct against you, in a workplace or any other setting? If so, please describe the nature of the complaint or allegation, your response, and any resolution, including any settlements.

Answer. No.

Question. Have you ever addressed concerns or allegations of sexual harassment, discrimination (e.g., racial, ethnic, religious, etc.), or inappropriate conduct made against any employee over whom you had supervisory authority? If so, please describe the outcome and actions taken.

Answer. No.

Question. Do you agree that any targeting of or retaliation against career employees based on their perceived political beliefs, prior work on policy, or affiliation with a previous administration, is wholly inappropriate and has no place in the federal government? If confirmed, what will you do to ensure that all employees under your leadership understand that any retaliation, blacklisting, or other prohibited personnel practices will not be tolerated?

Answer. Yes. If confirmed, I will make it clear to all employees of Mission Geneva that they are valued members of the team, and that retaliation, blacklisting, or other prohibited personnel practices are unacceptable.

Question. What is your assessment of the impact of the administration's zero-tolerance family separation policy on the children that were separated from their families and do you believe that separation caused these children any type of emotional or mental distress?

Answer. The migration of whole communities and vast numbers of families throughout the Northern Triangle has had a profound impact on children. The journey north has been widely documented as one that is both physically perilous and emotionally taxing. Trauma—including emotional and mental distress—is seen among both adults and children who make the dangerous journey to the U.S.

Question. Are you aware that the administration's zero-tolerance family separation policy separated children under the age of one year from their parents?

Answer. Yes.

Question. Did you participate in any conversations related to U.S. policy regarding the care of migrant children that were separated from their families and what is your assessment about whether these children received sufficient care while in custody of the U.S. government?

Answer. Yes, I participated in discussions and meetings regarding the reunification of children and their parents, and in the implementation of Executive Order 13841.

Question. Did you participate in any conversations related to the reunification of migrant children and their families that were separated under the administration's zero-tolerance family separation policy?

Answer. Yes, I participated in discussions and meetings regarding the reunification of children and their parents, and in the implementation of Executive Order 13841.

Question. Is it your assessment that all migrant children that were separated from their families as a result of the administration's zero-tolerance family separation policy have been re-united with their families?

Question. No. I believe the Department of Health and Human Services is still caring for one child, and is currently working with the ACLU to help facilitate that reunification.

Question. Did you participate in any conversations related to the administration's Migrant Protection Protocols and the policy of forcing asylum seekers to Remain in Mexico while their asylum claims are adjudicated in the United States?

Answer. No.

Question. Do you assess that individuals requesting asylum in the U.S. that are forced to remain in Mexico during their adjudication process are safe in Mexico or whether they face risks to their personal safety?

Answer. Because I did not participate in conversations related to the administration's Migrant Protection Protocols I have not made any assessment.

Question. Did the Domestic Policy Council (DPC) include assessments about the risks to the personal safety of asylum seekers forced to Remain in Mexico during their adjudication process in its decision making process when it formulated the administration's Migrant Protection Protocols?

Answer. Because I did not participate in conversations related to the administration's Migrant Protection Protocols I did not make any assessment.

Question. Did you or anyone on the Domestic Policy Council (DPC) engage with the Department of State or Department of Homeland Security regarding the TPS designations for El Salvador, Honduras, or Haiti, or any other countries? If yes, please describe any such engagement.

Answer. Yes, I participated in one interagency meeting regarding TPS where the Department of State and Department of Homeland Security participated.

Question. Did the DPC have a position regarding the termination, extension or redesignation of the TPS designations for El Salvador, Honduras, or Haiti? If yes, please describe any such position.

Answer. Yes. In light of the confidentiality interests that attach to executive branch decision-making, I am unable to further answer this question.

Question. Did the DPC provide the Department of State or Department of Homeland Security with any assessment about whether the ongoing presence in the U.S. of TPS beneficiaries from El Salvador, Honduras and Haiti posed any challenges to U.S. national interests? If so, please describe any such assessment.

Answer. I did not.

Question. When providing any input on the TPS designations for El Salvador and Honduras, did the DPC consider the risks to the personal safety and well-being of TPS beneficiaries from El Salvador and Honduras if they were deported to their countries of origin, given the elevated levels of crime and violence present in both countries?

Answer. Yes.

Question. When providing any input on the TPS designations for El Salvador and Honduras, did the DPC consider the risks to the personal safety and well-being of the U.S. citizen children of TPS beneficiaries from El Salvador and Honduras if they

accompanied their parents to their countries of origin, given the elevated levels of crime and violence present in both countries?

Answer. Yes.

Question. Did the DPC conduct any assessment of what the impact of terminating TPS designations for El Salvador and Honduras would be on the personal safety and well-being of the U.S. citizen children of TPS beneficiaries? If so, what were those findings, and to whom did DPC provide them?

Answer. I did not.

RESPONSES TO ADDITIONAL QUESTIONS FOR THE RECORD
SUBMITTED TO ANDREW P. BREMBERG BY SENATOR BENJAMIN L. CARDIN

Question. What are your most meaningful achievements to date in your career to promote human rights and democracy? What has been the impact of your actions?

Answer. During my time as the Director of the Domestic Policy Council, I worked on several issues that speak to human rights: advocating for the right to life of every human being, protecting religious liberty, reforming our Federal criminal justice system, the successful removal from the U.S. of former Nazi labor camp guard Jakiw Palij to Germany, expanding treatment for mental health, and calling for the eradication of new HIV infections in the U.S. I am proud to have helped President Trump advance the cause of unalienable human rights, particularly in his commitment to protecting the sanctity of life and human dignity around the world, including his impressive record on religious liberty and support for persecuted religious minorities.

Question. What are the most pressing human rights issues at the Office of the United Nations? What are the most important steps you expect to take—if confirmed—to promote human rights and democracy at the Office of the U.N.? What do you hope to accomplish through these actions?

Answer. Violations and abuses of human rights and fundamental freedoms are serious and require attention. At present, the most pressing of these include the massive and systematic violations and abuses occurring in China, where over one million Uighurs, ethnic Kazaks, Kyrgyz, and other Muslins in Xinjiang have been detained in camps since April 2017. We remain gravely concerned by the horrors perpetrated by the Assad regime in Syria, where hundreds of thousands of Syrian civilians have been detained, and over 120,000 reportedly remain missing as a result of an ongoing effort to silence calls for reform and change. In Venezuela, the illegitimate Maduro regime thwarts the democratic aspirations of millions through violence and repression, all the while starving its own people. In Burma, atrocities committed against Rohingya Muslims have recently displaced more than 730,000 Rohingya refugees to Bangladesh alone.

If confirmed, I will rally fellow U.N. member states to press jointly for changes in state practice and, as we have recently done with the case of Burma, to support, on a case-by-case basis, independent U.N. monitoring and investigation mechanisms to establish accountability and end impunity.

I would also continue to press U.S. concerns regarding the violations of human rights and fundamental freedoms, including the right to freedom of religious belief, peaceful assembly and association, and freedom of expression. Upholding these fundamental freedoms is a prerequisite for global development and stability, which, in turn, helps guarantee U.S. national security.

Question. If confirmed, what are the potential obstacles to addressing the specific human rights issues you have identified in your previous response? What challenges will you face at the Office of the United Nations in advancing human rights, civil society and democracy in general?

Answer. As we have seen in the unfortunate case of the U.N. Human Rights Council, it is often too easy for malign actors to become part of U.N. mechanisms, only to block criticism and thwart consensus on the need for meaningful engagement and reform.

It will be critical, moving forward, to take a serious look at reforming the functioning of U.N. mechanisms and, if confirmed, I would be honored to lead these efforts on behalf of the United States.

Question. Are you committed to meeting with human rights, civil society and other non-governmental organizations in the U.S.? If confirmed, what steps will you

take to pro-actively support the Leahy Law and similar efforts, and ensure that provisions of U.S. security assistance and security cooperation activities reinforce human rights?

Answer. The United States has made clear its commitment to protecting and defending the human rights of all. We work closely with U.S. NGOs in this effort, as demonstrated by our advocacy at the biannual NGO Committee meetings at the United Nations. The U.S. is also a strong backer of efforts to deepen human rights in the security sphere, as evidenced by our support for human rights in U.N. peacekeeping missions.

Question. Will you and your team actively engage with other nations to address cases of key political prisoners or persons otherwise unjustly targeted?

Answer. The United States will remain a leader in human rights advocacy, including in the multilateral system through our engagement in the Security Council, General Assembly, and other U.N. and regional fora. We are a strong advocate for human rights, including support for political prisoners and human rights defenders, in countries such as Iran and China.

Question. You have stated your first priority in Geneva will be advancing human rights. What does term "human rights" mean to you?

Answer. Human rights are those rights which are endowed by our Creator—usually expressed as freedoms that no government anywhere may abridge, which the U.S. Declaration of Independence speaks of as "unalienable" and can also be found in our Bill of Rights. One definitional source that many look to is the 1948 Universal Declaration of Human Rights, which includes rights of conscience, expression, religious exercise, freedom of movement, to marry, to form families free from government coercion, to be free from slavery and torture, to own property, and to due process applied equally to all. government respect for the universal human rights of all citizens fosters free and open societies in which all people can flourish. Advancing human rights means committing to defend the human rights and dignity of all people, no matter who they are. For example, as Secretary Pompeo has said: "standing up for human rights is hardwired into who we are as Americans. Promoting human rights is in the best interests of the United States. Societies that respect human rights and the rule of law are more stable, and make better allies." In accordance with international human rights treaties, if confirmed, I will vigorously advocate to protect the inalienable rights that all people share because of our shared human dignity.

Question. How did you use your role as Director of Domestic Policy at the White House to advanced human rights in the United States?

Answer. During my time as the Director of the Domestic Policy Council, I worked on several issues that speak to human rights: advocating for the right to life of every human being, protecting religious liberty, reforming our Federal criminal justice system, the successful removal from the U.S. of former Nazi labor camp guard Jakiw Palij to Germany, expanding treatment for mental health, and calling for the eradication of new HIV infections in the U.S. I am proud to have helped President Trump advance the cause of unalienable human rights, particularly in his commitment to protecting the sanctity of life and human dignity around the world, including his impressive record on religious liberty and support for persecuted religious minorities.

Question. Would you characterize access to housing as a human right? Why or why not?

Answer. As set forth in Article 25 of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights (UDHR), "everyone has the right to a standard of living adequate for the health and well-being of himself and of his family, including . . . housing." Access to housing is therefore facilitated by realization of the right to an adequate standard of living, as well as by equality before the law.

Question. Would you characterize access to health services, including reproductive health services, as a human right? Why or why not?

Answer. The United States supports the right to the enjoyment of the highest attainable standard of health. Likewise, the United States recognizes the importance and challenges of meeting basic needs for water and sanitation to support human health, economic development, and peace and security.

Question. International Human Rights NGOs play a critical role in highlighting abuses and pressing for accountability in many forums including the United Nations: Will you commit to working closely with human rights and humanitarian civil

society organizations and to briefing the NGO Working Group on the Security Council?

Answer. The United States will remain a leader in human rights advocacy, including in the multilateral system through our engagement in the Security Council, General Assembly, and other U.N. and regional fora. We are actively involved in the work of the Third Committee of the U.N. General Assembly, which covers social, humanitarian, and human rights issues. In that context we are advocating strongly in support of human rights in Iran, Crimea, Syria, the DPRK, and Burma among others. We will also continue our efforts to bring human rights issues to the attention of the Security Council, as we did during our recent presidency when we held the first ever session on the linkage between human rights abuses and threats to international peace and security.

Question. Some Human Rights Council critics have argued that the United States should pursue its human rights priorities in other U.N. fora. For example, U.S. Permanent Representative to the United Nations Nikki Haley has stated that the Security Council should play a greater role in addressing human rights issues; however, others maintain that the Council should focus on its mandate of maintaining international peace and security. Some Administration officials have also raised the possibility of discussing human rights in the General Assembly's Third Committee which addresses human rights as part of the Assembly's broader mandate: What is your view on this issue? What are the advantages and disadvantages of using these alternate mechanisms?

Answer. The United States will remain a leader in human rights advocacy, including in the multilateral system through our engagement in the Security Council, General Assembly, and other U.N. and regional fora. We are actively involved in the work of the Third Committee of the U.N. General Assembly, which covers social, humanitarian, and human rights issues. In that context we are advocating strongly in support of human rights in Iran, Crimea, Syria, the DPRK, and Burma among others. We will also continue our efforts to bring human rights issues to the attention of the Security Council, as we did during our recent presidency when we held the first ever session on the linkage between human rights abuses and threats to international peace and security. If confirmed, I will continue U.S. advocacy for human rights at every appropriate opportunity.

Question. Please provide your assessment of Human Rights Council reforms completed so far and what additional reforms the U.S. deems necessary for its future participation. Have additional reform benchmarks been laid out? Has a timetable been specified?

Answer. Ongoing reform efforts at the Human Rights Council have centered on working practices and have refrained from tackling the hard issues, namely the Council's pervasive anti-Semitic bias and the structural deficiencies that allow the worst human rights offenders to simultaneous use the Council as a shield from criticism and a sword for unjust criticism of U.S. allies. There is no path for U.S. reconsideration of its withdrawal without significant progress on both of these fronts. This must include the elimination of the Council's Agenda Item 7, an agenda item that uniquely and persistently targets Israel for criticism above all other U.N. member states.

Question. What challenges does the Human Rights Council face in achieving its reforms and why?

Answer. The chief obstacle to meaningful Council reform is the self-interest of malign actors, who seek to perpetuate their protected status on the Council while, simultaneously, using the body as a weapon with which to attack Israel. Reform is further complicated by those countries who believe, mistakenly, that even a misguided and fully inadequate Council is better than none.

Question. Is there a process outlined by which the United States would return to the Human Rights Council?

Answer. The United States will only consider the possibility of returning to the Human Rights Council if member states deal successfully with the bias and structural issues that grossly undermine the Council's legitimacy. This must include, not only the elimination of the anti-Semitic Agenda Item 7, but also fundamental changes to the rules governing election to the Council.

Question. Do you agree with the administration's decision to withhold assessed funding to the Human Rights Council and OHCHR? Why or why not?

Answer. The Department withheld from the U.N. regular budget an amount equivalent to the U.S. proportional share of the funding that the Office of the High

Commissioner for Human Rights receives from the U.N. regular budget. This withholding was based on policy considerations. There should be minimal impact on OHCHR, because the withholding was from the U.N. regular budget, not from the OHCHR budget. The Department is continuing to make voluntary contributions to the OHCHR budget.

Following our withdrawal from the Human Rights Council, we have also reduced our funding to the U.N. to account for the share of the U.S. contribution that would have gone to the HRC. We do, however, remain supportive of specific mandates created by the Council that support U.S. human rights objectives.

Our approach is to provide targeted voluntary funding towards OHCHR activities that advance U.S. policy objectives and priorities, such as focusing on work to address continuing egregious human rights violations and abuses around the world and to support fundamental freedoms such as the freedoms of expression, association, and religion or belief, among others.

Question. To your knowledge, under what authority did the administration withhold FY2018 funding? What is the impact of the withholdings on the operations of these bodies?

Answer. The Department withheld from the U.S. assessed contribution to the U.N. regular budget an amount equivalent to the U.S. proportional share of the U.N. regular budget funding that the Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights receives. This withholding was based on policy considerations. There should be minimal impact on OHCHR, because the withholding was from the U.N. regular budget, not from the OHCHR budget. The Department is continuing to make voluntary contributions to the OHCHR budget.

Question. To your knowledge, why did the United States withhold funding from the OHCHR? Do you agree with the decision? If so, what OHCHR actions do you find most concerning and why? What OHCHR actions, if any, do you support?

Answer. The Department withheld from the U.N. regular budget an amount equivalent to the U.S. proportional share of the funding that the Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rightsreceives from the U.N. regular budget. This withholding was based on policy considerations. There should be minimal impact on OHCHR, because the withholding was from the U.N. regular budget, not from the OHCHR budget. The Department is continuing to make voluntary contributions to the OHCHR budget.

Our approach is to provide targeted voluntary funding towards OHCHR activities that advance U.S. policy objectives and priorities, such as focusing on work to address continuing egregious human rights violations and abuses around the world and to support fundamental freedoms such as the freedoms of expression, association, and religion or belief, among others.

Question. Do you commit to bring to the committee's attention (and the State Department Inspector General) any change in policy or U.S. actions that you suspect may be influenced by any of the President's business or financial interests, or the business or financial interests of any senior White House staff?

Answer. I commit to comply with all relevant federal ethics laws, regulations, and rules, and to raise concerns that I may have through appropriate channels.

Question. Do you commit to inform the committee if you have any reason to suspect that a foreign government, head of state, or foreign-controlled entity is taking any action in order to benefit any of the President's business or financial interests, or the interests of senior White House staff?

Answer. I commit to comply with all relevant federal ethics laws, regulations, and rules, and to raise concerns that I may have through appropriate channels.

Question. Do you or do any members of your immediate family have any financial interests in industries that could compromise your work at the United Nations?

Answer. No.

Question. In 2017, you authored a memorandum for the President regarding immigration policy. In the memo, your reasoning for implementing certain policy was to, "fulfill several key campaign promises:" If confirmed, will your mission be to represent the American people, or fulfill the agenda and campaign promises of President Trump?

Answer. If confirmed, I will represent the interests of the American people by fulfilling the policies of the Trump administration.

Question. As Representative to the U.S. Mission in Geneva, what will be your commitment to consulting with and engaging in dialogue with Congress and civil society on critical international issues?

Answer. If confirmed, I look forward to frequent occasions to engage with Members of Congress and civil society on important matters addressed at U.N. venues in Geneva.

Question. How will you avoid alienating other member states that have traditionally been U.S. allies in the promotion of human rights, democracy and peace and security?

Answer. If confirmed, I will develop strong working relationships across the international community in Geneva, including with close allies and strategic competitors. I believe that among my key roles as U.S. Permanent Representative to the U.N. is communicating clearly U.S. values and objectives. Those values formed the foundation of the U.N. system, and remain a clarion call to the world.

Question. U.S. foreign assistance is vital in helping to reach the world's most marginalized people living in some of the most challenging contexts with life-saving health interventions, food assistance, access to education, and the tools with which to become more self-reliant over time:

- As Representative to the U.S. Mission in Geneva, how will you ensure that U.S. foreign assistance is used wisely by international organizations to reach the most vulnerable people around the world?

Answer. As a major donor to United Nations development assistance, the United States has a strong interest to ensure our funding is used to help the most vulnerable and most in need and that U.S. taxpayers' dollars are used effectively and efficiently to achieve these purposes. If confirmed, I will work with the United Nations organizations in Geneva to undertake reforms and improve transparency and accountability to ensure that our development assistance through these organizations will continue to reach those most in need.

Question. The Famine Early Warning Systems Network reports, "Across 46 countries, 85 million people require emergency food assistance in 2019, 80% more than in 2015." Earlier this month, the U.N. warned that 2 million people in Somalia alone could face starvation by summer's end if sufficient international humanitarian assistance does not arrive soon: As Representative to the U.S. Mission in Geneva, how will you push for a strong collective response to the most urgent crises impacting food security?

Answer. The United States government is committed to addressing global crises in food security and is on the Executive Boards of the U.N. Rome-based agencies: the Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO), the World Food Program (WFP), and the International Fund for Agricultural Development (IFAD). The United States is the largest donor to the FAO, providing over $190 million per year: almost 20% of the total budget. We are the largest donor to the WFP, providing over $2.5 billion in 2018: more than 34% of the budget. We are also the largest historic donor to IFAD, and contributed $30 million in 2019. If confirmed, I will work closely with our Ambassador to U.N. Agencies in Rome Kip Tom to urge other donors to do their fair share as well to address humanitarian crises around the globe.

Question. Research from private industry demonstrates that, when managed well, diversity makes business teams better both in terms of creativity and in terms of productivity. What will you do to promote, mentor, and support your staff that come from diverse backgrounds and underrepresented groups?

Answer. If confirmed, I will embrace every opportunity to promote diversity and inclusion in the workplace. I agree with the research that indicates that diverse teams are richer in creativity and perspective, and I believe all leaders should embrace a wide range of input, viewpoints, and backgrounds.

Question. What steps will you take to ensure each of the supervisors in your staff are fostering an environment that is diverse and inclusive?

Answer. If confirmed, I will ensure that all supervisors at Mission Geneva have undertaken the required workplace management training, including the Department's Equal Employment Opportunity coursework. In addition, I will lead by example, creating an inclusive working environment where all backgrounds and perspectives are treated as valid.

Question. Religion has played a major role in your higher education. You attended Franciscan University and Catholic University during your time as a student. Reports have also stated that these religious routes are what shape your policy. How

will your religion impact your ability to represent American people of all beliefs in Geneva?

Answer. I am a person of faith and an American with an abiding belief in freedoms of religion and expression. If confirmed, I will welcome people of all faiths to my team and represent proudly Americans of all backgrounds, religious or otherwise.

Question. The Trump administration has compromised U.S. energy security interests and our leadership role on climate change in the eyes of the world. Do you accept climate change is real, is caused by humans, and that immediate Congressional action is needed to address it?

Answer. Climate change is a complex global challenge. I believe the climate is changing, and that there is likely a human component to that. If confirmed, I will ensure the United States continues to be a world leader in providing affordable, abundant, and secure energy to our citizens, while protecting the environment and reducing emissions through job-creating innovation.

Question. As Representative to the U.S. Mission in Geneva, how will you repair the United States' standing in multinational climate discussions now that we have left the Paris Climate Accords?

Answer. The United States will remain a party to the UNFCCC. If confirmed, I will seek to maintain U.S. leadership to advance and protect U.S. economic and environmental interests, including by participating in international negotiations to ensure a level playing field for all countries.

Question. Do you believe the U.S. should play a leadership role in addressing climate change?

Answer. The United States is a world leader in reducing emissions. U.S. energy-related CO2 emissions fell by 14 percent between 2005 and 2017, even as our economy grew by 19.4 percent—largely due to the development and deployment of innovative energy technologies.

Question. The U.N. plays a large role in global climate change initiatives. In conjunction with its member states, the U.N. implements policies aimed at decreased the effects of climate change. On multiple occasions during your time in the Trump administration, you have actively sought to repeal regulations aimed at protecting the environment:

- Do you believe in the existence of climate change? Why or why not?

Answer. I believe that climate change is a complex global challenge. I believe the climate is changing, and that there is likely a human component to that.

Question. Do you believe climate change is largely a manmade issue that can be dealt with by changing human behavior? Why or why not?

Answer. I believe the climate is changing, and that there's warming taking place. There is likely a human component to that. If confirmed, I support decisions that are informed by the best scientific and intelligence assessments as we develop and implement relevant international policies.

Question. Over the last two years, the Center on Family and Human Rights, better known as C-Fam, has seen its influence grow and was even part of the official U.S. delegation to the Commission on the Status of Women (CSW) in 2017. As a Southern Poverty Law Center designated hate group, whose work focuses disproportionately on denying rights to the LGBTQ community and demonizing women's health and rights, will you ensure that C-Fam and other groups that espouse this type of hate and bigotry will not be given any official capacity in any future conference?

Answer. The United States opposes violence and discrimination against all persons. The public delegates to the CSW are not U.S. government employees, and they are not authorized to negotiate or speak on behalf of the United States. The Trump Administration continues to respect the rights of all persons, including women and those who identify as LGBT. The United States will continue to support the rights of all people to be free of violence and oppression.

Question. Over the last two years, the U.S. has staked out positions on sexual and reproductive health and rights during negotiations on important resolutions and outcome documents that have alienated our allies. The most egregious example was during the Security Council resolution on Sexual Violence in Conflict that the United States almost vetoed until two last-minute changes. The first was removal of the mechanism that would have allowed women who had been victims of sexual

violence in conflict access to health care and other forms of redress. The second was removal of the words "sexual and reproductive health and rights." Can you commit to this committee that you will work closely with our allies to ensure these important resolutions and outcome documents will be given the appropriate attention and that you will protect the rights of women and girls around the world?

Answer. The United States is committed to promoting the rights and well-being of women. In negotiating U.N. documents, U.S. delegation members often include senior officials and subject matter experts who seek to work constructively with other Member States toward achieving consensus. The administration has concerns about terminology related to sexual and reproductive health that do not enjoy international consensus. The use of these phrases by U.N. agencies and U.N. affiliates often implies abortion. The administration will do all it can do to protect and respect the sanctity of life around the globe. In its advocacy for women, the administration continues to hold to the commitments laid out in the 1995 Fourth World Conference on Women's Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action, as well as in the 1994 International Conference on Population and Development's Programme of Action. The United States moreover remains the largest bilateral donor of women's health and family planning assistance worldwide. Moving forward at the U.N. and elsewhere, the administration will continue to build consensus with a wide group of Member States on clear terminology that would better promote women's health without also promoting abortion. We are committed to focusing on the health care and health education needs of women, men, girls, and boys, including adolescents around the globe, while avoiding issues that do not enjoy international consensus and do not support human dignity.

Question. Armed conflict, political instability, climate change, and other factors have led to an unprecedented growth in global humanitarian needs. U.N. agencies like the World Food Program (WFP), U.N. Refugee Agency (UNHCR), U.N. Children's Fund (UNICEF), and U.N. Population Fund (UNFPA) are leading the global response, providing food, shelter, medical care, education, maternal health care, and other forms of life-sustaining aid to tens of millions of people around the world. Because the U.S. doesn't have the capacity or reach to lead every humanitarian response, it works closely with the U.N., which brings together member states, NGOs, faith-based organizations, the private sector, and others to address crises. The U.S. helped create these agencies, and has long been the largest donor to U.N. humanitarian appeals: Do you believe that it is important for the U.S. to continue to work with the U.N. to address humanitarian crises around the world?

Answer. The United States is a global leader in humanitarian assistance, having provided more than $8 billion in humanitarian aid in 2018. However, despite significant progress in addressing crises, humanitarian needs remain high and outpace funding levels. Crises affect more people and for longer periods of time, and the number of people targeted to receive assistance through U.N.-led humanitarian response plans increased in 2018 from 77 million in 2014 to 101 million. 2019 is on track to be a year of record high humanitarian needs, and burden sharing will be more essential than ever. In 2019, nearly 132 million people will need humanitarian assistance, the majority as a result of conflict. Per the Global Humanitarian Overview of 2018, a record $25 billion was needed to meet humanitarian needs in 2018; the U.N. Office of the Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (OCHA) and other U.N. agencies helped mobilize funding for $15 billion. The United States is a strong supporter of U.N. agencies such as OCHA and their work in coordinating and providing protection and life-saving assistance to the millions of people displaced by conflict, natural disasters, and other causes. As global humanitarian needs continue to increase, we will continue to work to maximize the impact of our collective humanitarian efforts, and we support the humanitarian reform commitments made by OCHA and other U.N. agencies to increase efficiency, transparency, accountability, and effectiveness of humanitarian assistance for improved outcomes for all populations in need of humanitarian assistance.

Question. Due to the ever-increasing scale of needs in recent years-brought on by conflict in Yemen, Syria, Iraq, South Sudan, DR Congo, Myanmar, and Afghanistan, among other places-UN humanitarian appeals are chronically underfunded: If confirmed, will you press for the U.S. to continue to provide robust financial support to the work of these activities, and will you push other countries to do the same?

Answer. Having provided more than $8 billion in humanitarian aid in 2018, the United States is a global leader in humanitarian assistance. If confirmed, I will push to reinforce U.S. leadership while encouraging greater burden-sharing from other donors. Despite significant progress in addressing crises, humanitarian needs remain high and outpace funding levels. Crises affect more people and for longer

periods of time, and the number of people targeted to receive assistance through U.N.-led humanitarian response plans increased in 2018 from 77 million in 2014 to 101 million. 2019 is on track to be a year of record high humanitarian needs, and burden sharing will be more essential than ever. In 2019, nearly 132 million people will need humanitarian assistance, the majority as a result of conflict. Per the Global Humanitarian Overview of 2018, a record $25 billion was needed to meet humanitarian needs in 2018; the U.N. Office of the Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (OCHA) and other U.N. agencies helped mobilize funding for $15 billion. The United States is a strong supporter of U.N. agencies such as OCHA and their work in coordinating and providing protection and life-saving assistance to the millions of people displaced by conflict, natural disasters, and other causes. As global humanitarian needs continue to increase, we will continue to work to maximize the impact of our collective humanitarian efforts, and we support the humanitarian reform commitments made U.N. agencies to increase efficiency, transparency, accountability, and effectiveness of humanitarian assistance for improved outcomes for all populations in need of humanitarian assistance.

Question. A High-Level Commission on Health Employment and Economic Growth called by the U.N. Secretary-General in 2016 concluded that investments in health have a nine-fold return and accounted for about one quarter of economic growth between 2000 and 2011 in low- and middle-income countries, having an outsized impact for women, who make up about 70% of the health and social workforce worldwide. As a result of the Commission, the WHO, ILO, and OECD have undertaken joint efforts to address a projected shortfall of 18 million health workers by 2030, which threatens to derail the tremendous progress the United States has spearheaded in saving lives around the world and also leaves us more vulnerable to infectious disease threats like Ebola. How will you prioritize U.S. leadership in Geneva, especially with the WHO and ILO, to help focus investments needed in health employment to drive economic growth and women's economic empowerment while simultaneously tackling our greatest global health challenges?

Answer. The United States welcomed the Report of the High-Level Commission on Health Employment and Economic Growth; we continue to support its important recommendations regarding measures to address the global shortfall of trained health workers. The Commission's work has helped guide action that advances employment and economic growth in low and middle-income countries. The World Health Organization Global Health Workforce Network is a key mechanism to implement the Commission's recommendations through a five-year action plan. The United States will continue to support these focused investments to help countries increase their health workforce and share data on workforce issues for decision-making.

Question. A May 2019 report of the Safeguarding Health in Conflict Coalition documents at least 973 attacks on health workers, health facilities, health transports, and patients in 23 countries in conflict around the world in 2018—from the DRC to Yemen, Syria, to the Philippines. At least 167 health workers died and at least 710 were injured. This marks an increase in the number of documented attacks compared to 2017, when the Coalition reported 701 such attacks. In January 2018 the WHO took an important step to document attacks on health and provide information for action to protect health services by launching its Surveillance System for Attacks on Healthcare and collecting and sharing data on attacks in nine countries in conflict—but the impact of this system is still very limited:

- Will the United States push for expansion of WHO's Surveillance System for Attacks on Healthcare, including providing information to describe the basic facts of the incident—withholding location information if needed for security reasons—and taking steps to enable identification of the perpetrator where known? And what more can and should be done to ensure compliance of U.N. Security Council Resolution 2286 passed in May 2016 to document and conduct investigations of attacks on health workers and facilities?

Answer. The United States has repeatedly urged member states to renew their commitment to the implementation of U.N. Security Council resolution 2286, which the Security Council passed unanimously in 2016. The Security Council demanded that the international community mobilize in an effort to prevent attacks on health services in armed conflict and hold those responsible for such attacks accountable. Three years later, however, a staggering number of attacks on health facilities, health workers, ambulances, and patients continue to take place across the globe. Impunity for such violations and abuses must come to an end. The United States strongly supports efforts to promote access to humanitarian relief, including medical care, for civilians in situations of armed conflict. If confirmed, I will work with other

members of the U.N. Security Council to ensure the full implementation of resolution 2286.

Question. In 2017, Congress used the Congressional Review Act (CRA) to repeal fifteen common-sense regulations, including measures to protect women's health, retirement security, workplace safety, clean water, and anti-corruption safeguards. What was your role in developing the CRA strategy and your rationale for undoing regulations including the rule implementing the Cardin-Lugar 1504 provision on transparency of global payments by oil, gas and mining companies?

Answer. I worked with other White House and Congressional staff to identify regulations that were finalized at the very end of the Obama administration, including many "midnight regulations" that were finalized after the election, that we believed were overly burdensome.

Question. As the Representative to the U.S. Mission in Geneva, you will be working closely with the U.N. Human Rights commission. The U.N. has made it clear that the access to an abortion is a human right that must be protected. The U.N. has even called on the United States to make sure that Americans still have the right and protections for safe abortions: In previous works, you have made it difficult for certain citizens to obtain an abortion. Do you believe abortion is a human right? If not, will you work to change the declaration by the U.N.?

Answer. In its advocacy for women, the administration continues to hold to the commitments laid out in the 1995 Fourth World Conference on Women's Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action, as well as in the 1994 International Conference on Population and Development's Programme of Action. As noted at the time, these documents do not establish a right to abortion. Similarly, human rights instruments to which the United States is party do not establish abortion as a right; neither do binding humanitarian instruments. In short, there is no international consensus on a right to abortion. Decisions on abortion are those of individual sovereign states.

Moving forward at the U.N. and elsewhere, the administration will continue to build consensus with a wide group of Member States on clear terminology that would better promote women's health without also promoting abortion. We are committed to focusing on the health care and health education needs of women, men, girls, and boys, including adolescents around the globe, while avoiding issues that do not enjoy international consensus and do not support human dignity.

Question. You have said that the United States "supports the right to the enjoyment of the highest attainable standard of health." Currently, roughly half of the world's population—3.5 billion people—forgoes essential health services due to financial constraints or lack of accessible facilities. Throughout this year, the international community is addressing this issue through the consideration of Universal Health Coverage, culminating in a High Level Meeting at the United Nations in September. Universal Health Coverage guarantees access to quality health services, essential medicines, and vaccines, and insures people against catastrophic and routine health costs, ensuring they will not face financial ruin because of health care costs: How will you work toward Universal Health Coverage that ensures that no one, including women and girls, is left behind?

Answer. The United States looks forward to the U.N. Meeting on Universal Health Coverage. We believe health care systems must be accessible by all in a country, including through access to primary healthcare for women, men, boys and girls, and strong health systems. We need to accelerate progress toward universal health access, while understanding efforts to expand access do not imply government-centric solutions or mandates, and countries will choose to pursue UHC in line with national contexts and priorities. Pathways to achieving UHC can include strengthening the role of private markets; innovation and efficient financing to reduce out of pocket costs; enhancing consumer choice; and appropriate regulations/governance.

Question. For some time, the United States has been the leading funder of global health and, specifically, of family planning and reproductive health. However, this Administration has repeatedly proposed catastrophic reductions of funding to family planning/reproductive health programs, zeroing out the program in the first budget, and this year requesting an over 55 percent reduction compared to enacted levels. It has also pursuing policies, including the Mexico City Policy/Global Gag Rule, that numerous studies have shown make contraception and family planning more difficult and costly for women to access. Do you believe that the United States can continue to be a leader on global health if we scale back financial commitments to programs that have proven critical to promoting the health of women and girls?

Answer. The United States is the most generous funder of maternal and child health, including family planning programs, in the world. I agree that this strong record of leadership should continue, and that it should continue to do so within the longstanding ethical parameters that govern our foreign assistance today. Those parameters include the decades-old protections against taxpayer support for abortion, and the preservation of parental rights when it comes to the information and care provided to children, including the provision of culturally sensitive, age-appropriate, optimal health-focused sex education.

Question. The Trump administration has actively sought to expand protections for healthcare providers who cite moral or religious objections to providing certain services or serving certain populations:

- Do you believe that the personal views of a medical provider should affect an individual's right to access quality and affordable healthcare? Should providers who refuse to provide critical services to women, or to LGBTQ persons, or any other population be allowed to continue to receive U.S. funding? Does that include a full range of contraceptive methods?

Answer. As the Director of the DPC, I helped coordinate the development and drafting of several Executive Orders, including Executive Order 13798 "Promoting Free Speech and Religious Liberty." The order required certain cabinet officials to "consider issuing amended regulations, consistent with applicable law, to address conscience-based objections to the preventive-care mandate promulgated under section 300gg-13(a)(4) of title 42, United States Code." The order could not and did not contradict any statutes or controlling case law with respect to employee access to birth control provided or covered by employers. Congress has passed numerous federal laws prohibiting discrimination by recipients of federal funds on the basis of race, color, national origin, disability, age, sex, religion, the exercise of conscience, and other protected classes. I intend to continue the administration's policy on this question and abide by all applicable laws if confirmed.

This administration has and will continue to support policies furthering the health and wellbeing of all people, including women, and LGBTI individuals. Congress has passed numerous federal laws prohibiting discrimination by recipients of federal funds on the basis of race, color, national origin, disability, age, sex, religion, the exercise of conscience, and other protected classes. I intend to continue the administration's policy on this question and abide by all applicable laws if confirmed.

The United States is the most generous supporter of global health assistance, including family planning programs that provide a broad range of family planning methods and services. Congress has passed numerous federal laws prohibiting discrimination by recipients of federal funds on the basis of race, color, national origin, disability, age, sex, religion, the exercise of conscience, and other protected classes. I intend to continue the administration's policy on this question and abide by all applicable laws if confirmed.

Question. In addition to threatening funding cuts, the United States has taken a hard-line against long-standing agreements on sexual and reproductive health at the United Nations. Specifically, U.S. negotiators at the U.N. have repeatedly sought the removal of agreed language on sexual and reproductive access for communities worldwide:

- If confirmed, how will you work to ensure that the U.S. upholds and advances international commitments on sexual and reproductive health and rights globally, rather than seeking to roll them back?

Answer. The administration has concerns about the terms "sexual and reproductive health services" and "sexual and reproductive rights". Over the years, these references have become associated with support for abortion as an alleged right. The administration will do all it can do to protect and respect the sanctity of life around the globe.

In its advocacy for women, the administration continues to hold to the commitments laid out in the 1995 Fourth World Conference on Women's Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action as well as in the 1994 International Conference on Population and Development's Programme of Action. The United States moreover remains the largest bilateral donor of women's reproductive health and family planning assistance worldwide.

Moving forward at the U.N., the administration seeks to find consensus with a wide group of Member States on clear terminology that would better promote women's health without promoting abortion. We are committed to meeting the health care needs of women, men, girls, and boys, as well as the health-education needs of children and adolescents around the globe, and avoid issues that offend human dignity.

Question. The U.S. recently made an egregious and extraordinary threat to veto a U.N. Security Council Resolution on gender-based violence in conflict over a reference to survivors' access to sexual and reproductive health care. Media reports also suggest that during negotiations, the U.S. sought to remove a mechanism that would have provided funding for survivors of sexual violence in conflict with services over fears it could be used by survivors for abortions, where legal. These negotiations at the U.N. have real world impact on women and girls around the world:

- Do you believe victims of sexual violence should be able to terminate the pregnancy, where legal? The global gag rule allows international organizations who receive U.S. global health funding to provide abortions in the case of rape, incest, and life endangerment of the woman with non-U.S. funding—do you support these exceptions or would you recommend and seek to close them?

Answer. I have tremendous sympathy for any woman victimized by sexual violence and support the U.S. efforts to help victims of sexual violence become thriving survivors. As I stated during the hearing, I do not believe that abortion is ever a moral answer to a problem. The U.S. opposition to the resolution in question was intended to ensure that U.N. organizations did not interpret that language to begin assuming a right to abortion as a method of family planning. In addition, I support the existing Mexico City policy, which includes the exceptions you identified in the question.

Question. On May 30, 2019, a notice of intent to establish a State Department Commission on Unalienable Rights appeared on the Federal Register. According to a version of the draft charter reviewed by Just Security, the commission's duties include providing "advice and recommendations, for the secretary's approval, to guide U.S. diplomatic and foreign policy decisions and actions with respect to human rights in international settings." According to remarks by Secretary Pompeo, he is trying to "make sure that we have a solid definition of human rights upon which to tell all our diplomats around the world."

- Do you believe that the State Department has failed to provide this solid definition of human rights in its work, including in its annual human rights reports? How so? Do you believe the multilateral human rights institutions are failing in this regard? Please state how. Also, do you believe that women's human rights, including the right to be free from domestic violence and to access reproductive health care, are a part of a "solid definition of human rights?"

Answer. The United States has been and remains the world's guiding force for human rights around the world. This leadership takes many forms, including through constructive public advocacy, such as the State Department's annual human rights and religious freedom reporting. The new Commission on Unalienable Rights extends that leadership by refreshing our discourse on human rights, including where that discussion may have departed from our nation's founding principles of natural law and natural rights.

Human rights are those rights which are endowed by our Creator—usually expressed as freedoms that no government anywhere may abridge, which the U.S. Declaration of Independence speaks of as "unalienable" and can also be found in our Bill of Rights. One definitional source that many look to is the 1948 Universal Declaration of Human Rights, which includes rights of conscience, expression, religious exercise, freedom of movement, to marry, to form families free from government coercion, to be free from slavery and torture, to own property, and to due process applied equally to all.

government respect for the universal human rights of all citizens fosters free and open societies in which all people can flourish. Advancing human rights means committing to defend the human rights and dignity of all people, no matter who they are. For example, as Secretary Pompeo has said: "standing up for human rights is hardwired into who we are as Americans. Promoting human rights is in the best interests of the United States. Societies that respect human rights and the rule of law are more stable, and make better allies."

In accordance with international human rights treaties, if confirmed, I will vigorously advocate to protect the inalienable rights that all people share because of our shared human dignity. I believe all human beings, including women, are endowed with the same fundamental rights and liberties. This includes the right to be free from all forms of violence, including domestic violence, and to access voluntary reproductive healthcare.

Question. In countries around the world, LGBTQ people are criminalized for who they love. There are also women who are in jail in places like El Salvador and Senegal for having miscarriages or abortions. These are gross human rights violations: If you are confirmed, will you speak out against laws that criminalize same-sex rela-

tionships and women's personal health decisions in public and private settings as part of the United States human rights and diplomacy agenda?

Answer. The United States has made clear its commitment to protecting and defending the human rights of all, including LGBTI persons, and has condemned the fact that in many parts of the world, LGBTI individuals and their supporters continue to face violence, arrest, harassment and intimidation for standing up for their human rights, participating in peaceful marches and rallies, and expressing their views. As Secretary Pompeo has stated, LGBTI persons—like all persons—must be free to enjoy their human rights and fundamental freedoms, including freedom of expression, peaceful assembly, and association, without fear of reprisal.

Question. Do you recognize reproductive rights and the rights of LGBTQ people as human rights? Do you believe that States have human rights obligations to eliminate gender-based violence, including domestic violence, sexual violence and harassment, in public and private life?

Answer. The Department has been clear and consistent in affirming that human rights are universal, and that no one should face violence, criminalization, or severe official discrimination because of who they are. We will continue to stand up and speak out in support of the human rights and fundamental freedoms of all people, including LGBTI persons in all corners of the globe, and to press for perpetrators of human rights violations and abuses to be held accountable.

Question. The Trump administration has twice expanded the global gag rule—implementing a version of the policy that is unprecedented in scope. Recent research indicates the global gag rule is disrupting health care services, weakening civil society, and halting national policy progress on health and human rights:

- Were you involved in decisions to expand the global gag rule? Have you made any efforts to understand the impact of these decisions in terms of access to a range of health services, effective partnership in the field, and the silencing of medical professionals and advocates? Do you believe the policy should be expanded even further?

Answer. I was involved in President Trump's decision to reinstate the Mexico City policy through his Protecting Life in Global Health Assistance policy. After implementation of the Protecting Life in Global Health Assistance policy, the administration conducted a review at all affected departments and agencies. This review found that only four prime partners declined to agree to the conditions of the policy out of 733 awards. I support the existing policy.

Question. In your written answers for the committee, you stated that, "The administration made a determination that UNFPA's work with Chinese population authorities violated statutory funding restrictions:"

- Can you explain the how UNFPA has violated Kemp-Kasten because I have not been able to get a clear answer how the administration went about making the determination against UNFPA? The U.S. sits on UNFPA's Executive Board, which approves country programs. If the U.S. was really concerned about UNFPA's China country program, wouldn't it use its position to bring the program into compliance of U.S. statutory funding restrictions?

Answer. The determination to withhold funding from UNFPA was made based on the fact that China's family planning policies still involve the use of coercive abortion and involuntary sterilization practices and that UNFPA partners on family planning activities with the Chinese government agency responsible for these coercive policies. The Secretary has determined that UNFPA therefore "supports or participates in the management of a program of coercive abortion or involuntary sterilization."

If confirmed, I will continue to examine closely the activities of UNFPA in the context of the funding decision, and will take every opportunity to remind other nations that the United States is and will be at the forefront of improving women's health across the lifespan, including continued access to family planning methods and preventing maternal and child deaths.

Question. NGOs have already reported that compliance with the Global Gag Rule has increased their administrative costs due to adding complicated compliance mechanisms. How much will this broad interpretation increase this burden for these NGOs? How much will this new compliance burden affect the amount and quality of health services this funding is intended for?

Answer. The United States is and will remain the leading funder of maternal and child health and family planning programs internationally, and without that support, millions of women would lose access to vital health programs. After implemen-

tation of the Protecting Life in Global Health Assistance policy, the administration conducted a review at all affected departments and agencies. This review found that only four prime partners declined to agree to the conditions of the policy out of 733 awards.

Question. Have you discussed these expansions with our global bilateral donors like DFID or SIDA? How does this impact our ability to work and coordinate effectively with their global health and development programs?

Answer. I have not met with global bilateral donors like DFID or SIDA. I look forward to learning how this policy could impact our work with their programs.

Question. The State Department stated they would complete a second review of the Mexico City Policy, also known as the global gag rule, by the end of 2018, yet we are still waiting on that report. Recent research from civil society groups indicates the global gag rule is disrupting health care services, weakening civil society, and halting national policy progress on health and human rights. For example, under the Mexico City Policy, Family Life Association of Swaziland has been forced to nearly eliminate its services to reach youth with family planning, treat STIs, screen for reproductive cancers, and provide maternal and child care:

- Especially given the further expansion of the policy, is anyone able to meet the needs of young people and vulnerable populations in these specific communities? What actions have been taken to address these gaps in services and how are these needs being filled?

Answer. The Mexico City Policy is a critical protection for taxpayers and for the women and girls that we support around the world. Taxpayers expect us to use the billions of dollars managed by our maternal and child health, family planning, HIV/AIDS, malaria, child nutrition and many other programs to save lives, not take them. After implementation of the Protecting Life in Global Health Assistance policy, the administration conducted a review at all affected departments and agencies. This review found that only four prime partners declined to agree to the conditions of the policy out of 733 awards. The second review is still underway.

Question. How will the next review assess and evaluate these types of service disruptions and inefficiencies created by switching health care service partners?

Answer. If confirmed, as Ambassador to the U.N. in Geneva, I do not believe that I would be involved in such a review process.

Question. Recent research by amfAR documented that the expanded global gag rule has resulted in many PEPFAR implementing partners altering the health services and information that they provide, including non-abortion related services such as contraception and HIV, and their partnerships on the ground. These disruptions were reported in 31 of the 45 countries surveyed and common in areas with high HIV-prevalence, such as South Africa, Eswatini and Mozambique. The disruptions span multiple types of services, including altering HIV programs such as voluntary medical male circumcision. Their research indicates that there may be a disproportionate impact on key and vulnerable populations, such as adolescent girls, young women, and men who have sex with men, who are more reliant on outreach services and integrated care models that are adversely impacted by the global gag rule because those organizations who provided comprehensive reproductive health care are also often the ones to best able to serve and reach key and vulnerable populations:

- How are you monitoring the impact of the expanded global gag rule on HIV programs and how do you expect to meet the ambitious goals and targets set out under PEPFAR if the policy impedes our ability to work with effective partners and prompts widespread disruption of services and information?

Answer. This administration has and will continue to ensure that all people living with or at risk of HIV/AIDS, including women, girls, and LGBTI individuals, have access to comprehensive information on how to prevent transmission of HIV. Congress has passed numerous federal laws prohibiting discrimination by recipients of federal funds on the basis of race, color, national origin, disability, age, sex, religion, the exercise of conscience, and other protected classes. I intend to continue the administration's policy on this question and abide by all applicable laws if confirmed.

Question. In his September 2018 speech to the U.N. General Assembly, President Trump highlighted the importance of national sovereignty and emphasized his "American First" foreign policy. How might this impact U.S. participation in the United Nations? How can the United States balance sovereignty concerns and its engagement with multilateral institutions such as the United Nations?

Answer. As a founding member of the United Nations, the United States stands firm on our overall commitment to the core values of the U.N. Charter—to save suc-

ceeding generations from the scourge of war, to reaffirm faith in human rights and the dignity and worth of the human person, to maintain international peace and security, and to promote economic advancement for all people. This commitment is rooted in U.S. interests, because the U.N. directly advances a number of top U.S. policy priorities.

While the United States remains committed to advancing the ideals, President Trump has made clear that we will never surrender our interests to an unelected, unaccountable, global bureaucracy. The United States will continue to unapologetically advance its own values and interests in the U.N. system, and will not hesitate to withdraw from a U.N. body when we assess our sovereign rights are at risk. The United States will also continue to press for reforms to the U.N. system, especially to the U.N. budget and management system. As the single largest donor to the U.N., the United States will always have a strong voice in the system—and will raise its voice when decisions taken in this institution run counter to our value set and our national interests.

Question. What, if any, are the key U.N. issues that overlap with U.S. national interests? In what ways do action or inaction by U.N. bodies affect these interests?

Answer. The United Nations is important to U.S. national security interests. Engagement in the U.N. multiplies our impact and spreads the costs of international action. It is in the U.S. national security interest to partner closely with the United Nations, while working to reform the institution in a serious and meaningful way, particularly on peacekeeping, budget, management, and development issues, as well as on ending the disturbing anti-Israel bias that permeates much of the U.N. system.

First, U.S. support for U.N. peacekeeping protects our security interests while sharing costs and risks with other member states. U.N. peacekeeping missions deploy to countries such as the Central African Republic and South Sudan, where U.N. troops protect civilians and promote regional stability.

Second, U.S. engagement in U.N. bodies, including the Security Council and General Assembly, highlights our priorities and holds others accountable. For example, the United States has demanded accountability for the use of chemical weapons in Syria. The United States has promoted General Assembly resolutions on North Korea, Syria, and Iran that have been adopted with broad cross-regional support. The United States actively defends Israel from unbalanced criticism throughout the U.N. system.

Third, the United States supports the U.N. as it leads the international response to humanitarian emergencies around the globe, including South Sudan, the Lake Chad Basin, and many other places. At a time when the world faces the risk of famine in no fewer than six countries, as well as the largest movement of forcibly displaced persons since the Second World War, the U.N.'s humanitarian leadership role has never been more important.

Finally, the U.N. system includes a range of technical and specialized agencies that are central to setting international standards and norms innumerous fields that have a direct impact on the safety, security, and economic well-being of our citizens, including in the areas of intellectual property, civil aviation, shipping, telecommunications, and nuclear safety and security.

Question. What steps, if any, might be taken to strengthen U.S. influence in U.N. fora, particularly in UNOG?

Answer. Geneva, as the hub for dozens of U.N. and international organizations, is an important location for promoting U.S. values and influence throughout the U.N. system—from advocating for human rights, to helping recruit and place qualified Americans at posts throughout the multilateral agencies, to countering any nation's attempts to push agendas that go against U.S. interests and undermine international norms, standards, and institutions.

If confirmed, I will coordinate closely with my colleagues in the State Department as well as with other U.S. agencies to promote U.S. interests in Geneva, including with the U.N. Office at Geneva.

Question. What, if any, are the priorities the United States shares with U.N. Secretary-General Antonio Guterres of Portugal? How do you plan to work with the Secretary-General and the Director-General of UNOG to further U.S. interests in the United Nations?

Answer. The United States is committed to advancing the U.N. Secretary-General's reform agenda throughout the U.N. system through U.S. representation in the U.N. General Assembly and relevant governing bodies, as well as direct engagement with U.N. agencies, including in Geneva.

The United States continues to promote the modernization of management practices within the U.N. and other international organizations. This includes successful functioning of audit processes, timely public access to audit reports, robust protections for whistleblowers, and increased transparency and oversight by member states.

If confirmed, I will closely monitor these issues, including raising shortcomings in these and other management categories with senior leadership and other member states at the Geneva organizations, including with the Director General of the U.N. Office at Geneva.

Question. How, if at all, will the U.N. Secretary-General's reform priorities impact UNOG operations and procedures?

Answer. The impact on UNOG will be similar to that at other U.N. duty stations. Changes such as increased delegations of authority should improve the efficiency and effectiveness of the office.

Question. To what extent, if any, is UNOG involved in broader, U.N. system-wide reforms? To your knowledge, is the U.S. Mission in Geneva participating in these discussions?

Answer. The U.S. Mission in Geneva and UNOG are both highly involved in U.N. reform discussions, especially the management reforms related to the U.N. secretariat. The U.S. Mission is also highly involved in discussions about the reforms underway in the U.N. Development System, such as creation of the new Resident Coordinator System.

Question. What do you view as reform priorities for UNOG and the broader U.N. system?

Answer. The highest reform priority is ensuring that the United Nations is efficient, effective and accountable. The reform efforts underway throughout the U.N. System are working toward those ends.

Question. U.N. members have been unable to achieve consensus on how to implement certain elements of U.N. reform. These disagreements have emerged in the General Assembly and other U.N. fora-particularly between developing countries and developed countries:

- Please discuss how these disagreements have impacted progress. Can these differences be overcome? Why or why not?

Answer. The differences in the General Assembly and other U.N. fora are often an obstacle to achieving meaningful reform. Developing countries have the greatest interest in seeing the U.N. become more efficient and effective, because they benefit directly from much of the work that the U.N. and U.N. agencies do. The United States and other developed countries share that interest. Yet the divide remains great over how to make changes to the status quo.

Question. The United States has withdrawn from the U.N. Human Rights Council, but appears to be participating in the Council's Universal Periodic Review (UPR) process. What is your assessment of the UPR? Do you think it is an effectiveness mechanism for addressing human rights?

Answer. The UPR process is an invaluable tool: each of the 193 U.N. member states reviewed has the opportunity to state actions taken to improve the human rights situations in their countries, and to provide an assessment of the human rights situation in other countries. We take this process seriously, as we view it as a powerful means to shine a spotlight on human rights violations and abuses, recommend concrete actions to prevent such violations and abuses, and to follow up on implementation of recommendations.

Question. The last time the United States was reviewed by the Universal Periodic Review (UPR) Committee was in May 2015. Should the United States undergo another review? Why or why not?

Answer. Yes. The United States is rightfully proud of its human rights record. It has served and will continue to serve as a model for other nations. Our previous reports have discussed that record, including areas of strength, such our record on core freedoms of speech, association and belief. We have also previously addressed a range of challenges, including issues of discrimination and topics related to civil liberties in the context of national security.

The U.S. UPR report is just one element of a broad U.S. effort to engage broadly, substantively, and constructively on human rights issues.

Question. What role can the United Nations play in maintain international peace and security when the perceived interests of a permanent member and those of

other Security Council members diverge? How do you plan to portray the role of the Security Council in discussions with the President and other senior administration officials? What factors influence U.S. policy to seek Security Council action?

Answer. While imperfect, the U.N. Security Council remains one of the United States' most effective tools in tackling international crises and confronting threats to U.S. national security. There is no equivalent mechanism to harness international consensus and obligate U.N. member states to support U.S-led efforts to resolve crises. The Security Council utilizes U.N. Charter Chapter VII powers to authorize the use of military force; establish, modify, and draw down U.N. peacekeeping operations; and impose U.N. sanctions that all member states are legally required to implement. Under President Trump, the United States has used the Security Council to advance U.S. priorities, including non-proliferation, human rights, and anti-corruption.

The Security Council, however, has failed to confront many of the most pressing challenges to global peace and security in the 21st century, from Venezuela to Syria to Ukraine. Despite this paralysis, the United States will continue to bring issues of concern to us—and to many around the world—before the Security Council, even if other member states threaten to block our efforts. If confirmed, I will ensure that my team in Geneva works closely on these matters with colleagues at the U.S. Mission to the U.N. in New York and in Washington.

Question. President Trump has suggested tying U.S. foreign assistance to recipient countries' voting records in U.N. fora such as the Security Council and General Assembly. What is your opinion of this proposal?

Answer. Representatives of the U.S. government have a responsibility to ensure that taxpayer resources are advancing U.S. national interests. As such, I agree that the practice of voting for or against U.S. priorities in U.N. fora should be a consideration in government decision-making about the best use of taxpayer resources.

Question. Over the years, U.S. policymakers have debated appropriate levels of U.S. funding to the United Nations. Do you think the current U.S. assessment rates for the U.N. regular budget and U.N. peacekeeping are fair? Should other countries pay more? Why or why not?

Answer. Since the inception of the United Nations, multiple administrations have asserted that the United Nations and other international organizations should not be overly dependent on a single major contributor. We have also seen that countries that increase the amounts of their financial contributions take a greater interest in the good stewardship of resources and achievement of results by international organizations.

Question. The United States is currently assessed 22 percent of the U.N. regular budget (which includes funding for UNOG), and 28.4 percent of the U.N. peacekeeping operations budget. Over the years, U.S. policymakers have debated appropriate levels of U.S. funding to the organization:

- Are you satisfied with the current process and formulas for determining U.S. assessments? Why or why not? If not, what alternative processes would you propose, if confirmed?

Answer. Since the inception of the United Nations, multiple administrations have asserted that the United Nations and other international organizations should not be overly depending on a single major contributor. The current scale of assessments methodology has led to a situation where one country contributes significantly more than any other country, and the vast majority of countries contribute very, very small amounts.

Question. The "Strategic Heritage Plan (SHP)" is a multiyear project to renovate and construct new buildings at the United Nations' Palais des Nations complex in Geneva, which is home to UNOG. The plan was approved by the U.N. General Assembly in 2013 due to health and safety concerns stemming from the overall deterioration of the existing buildings:

- To your knowledge, what steps is the U.S. government taking to ensure the Strategic Heritage Plan runs efficiently and effectively?

Answer. The U.S. Missions to the United Nations in New York and Geneva are closely monitoring the Strategic Heritage Plan. Since the U.S. government will contribute 22 percent of the costs of the project, both missions are working to ensure that the project is accomplished within budget and on schedule.

Question. In a March 2019 report to the U.N. General Assembly, U.N. Secretary-General (SG) Antonio Guterres expressed concern regarding the "deteriorating financial health" of the United Nations. He stated that the organization's financial

challenges were not only the product of U.N. member state "payment patterns and arrears," but also "structural weaknesses in [UN] budget methodology." What is your view on the SG's statement?

Answer. Secretary-General Guterres is correct that the current financial difficulties at the U.N. are the result of both irregularities in the receipt of member state contributions and also a lack of flexibility with respect to utilizing the financial resources that are within the U.N.'s control. This issue is currently being discussed in the Fifth Committee of the General Assembly.

Question. Many experts agree that U.N. peacekeeping operations need to strengthen and modernize to develop the capacity, flexibility, and resources to fulfill their increasingly broad and challenging mandates. Common weaknesses identified by experts include troop shortages, slow deployments, and lack of critical equipment and other materiel:

- What steps have U.N. members taken to combat these problems, and were they effective? In your view, how can these efforts be improved, and what areas should be prioritized?

Answer. While the U.N. has made strides to ensure peacekeeping missions have the capabilities they need to achieve increasingly complex mandates, we continue to see examples of poorly trained, poorly equipped, and underperforming units. There remain challenges in soldiering and policing skills, human rights and protection of civilians, logistics and sustainment operations, and availability of key enablers such as aviation, medical, and counter-IED resources. The United States' peace operations capacity building efforts—like the Global Peace Operations Initiative (GPOI) and the International Police Peacekeeping Operations Support (IPPOS) program—are playing a significant role in helping troop and police contributing countries realize their pledges. Our programming also works to strengthen the operational readiness and performance of contributors already deploying to missions. We are also working at the U.N. to enhance the role of performance-data driven decision-making in the force generation, deployment, and evaluation processes.

Question. Congress has been particularly interested in U.N. reforms related to sexual exploitation and abuse (SEA) and exploitation by U.N. peacekeepers. Recent legislation requires that the United States withhold assistance from "any unit of the security forces of a foreign country" if the Secretary of State determines such unit has engaged in sexual abuse while serving in a U.N. peacekeeping operation:

- What is your perspective on these efforts? Do you think they will be effective in combatting SEA by peacekeepers? Why or why not

Answer. The United States takes incidents of SEA very seriously and is committed to supporting the U.N.'s zero tolerance policy. While the U.N. has taken important recent steps to strengthen accountability measures, there is still work to be done. The U.N. now regularly updates information on SEA allegations online, including progress on investigations, the nationality of alleged perpetrators and any accountability measures taken by the U.N. and sending countries. While the U.N. has responsibility for administrative accountability and conducting certain investigations, responsibility for criminal accountability lies with the sending country. Many investigations remain pending for far too long and pursuing legal action against perpetrators can be difficult. As such, the United States engages bilaterally with countries to press for credible investigations and accountability for individuals who have been found to commit SEA. If confirmed, I commit to continuing these efforts to hold the U.N. and troop- and police-contributing countries accountable.

Question. Although the U.N. Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees in the Near East (UNRWA) managed to secure enough funding to cover its costs for 2018, are there strategies under consideration for the longer-term financial stability of the organization?

Answer. I understand that for years, the United States has urged UNRWA to seek out new voluntary funding streams, increase financial burden-sharing among donors, and find ways to reduce expenditures. The USG reiterated this when it made its final $60 million contribution to UNRWA in January 2018, and stressed the need to institute such reforms directly to UNRWA, as well as to the regional and international stakeholders who make up UNRWA's largest contributors. I understand the USG is ready to explore with key regional partners how the United States can assist in transitioning UNRWA services to host governments, or to other international or local non-governmental organizations as appropriate.

Question. What challenges does U.N. Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees in the Near East (UNRWA) face as a humanitarian organization working in

such a highly politicized environment? What are the potential security concerns and risks?

Answer. The U.N. General Assembly gave UNRWA a mandate that the international community has not been able or willing to sustain. Cyclical budget shortfalls that routinely threaten essential services do not help to build a brighter future for the Palestinian people. If confirmed, I will continue to work closely with Israel and key regional partners on ways to improve economic and humanitarian conditions in Gaza. Hamas is primarily responsible for those conditions, having put its own interests above those of Gaza's residents.

Question. Under what circumstances, if any, do you think the United States should fund U.N. Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees (UNRWA)?

Answer. I understand the USG has made it clear that the United States will no longer bear a disproportionate share of UNRWA's costs. While several donors increased their contributions in 2018, including UAE, Kuwait, Qatar, and Saudi Arabia, UNRWA's business model—which is tied to an expanding community of beneficiaries—is unsustainable. Palestinians deserve better than a service provision model that operates in permanent crisis mode.

Question. In recent years, Palestine Liberation Organization (PLO) Chairman and Palestinian Authority President Mahmoud Abbas has sought to achieve international recognition for Palestinian statehood by changing its status in the United Nations:

Question. Please comment on these efforts. What is your view on the role of the United Nations in recognizing statehood, and how, if at all, does it apply to the PLO's membership efforts?

Answer. I believe that efforts by the Palestinians to join international entities are premature and counterproductive. The United States does not currently recognize a Palestinian state and does not believe that it is eligible to join U.N. organizations as a Member State. The United States opposes the treatment of the Palestinians as a "state" in multilateral meetings and Palestinian accession to, or membership in, treaties and organizations open only to States. I agree with and will uphold these policies if confirmed.

Question. On December 19, 2018, the U.N. General Assembly voted to endorse the Global Compact on Migration (GCM). The U.S. was one of the few countries that voted against. The GCM paves the way for an ordered international response to migration and would serve as a template to ensure the rights and dignity of migrants around the world:

Question. Do you support U.S. opposition to the GCM?

Answer. The United States does not support the Global Compact on Migration (GCM) or the process that led to it, because they included goals and objectives inconsistent and incompatible with U.S. law, policy, and the interests of the American people.

As the U.S. national statement on the GCM noted, "While the United States honors the contributions of the many immigrants who helped build our nation, we cannot support a 'Compact' or process that imposes or has the potential to impose international guidelines, standards, expectations, or commitments that might constrain our ability to make decisions in the best interests of our nation and citizens." Further, I understand there is lack of consensus among U.N. member states regarding the GCM. When it came up for endorsement at the U.N. General Assembly on December 19, 2018, the United States, the Czech Republic, Hungary, Israel, and Poland voted against it, another 12 other countries abstained, and 24 did not vote.

Question. The U.N. Migration agency defines a migrant as any person who is moving or has moved across an international border o within a State away from his/her habitual place of residence, regardless of (1) the person's legal status; (2) whether the movement is voluntary or involuntary; (3) what the causes for the movement are; or (4) what the length of the stay is. The IOM agenda states that one of the core principles is to "leave no one behind" including migrants:

Question. The immigration policy you proposed has done more than leave migrants behind. If confirmed, would you continue an agenda that is tough on migrants trying to enter the U.S. and globally?

Answer. If confirmed, I would continue to support the administration's approach to this complex challenge, framed by the President's tireless commitment to the safety and security of the American people.

Question. What is your view on a path to citizenship for undocumented people living in the United States?

Answer. I support the President's vision for legal immigration to this country.

Question. What is your view on undocumented people living in the United States being able to work? Should undocumented migrants in other countries be allowed to work?

Answer. I support the President's vision for legal immigration to this country.

Question. The Trump administration continues to request that Congress completely cut funding to International Organizations and Programs Account and severe cuts to the Contributions to International Organizations Account. While even allies of the administration continue to call these budget cuts dead on arrival, they do represent this administration's priorities. As you said in earlier conversations, the U.S. is the most generous country in the world:

Question. How will you be able to confidently work with our allies in multilateral forums when the administration continues to threaten the stability of these bodies with these massive funding cuts?

Answer. As stated in the President's budget request to Congress, the administration is calling on other countries to take on more of the financial responsibility at international organizations. This call for increased burden sharing is occurring within the context of multilateral and bilateral working relationships where there are many overlapping interests beyond the distribution of financial responsibility.

Question. How might the administration's proposed funding cuts to international organizations negatively impact the work of the International Bureau of Education, which is headquartered in Geneva?

Answer. The International Bureau of Education appears to be an affiliate of UNESCO. As such, the Department may not be able to make financial contributions to the Bureau as a result of the legislative restrictions on funding for U.N. entities that grant the Palestinians membership.

Question. How might the administration's proposed funding cuts to international organizations negatively impact the work of the International Labour Organization, which is headquartered in Geneva?

Answer. As stated in the President's budget requests to Congress, the administration is calling upon other countries to assume greater financial responsibility at international organizations. The International Labor Conference has recently agreed to a 2020-2021 increase that includes an increase in member contributions and does not reflect increased burden sharing.

Question. How might the administration's proposed funding cuts to international organizations negatively impact the work of the International Trade Centre, which is headquartered in Geneva?

Answer. As stated in the President's budget requests to Congress, the administration is calling upon other countries to assume greater financial responsibility at international organizations. The International Trade Centre receives the vast majority of its funding from the U.N. regular budget and the regular budget of the World Trade Organization.

Question. How might the administration's proposed funding cuts to international organizations negatively impact the work of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees, which is headquartered in Geneva?

Answer. As stated in the President's budget requests to Congress, the administration is calling upon other countries to assume greater financial responsibility at international organizations. The Office of the High Commissioner for Refugees receives voluntary contributions from a large array of governments and non-governmental donors.

Question. How might the administration's proposed funding cuts to international organizations negatively impact the work of the United Nations Office on Sport for Development and Peace, which is headquartered in Geneva?

Answer. News reports indicate that the Office on Sport for Development and Peace closed in 2017.

Question. How might the administration's proposed funding cuts to international organizations negatively impact the work of the World Health Organization, which is headquartered in Geneva?

Answer. As stated in the President's budget requests to Congress, the administration is calling upon other countries to assume greater financial responsibility at international organizations. The World Health Organization receives voluntary contributions from a large array of governments and non-governmental donors.

Question. How might the administration's proposed funding cuts to international organizations negatively impact the work of the World Intellectual Property Organization, which is headquartered in Geneva?

Answer. As stated in the President's budget requests to Congress, the administration is calling upon other countries to assume greater financial responsibility at international organizations. The World Intellectual Property Organization depends on fees from trademark and patent applicants for over 95 percent of its revenue.

Question. How might the administration's proposed funding cuts to international organizations negatively impact the work of the World Meteorological Organization, which is headquartered in Geneva?

Answer. As stated in the President's budget requests to Congress, the administration is calling upon other countries to assume greater financial responsibility at international organizations. The World Meteorological Organization receives contributions from a variety of governmental and non-governmental donors.

Question. How might the administration's proposed funding cuts to international organizations negatively impact the work of the United Nations Research Institute For Social Development, which is headquartered in Geneva?

Answer. As stated in the President's budget requests to Congress, the administration is calling upon other countries to assume greater financial responsibility at international organizations. The Research Institute For Social Development depends entirely on voluntary contributions from governments and non-governmental donors for its financing.

Question. How might the administration's proposed funding cuts to international organizations negatively impact the work of the United Nations Human Rights Council, which is headquartered in Geneva?

Answer. As stated in the President's budget requests to Congress, the administration is calling upon other countries to assume greater financial responsibility at international organizations. The Human Rights Council, which the United States is no longer part of, receives funding from the U.N. regular budget and from governments and non-governmental donors.

Question. How might the administration's proposed funding cuts to international organizations negatively impact the work of the United Nations Economic Commission for Europe, which is headquartered in Geneva?

Answer. As stated in the President's budget requests to Congress, the administration is calling upon other countries to assume greater financial responsibility at international organizations. The Economic Commission for Europe receives funding primarily from the U.N. regular budget.

Question. How might the administration's proposed funding cuts to international organizations negatively impact the work of the Joint United Nations Programme on HIV/AIDS, which is headquartered in Geneva?

Answer. As stated in the President's budget requests to Congress, the administration is calling upon other countries to assume greater financial responsibility at international organizations. The U.N. Program on HIV/AIDS receives funding from a wide array of governmental and non-governmental donors.

Question. How might the administration's proposed funding cuts to international organizations negatively impact the work of the United Nations Non-governmental Liaison Service, which is headquartered in Geneva?

Answer. As stated in the President's budget requests to Congress, the administration is calling upon other countries to assume greater financial responsibility at international organizations. The Department does not contribute funding directly to the Non-governmental Liaison Service.

RESPONSES TO FOLLOW-UP QUESTIONS FROM SENATOR BENJAMIN L. CARDIN

Question. In response to my question about your role in developing the CRA strategy and your rationale for undoing regulations including the rule implementing the Cardin-Lugar 1504 provision, you stated that you, "worked with other White House

and Congressional staff to identify regulations that were finalized at the very end of the Obama administration, including many 'midnight regulations' that were finalized after the election, that we believed were overly burdensome."

- Were you aware that the 1504 regulation was mandated by a bipartisan Congressional provision of the Dodd-Frank Act, which was passed into law in 2010, and therefore not a "midnight regulation" nor sought solely by the Obama administration ? If not, why not? Were those factors at all considered in your strategy?

Answer. Yes. I would not characterize the Extraction Payment Disclosure Rule as a midnight regulation.

Question. When you identified the 1504 regulation as a target for your CRA strategy, were you aware that the 1504 provision, and subsequent rulemaking was supported by human rights and anti-corruption advocates as well as by investors, many major oil and mining companies, think tanks, and academics? If not, why not? Was that factor at all considered in your strategy?

Answer. No, as this was not my area of expertise. When I worked on the administration's overall CRA strategy, I did not personally provide policy advice or analysis of every regulation that was considered. Other White House components would work with the SEC on this issue.

Question. When you identified the 1504 regulation as a target for your CRA strategy, were you aware that disclosure sought by the 1504 rulemaking has been happening for up to 4 years in other countries—including by European subsidiaries of U.S.-based international companies Exxon and Chevron, so American companies are complying with these transparency disclosure requirements elsewhere? If not, why not? Was that factor at all considered in your strategy?

Answer. No, as this was not my area of expertise. When I worked on the administration's overall CRA strategy, I did not personally provide policy advice or analysis of every regulation that was considered. Other White House components would work with the SEC on this issue.

Question. Note that U.S.-based companies like Kosmos Energy had already voluntarily disclosed for years. What is particularly burdensome about the SEC requiring disclosures that American companies are already complying with in 30 other countries?

Answer. The Extraction Payment Disclosure Rule was estimated to have an initial cost of up to $700 million and put domestic extraction companies and their employees at an unfair disadvantage compared to foreign government owned companies. The regulation would have been less burdensome if it had been more similar to the European Union's disclosure rules, or built off of the Extractive Industries Transparency Initiative.

Question. Were you aware that thirty other countries, including the 28 members of the European Union, Canada and Norway are implementing mandatory disclosure? If so, was that factor at all considered in your strategy?

Answer. No, as this was not my area of expertise. When I worked on the administration's overall CRA strategy, I did not personally provide policy advice or analysis of every regulation that was considered. Other White House components would work with the SEC on this issue.

RESPONSES TO ADDITIONAL QUESTIONS FOR THE RECORD
SUBMITTED TO ANDREW P. BREMBERG BY SENATOR JEANNE SHAHEEN

Question. This administration has taken a hardline against long-standing agreements on sexual and reproductive health at the United Nations. Specifically, U.S. negotiators at the U.N. have repeatedly sought the removal of agreed language on sexual and reproductive access for communities worldwide. If confirmed, will you work to ensure that the U.S. upholds and advances international commitments on sexual and reproductive health and rights globally, rather than seeking to roll them back? If so, what specifically will you do?

Answer. The administration has concerns about the terms "sexual and reproductive health services" and "sexual and reproductive rights". Over the years, these references have become associated with support for abortion as an alleged right. The administration will do all it can do to protect and respect the sanctity of life around the globe.

In its advocacy for women, the administration continues to hold to the commitments laid out in the 1995 Fourth World Conference on Women's Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action as well as in the 1994 International Conference on Population and Development's Programme of Action. The United States moreover remains the largest bilateral donor of women's reproductive health and family planning assistance worldwide.

Moving forward at the U.N., the administration seeks to find consensus with a wide group of Member States on clear terminology that would better promote women's health without promoting abortion. We are committed to meeting the health care needs of women, men, girls, and boys, as well as the health-education needs of children and adolescents around the globe, and avoid issues that offend human dignity.

Question. The U.S. recently made an egregious and extraordinary threat to veto a U.N. Security Council Resolution on gender-based violence in conflict over a reference to survivors' access to sexual and reproductive health care. Media reports also suggest that during negotiations, the U.S. sought to remove a mechanism that would have provided funding for survivors of sexual violence in conflict with services over fears it could be used by survivors for abortions, where legal. These negotiations at the U.N. have real world impact on women and girls around the world.

- Do you believe victims of sexual violence should be able to terminate a pregnancy where legal? The global gag rule allows international organizations who receive U.S. global health funding to provide abortions in the case of rape, incest and life endangerment of the woman with non-U.S. funding. Do you support these exceptions or would you recommend and seek to close them?

Answer. I have tremendous sympathy for any woman victimized by sexual violence and support the U.S. efforts to help victims of sexual violence become thriving survivors. The United States will not support abortion services, but that does not equate to denying women who have been raped access to legal medical care. The U.S. opposition to the resolution in question was intended to ensure that U.N. organizations did not interpret that language to begin assuming a right to abortion as a method of family planning. Additionally, I support the existing Mexico City policy, which includes the exceptions noted.

Question. Over the last few years, the U.N. has played an important role in the fight against opioids and synthetics. For example, in 2017, for example, the U.N. Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC) voted to put international controls on two primary ingredients that are used to produce fentanyl. As the State Department made clear at the time, "This action will make it harder for the criminals that are illicitly producing fentanyl to access the necessary resources," while simultaneously making it easier for countries to monitor suspicious orders and transactions."

- The State Department and U.N. are working together on this issue—will you support this work and ensure that funding levels aren't cut which may make progress more difficult?

Answer. If confirmed, I will be actively engaged on this important matter, as I was during my tenure at the Domestic Policy Council.

Question. You praised the U.S. decision to pull out of the Universal Postal Union (UPU). Besides that it may lead to higher costs for U.S. consumers, pulling out of this will set back our efforts to combat the opioid crisis. By pulling out of the UPU, the White House would negate U.S. Postal Service ability to access the advanced electronic data (AED) shared by all those within the UPU. Such a move would harm individuals and businesses across the country. Given the severity of the opioid crisis, why pursue an approach that could make the situation worse?

Answer. The administration is hopeful that its efforts to reform international postal rates will result in our continuing membership in the Universal Postal Union. Should those efforts prove unsuccessful, any and all resulting postal agreements established on a bilateral basis would unquestionably include required access to advanced electronic data.

Question. Last June, the Trump administration withdrew the U.S. from the U.N. Human Rights Council (UNHRC), citing anti-Israel bias and concerns over the composition of the Council's membership. While the UNHRC is certainly not a perfect institution, U.S. engagement with and membership on the Council did deliver a number of positive results over the years. The Council voted to dispatch a team to investigate atrocities committed by ISIS in Iraq; continues to scrutinize and bring attention to the dire human rights situation in Iran; authorized a groundbreaking investigation into human rights violations in North Korea; and has taken action on a variety of other human rights crises in Myanmar, Yemen, South Sudan, DR

Congo, Burundi, and Eritrea, to name a few. At the same time, U.S. membership on the Council helped us more effectively push back against instances of anti-Israel bias. According to the American Jewish Committee's Jacob Blaustein Institute for the Advancement of Human Rights, there was a 30 percent decline in country-specific resolutions on Israel during U.S. membership versus the period when we were off the Council. The number of special sessions on Israel also dropped significantly—six during the three years before we joined the Council in 2009 versus one in the last four years. In March 2018, the State Department itself reported that the UNHRC saw "the largest shift in votes towards more abstentions and no votes on Israel related resolutions since the creation of the [Council]."

- Do you agree that there is a positive correlation between U.S. engagement and policy outcomes that reflect our nation's interests and values?

Answer. The United States withdrew from the U.N. Human Rights Council (HRC) because of concerns related to its focus and composition, We noted then that "Countries that aggressively violate human rights at home should not be in a position to guard the human rights of others" and that the Council's persistent, unfair bias against Israel detracts attention and resources away from the HRC's mandate to promote universal respect for the protection of human rights and fundamental freedoms. If meaningful reforms are undertaken by member states that address our longstanding concerns with the Human Rights Council, we would consider the possibility of re-engaging at that time.

The United States has, for decades, led global efforts to promote human rights, including through multilateral institutions. We will continue to pursue a robust human rights agenda at the United Nations General Assembly's Third Committee as well as other U.N. bodies, as we did during other periods we were not a HRC member. We will also redouble our efforts to bring human rights issues to the attention of the Security Council, as we did during our 2018 presidency, when we held the first ever session on the linkage between human rights abuses and threats to international peace and security.

Question. The UNHRC was established in 2006 to replace a previous U.N. human rights body which had been criticized as ineffective, politicized, and biased against Israel. During its first several years, the U.S. refused to run for a seat on the Council, fearing it would be no better than its predecessor. This became a self-fulfilling prophecy: in 2007, the Council voted to place "the human rights situation in Palestine and other occupied Arab territories" on its permanent agenda, in effect making Israel the only country subject to scrutiny under a stand-alone agenda item (also known as "Item 7"). More than a decade later, the U.S. is once again side-lining itself in Geneva, with a familiar pattern of consequences: during the Council's most recent regular session, a representative of a pro-Israel NGO was prevented from completing a speech at the Item 7 debate after several member states, including Cuba, challenged his remarks on procedural grounds. Had the U.S. actually been in the room and able to intervene, it's unlikely this incident would've played out the way it did. Unfortunately, it seems as though history is repeating itself: just like in 2006, the U.S. is forfeiting its seat at the table, and as a result, Israel is left even more isolated and exposed to criticism than before. What makes this all the more frustrating is that, during the years when we engaged constructively with the Council (2009-2018), UNHRC actions targeting Israel actually declined.

- The U.S. is the strongest country in the world, shouldn't we fight for our allies?

Answer. When the United States made the decision to withdraw from the U.N. Human Rights Council, the Israel government called it a "courageous decision against hypocrisy and lies."

Question. In response to the decision to withdraw from the Council, 12 civil society organizations sent a letter to Secretary Pompeo urging the Department of State to review this decision, to seek reelection to the U.N. Human Rights Council in 2019, and to continue to advance reforms in the Human Rights Council. These groups noted that the "decision is counterproductive to American national security and foreign policy interests and will make it more difficult to advance human rights priorities around the world. In fact, a 2017 study by the Council on Foreign Relations found that two successive terms of U.S. membership on the U.N. Human Rights Council improved its performance in several ways. First, U.S. involvement strengthened the council's commitment to action within specific countries like Burundi, Iran, Myanmar, North Korea, and Syria; fortifying norms like freedom of association, assembly and religion; as well as the protecting the rights of at-risk populations. Second, the CFR Report noted a significant decline in anti-Israel resolutions during U.S. membership and concluded, U.S. participation in the UNHRC can advance U.S. interests and lessen anti-Israel bias while supporting measures to avert

and de-escalate human rights crises, thus reducing the likelihood of costly military interventions."

- Do you agree that being part of body that enhances our interests and reduces anti-Israel bias is a good outcome? Given the recent attack on human rights globally, shouldn't we pursue policies that human rights organizations deem in our interest?

Answer. The administration made a concerted effort to encourage Human Rights Council members to undertake significant reforms to improve its membership guidelines and end its history of anti-Israel bias. When those reform recommendations fell on deaf ears, the United States decided the time had come to withdraw.

RESPONSES TO ADDITIONAL QUESTIONS FOR THE RECORD
SUBMITTED TO ANDREW P. BREMBERG BY SENATOR EDWARD J. MARKEY

Question. In 2017, nearly 29,000 Americans died from overdosing on a synthetic opioid, such as fentanyl. To date, the administration's policies have not been effective in stemming the flow of fentanyl into the United States. If confirmed, how would you use your role at the U.N. to advocate for meaningful diplomatic action to stop fentanyl from entering this country?

Answer. If confirmed, I would use the existing U.N. drug control treaty framework to facilitate international cooperation to curb the illicit production, trafficking, and distribution of fentanyl, and to accelerate the rate at which dangerous synthetic drugs are placed under international control. I would also promote cooperation with the Universal Postal Union to increase the exchange of advanced electronic data that can detect and deter fentanyl in the international mail.

I would urge countries to support programming within the World Health Organization, U.N. Office on Drugs and Crime, and International Narcotics Control Board to build foreign capacity to stop fentanyl before it reaches our shores.

Question. If confirmed, you will also be working with the World Health Organization to address U.S. health priorities. The WHO says that preventing opioid overdoses will involve increasing access to treatment for opioid dependence. Medicaid is the U.S.'s largest payer of mental health services, which include treatments for substance use disorder. And the Affordable Care Act included key consumer protections—like guaranteed coverage for individuals with pre-existing conditions—that makes access to opioid use disorder treatment much easier for the individuals who need it most. As the Director of the Domestic Policy Council, you signed off on policies that would undermine these health care lifelines and would ultimately hamper our domestic response to the opioid overdose crisis. How would you reconcile the differences between the WHO's recommendations to expand access to opioid treatment and your support of policies that would restrict access to this life-saving treatment?

Answer. The Trump administration has led unprecedented efforts to ensure that everyone who needs treatment for opioid use disorder (OUD) receives it. We have emphasized that medication-assisted treatment (MAT) is the cornerstone of treatment for OUD, and now over 1.1 million people are receiving MAT. Since President Trump's inauguration, there has been a 25 percent increase in patients receiving buprenorphine, and monthly prescriptions for naltrexone are up 48 percent. Most importantly, overdose deaths have begun to decline.

RESPONSES TO ADDITIONAL QUESTIONS FOR THE RECORD
SUBMITTED TO PHILIP S. GOLDBERG BY SENATOR ROBERT MENENDEZ

Colombia Peace Process

Question. Achieving peace after decades of conflict is always a challenging and complicated endeavor, but during the last several months, implementation of Colombia's historic peace accord has been uneven and the subject of intense debate between political stakeholders in Colombia. After an initial phase of demobilization and disarmament, Bogotμ is struggling with the more costly stages of reintegration of ex-fighters, soaring illicit drug production, rural underdevelopment, and reparations to victims. Meanwhile, some combatants are returning to arms and human rights defenders and social leaders are being killed at alarming rates:

- If confirmed, what steps will you take as Ambassador to support the Colombian government in its efforts to overcome these obstacles and help ensure full implementation of the peace accord?

Answer. The United States strongly supports a sustainable peace in Colombia, one of our strongest partners in the Western Hemisphere. If confirmed, I will maximize the embassy's use of available resources, use funding as efficiently as possible to support the Colombian government in its pursuit of peace, and continue longstanding U.S. support for peace in Colombia. U.S. assistance to Colombia is vital to our efforts to combat narcotics trafficking and achieve lasting peace in Colombia. Our assistance constitutes only a fraction of Colombia's own investment in its peace, but between FY 2000 and FY 2017, U.S. assistance totaled roughly $10 billion to support Plan Colombia and its follow-on programs. At the same time, Colombia invested billions more, achieving notable progress in combating drug trafficking and terrorist activities and reestablishing government control over much of its territory.

Colombian Coca Cultivation and Cocaine Production

Question. Colombian coca cultivation and cocaine production are at historic levels. While the Duque administration is expanding Colombia's response, the effects are widespread. More coca yields more cocaine, which yields more illicit profits and, in turn, leads to greater violence and criminal activity. It would seem that we've thrown everything at the problem and it continues unabated.

- As our next Ambassador, if you are confirmed, what concrete steps would you take to ensure that we are working in close collaboration with our Colombian partners to on a comprehensive response that attacks every link of the production chain, including cultivation, interdiction, violence, and related money laundering and financial crimes?

Answer. If confirmed, I would continue to ensure effective U.S. support for Colombia's whole-of-government counternarcotic strategy in order to meet the U.S.-Colombia goal to cut coca cultivation and cocaine production by half of 2017 levels by the end of 2023. Because of the U.S.-Colombia partnership, there is already progress towards this goal. For example, Colombia destroyed over 60 percent more coca in 2019 than the same period in 2018. Still, the Colombian and U.S. governments need to do more to meet our goal.

If confirmed, I will encourage the Colombian government to increase civilian eradication groups, maritime interdiction, push for the extradition to the United States of high-level drug traffickers, and strengthen support for rule of law programs that will help Colombians prosecute complex money laundering and financial crimes cases. If confirmed, I would also work to ensure the United States supports Colombians' efforts to expand state presence into rural areas to enhance development and security in high-coca growing regions.

The Impact of Venezuela's Crisis on Colombia

Question. Venezuela's tragic humanitarian crisis is having a destabilizing impact on the region and the U.N. reports that more than four million Venezuelans have fled their country in recent years. Colombia is the largest recipient of Venezuelan refugees, with more than one million Venezuelan migrants now residing there. This year, the World Bank announced concessional funding for Colombia to respond to the Venezuelan migrant and refugee crisis-a process that was supported by various countries, even though the U.S. abstained. While the Administration has provided approximately $250 million to respond to this humanitarian crisis, I'm concerned that more will be needed to address the crisis:

- What is your assessment of the role the United States in addressing the Venezuelan crisis, particularly as it refers to the more than one million Venezuelans that now reside in Colombia? In your view, what else can the United States do to support Colombia in addressing this issue?

Answer. The USG has committed nearly $130 million in aid to respond to the influx of Venezuelans in Colombia since FY 2017, including approximately $37 million in development assistance and more than $91 million in humanitarian assistance. This funding supports Colombia's efforts to assist Venezuelan refugees and the communities that host them. In addition to this support, the FY 2019 appropriation includes $418.3 million in bilateral assistance for Colombia. This includes robust support for priorities such as our joint goal to reduce coca cultivation and cocaine production by 50 percent by the end of 2023, as well as peace implementation.

If confirmed, I would encourage Colombia to increase Colombia's regional collaboration with international partners to address the crisis.

Responsiveness

Question. Do you commit to respond promptly to all requests for information by Members of this committee?

Answer. Yes.

Question. Do you commit to appear before this committee upon request?

Answer. Yes.

Question. If you become aware of any suspected waste, fraud, or abuse in the Department, do you commit to report it to the Inspector General?

Answer. Yes.

Administrative

Question. Please list any outside positions and affiliations you plan to continue to hold during your term of appointment.

Answer. I do not have any outside positions and affiliations I plan to continue to hold during my term of appointment.

Question. Have you ever been an officer or director of a company that has filed for bankruptcy? If so, describe the circumstances and disposition.

Answer. No.

Question. If you leave this position before the completion of your full term of the next presidential election, do you commit to meeting with the committee to discuss the reasons for your departure?

Answer. Yes.

Question. Has anyone ever made a formal or informal complaint or allegation of sexual harassment, discrimination (e.g., racial, ethnic, religious, etc.), or inappropriate conduct against you, in a workplace or any other setting? If so, please describe the nature of the complaint or allegation, your response, and any resolution, including any settlements.

Answer. No.

Question. Have you ever addressed concerns or allegations of sexual harassment, discrimination (e.g., racial, ethnic, religious, etc.), or inappropriate conduct made against any employee over whom you had supervisory authority? If so, please describe the outcome and actions taken.

Answer. No.

Question. Do you agree that any targeting of or retaliation against career employees based on their perceived political beliefs, prior work on policy, or affiliation with a previous administration, is wholly inappropriate and has no place in the federal government? If confirmed, what will you do to ensure that all employees under your leadership understand that any retaliation, blacklisting, or other prohibited personnel practices will not be tolerated?

Answer. Yes, I agree that any targeting of or retaliation against career employees based on their perceived political beliefs, prior work on policy, or affiliation with a previous administration, is wholly inappropriate and has no place in the federal government.

RESPONSES TO ADDITIONAL QUESTIONS FOR THE RECORD
SUBMITTED TO PHILIP S. GOLDBERG BY SENATOR BENJAMIN L. CARDIN

Question. What are your most meaningful achievements to date in your career to promote human rights and democracy? What has been the impact of your actions?

Answer. The promotion of human rights and democracy has been central to my career as a Foreign Service Officer, Chief of Mission, and Assistant Secretary of State for INR. In Colombia, I worked with former M-19 guerrillas returning to the legal, democratic political process: they ultimately took seats in the constitutional assembly and integrated into civilian life. During the lead up to democratic, nonracial elections in South Africa, I was a liaison with the African National Congress, working with USAID and other U.S. agencies to prepare the party's economic officials on free market and democratic principles, as they got ready to enter government. As a Chief of Mission in Kosovo, I was an advocate for promoting minority rights in the Serb community and assuring the transition to democratic elections and independence. In Bolivia, I maintained contact with the democratic opposition

and independent journalists despite fierce resistance from the Morales government. In the Philippines, I helped the Aquino government establish a unit to investigate human rights cases involving attacks against journalists and reinstated assistance to NGOs to serve as election observers. When President Duterte came to office, I challenged publicly and privately the human rights abuses associated with his anti-drug campaign and authorized increased human rights training for police officials.

Under my leadership in INR, we expanded the work of our Humanitarian Affairs Unit, focusing on the crisis in Syria and other war zones, and increased efforts on the treatment of women and minority groups around the world.

Question. What are the most pressing human rights issues in Colombia? What are the most important steps you expect to take—if confirmed—to promote human rights and democracy in Colombia? What do you hope to accomplish through these actions?

Answer. Colombia continues to make progress on human rights issues, including through its efforts to implement the historic 2016 peace accord with the FARC. It is hard to overstate the human rights benefits of ending the hemisphere's longest-running armed conflict, which cost the lives of more than 250,000 and displaced millions. Ending this conflict has permitted the Colombian government to take steps to bring justice to victims and their families, fight narcotrafficking and organized crime by extending the reach of state institutions to former conflict zones, reduce violence, and protect human rights in Colombia.

The United States has a clear interest in supporting a stronger, stable Colombia that protects human rights. The implementation of a comprehensive plan to provide government services in remote areas will be important to sustain peace, increase counternarcotics and counter-transnational crime efforts, ensure citizen security, and prevent violence against defenders of human rights and social activists. Addressing human rights challenges is essential to build the just and lasting peace the Colombian people deserve. If confirmed, I will engage with the Colombian government, civil society, the private sector, journalists, and the international community to support and encourage Colombia's efforts to secure continued progress on human rights.

Question. If confirmed, what are the potential obstacles to addressing the specific human rights issues you have identified in your previous response? What challenges will you face in Colombia in advancing human rights, civil society and democracy in general?

Answer. Colombia is a consolidated democracy undertaking laudable efforts to improve the transparency and accountability of its own governance and defend democracy abroad. The Colombian government has prioritized human rights and made advances on some important cases, but some challenges remain. I consider human rights and social inclusion to be issues central to Colombia's ability to secure a just and lasting peace. If confirmed, I would stress to the Colombian government the need to fill power vacuums in areas formerly controlled by the FARC. The Colombian government's challenge is to establish a comprehensive state presence to provide not only security services but also education, infrastructure, local governance, and victims' assistance to deny criminal groups a foothold. I would also continue to support the Colombian government's efforts to dismantle the illegal armed groups responsible for many crimes against human rights defenders, and to urge thorough investigations and prosecutions into these crimes.

Colombia's marginalized populations, including Afro-Colombians, indigenous people, internally displaced persons, women, and children, continue to suffer disproportionately from forced displacement, sexual violence, and social exclusion. If confirmed, I will encourage the Colombian government to implement measures to guarantee the rights of those most affected by conflict and include marginalized populations in all phases of peace implementation.

Question. Are you committed to meeting with human rights, civil society and other non-governmental organizations in the U.S. and with local human rights NGOs in Colombia? If confirmed, what steps will you take to pro-actively support the Leahy Law and similar efforts, and ensure that provisions of U.S. security assistance and security cooperation activities reinforce human rights?

Answer. Yes. The protection of human rights has long been a core component of U.S.-Colombian relations and a central value of our foreign policy. The NGO community plays a vital role in shining a light on human rights issues and challenges, and has valuable contributions and perspectives to share. There is a vibrant community of NGOs and civil society organizations focused on human rights issues in Colombia. If confirmed, I will continue the United States' longstanding tradition of engaging regularly on these issues with NGOs based in the United States and in Co-

lombia and Colombian civil society organizations to understand their concerns and seek their input and proposals.

The Leahy Law not only advances our human rights agenda but also promotes the professionalization of the security forces with which we partner, making them better security partners. If confirmed, I will work closely with the Embassy Team, Colombian government, and civil society to ensure we direct all U.S. assistance to rights-respecting security forces in an efficient and effective manner in accordance with U.S. law. In accordance with the Leahy law, I will ensure no assistance or equipment is provided to Colombia security forces that commit gross violations of human rights. Leahy vetting plays an important role in furthering U.S. government programs and objectives on human rights and encourages security force professionalization.

Question. Will you and your embassy team actively engage with Colombia to address cases of key political prisoners or persons otherwise unjustly targeted by Colombia?

Answer. It is my understanding that the United States is not aware of any political prisoners in Colombia, or unjust targeting of individuals. If confirmed, I would certainly engage the government in the event this becomes an issue.

Question. Will you engage with Colombia on matters of human rights, civil rights and governance as part of your bilateral mission?

Answer. Yes. If confirmed, I will engage with Colombia on matters of human rights, civil rights, and governance as part of our bilateral mission. Colombia is a close friend of the United States, and our countries have long enjoyed outstanding cooperation on a range of issues. As a close partner, I will work with the Colombian government to continue to encourage improvements on matters of human rights, civil rights, and governance through a variety of approaches, including programming, regular diplomatic engagement, and high-level dialogues with the Colombian government. I look forward to continuing and expanding upon our close collaboration on these issues in multiple fora.

Question. Do you commit to bring to the committee's attention (and the State Department Inspector General) any change in policy or U.S. actions that you suspect may be influenced by any of the President's business or financial interests, or the business or financial interests of any senior White House staff?

Answer. I commit to comply with all relevant federal ethics laws, regulations, and rules, and to raise concerns that I may have through appropriate channels.

Question. Do you commit to inform the committee if you have any reason to suspect that a foreign government, head of state, or foreign-controlled entity is taking any action in order to benefit any of the President's business or financial interests, or the interests of senior White House staff?

Answer. I commit to comply with all relevant federal ethics laws, regulations, and rules, and to raise concerns that I may have through appropriate channels.

Question. Do you or do any members of your immediate family have any financial interests in Colombia?

Answer. No. Nonetheless, I am committed to ensuring that my official actions will not give rise to a conflict of interest and I will remain vigilant with regard to my ethics obligations.

Question. Research from private industry demonstrates that, when managed well, diversity makes business teams better both in terms of creativity and in terms of productivity. What will you do to promote, mentor and support your staff that come from diverse backgrounds and underrepresented groups in the Foreign Service?

Answer. If confirmed, I commit to promote, mentor and support all staff, including those from diverse backgrounds and underrepresented groups. I will be guided by U.S. law and policies, but also by my personal appreciation that discrimination can harm not only individual employees but also the workplace and the larger institution. I recognize that each individual employee brings unique strengths and weaknesses; and I will encourage each to do, and achieve, their best, and to help foster a work environment that both reflects and draws upon the rich composition of America's citizenry.

I assure you that, if confirmed, I will consider diversity when seeking to fill high-level positions at the U.S. Mission in Colombia, as I have done in past assignments. I am committed to mentoring all staff members, but especially those from diverse backgrounds and under-represented groups.

Question. What steps will you take to ensure each of the supervisors at the Embassy are fostering an environment that is diverse and inclusive?

Answer. If confirmed, I will ensure that Embassy supervisors hear from me, and see from my own behavior, that encouragement of such an environment is expected from all Embassy leaders. I will ensure that Country Team members—as well as lower-level supervisors—understand their individual responsibilities to provide mentoring and guidance to all members of their teams, with specific emphasis on diversity and inclusiveness. I will ensure that performance, as it relates to such issues, is covered as appropriate, in ratings and evaluations, as these supervisors seek to advance their own careers and serve as examples for their employees and our institution.

Question. How do you believe political corruption impacts democratic governance and the rule of law generally, and in Colombia specifically?

Answer. Corruption is a worldwide problem and a growing political issue in many nations. Combatting corruption is linked closely to strengthening justice and rule of law. In Colombia, revenues from transnational organized crime, including drug trafficking, also exacerbate corruption challenges. Expanding justice services to rural areas, combatting narcotrafficking, and strengthening rule of law have been essential components of peace implementation efforts and are key to continued progress on combatting corruption.

Question. What is your assessment of corruption trends in Colombia and efforts to address and reduce it by that government?

Answer. Colombia has undertaken serious efforts to address corruption concerns. The breaking of the Odebrecht scandal launched corruption to the forefront of Colombia's political dialogue. In 2018, Colombian voters made clear that they strongly supported anti-corruption measures, with more than 11.5 million citizens voting in favor of proposals on accountability and transparency measures.

Since taking office, President Duque has sought congressional support for his anti-corruption initiatives. The offices of the attorney general and inspector general have publicly identified anticorruption efforts as priorities for their institutions and have achieved some important results. At a June 2018 forum, the Inspector General signed a transparency and anti-corruption pact with business community representatives. The Attorney General's office launched the "Bolsas de Cristal" anticorruption initiative and it continues to investigate and prosecute cases related to the Odebrecht scandal. In March 2018, the Colombian Supreme Court sentenced former top anticorruption official Luis Gustavo Moreno Rivera to four years and 10 months in prison on corruption charges. Reducing corruption in Colombia will require continuing and building on such efforts.

Question. If confirmed, what steps will you take to strengthen good governance and anticorruption programming in Colombia?

Answer. If confirmed, I will work with the Colombian government and its citizens to promote public transparency, accountability, and integrity. Key to advancing these priorities, in partnership with the Department of Justice, would include programming and efforts to strengthen rule of law and the capacity of our law enforcement partners; ensuring a level playing field for U.S. investors; and denying corrupt individuals access to U.S. financial systems and resources.

Venezuela Crisis

Question. Colombia's response to the Venezuelan migration crisis should serve as a model to other countries:

- How can we highlight Colombia's example to other countries in the region?

Answer. Colombia's leadership on Venezuela is extraordinary and their generosity in hosting fleeing Venezuelans has been a vital component of the regional response to the Venezuelan crisis. The United States strongly supports Colombia and governments in the region. If confirmed, I will work with them to restore democracy to Venezuela and mitigate the ongoing humanitarian crisis.

Question. How can the United States support Colombia's efforts?

Answer. The U.S. government has committed nearly $130 million in aid to respond to the influx of Venezuelans in Colombia since FY 2017, including $37.1 million in development assistance and $91 million in humanitarian assistance. This funding supports Colombia's efforts to assist Venezuelan refugees as well as the communities that host them. The United States continues to encourage additional contributions from donors to international organizations to meet growing needs. If

confirmed, I will work with Colombia on efforts to restore democracy to Venezuela and mitigate the ongoing humanitarian crisis.

Question. Are you concerned that the Venezuela crisis could detract from Colombia's ability to fully implement the peace accords?

Answer. Colombia is a vital strategic partner. The United States and Colombia share many priorities, including coordinating a regional response to the crisis in Venezuela, supporting sustainable peace in Colombia, and combatting narcotics trafficking and transnational crime. U.S. foreign assistance is crucial to support Colombia's efforts both to respond to the Venezuela crisis and to implement peace.

The FY 2019 appropriation includes $418.3 million in bilateral assistance for Colombia, which includes robust support for priorities such as peace implementation and our joint goal to reduce coca cultivation and cocaine production by 50 percent by the end of 2023. Separately, to support Colombia in its response to the Venezuelan crisis, the U.S. government has committed nearly $130 million in aid to respond to the influx of Venezuelans in Colombia since FY 2017. If confirmed, I will work with the Colombian government to advance peace implementation and to work with partners to ensure a coordinated regional response to the Venezuelan crisis.

Question. If so, how would you work to help Colombia balance these competing priorities?

Answer. The United States strongly supports Colombia's efforts to secure a lasting peace. Colombia remains one of our strongest partners in the region, including on pressuring the former Maduro regime and responding to the Venezuelan crisis, and successful implementation of the peace accord is in the national interest of both our nations.

If confirmed, I will work with the Colombian government to support our joint efforts to implement the peace accord and to restore democracy to Venezuela. Regarding Venezuela, if confirmed, I will work with partners to encourage a coordinated regional response to the Venezuelan crisis, as well as encourage additional contributions from donors to international organizations such as IOM, PAHO, and UNCHR to meet growing needs and effectively support efforts—particularly those of frontline states such as Colombia.

Question. Colombia is increasingly serving as a strategic partner for the United States internationally from Central America to Afghanistan:

- Where do you anticipate us expanding this cooperation in coming years?

Answer. Colombia is one of our strongest and most capable partners in the hemisphere. If confirmed, I would encourage Colombia's continued support for U.S. regional and global security objectives. For example, if confirmed, I would work with the Colombian government to advance the administration's strategy to enhance regional cooperation against transnational criminal networks and expand the promotion rule of law and democracy in the region. In addition, Colombia's efforts in areas such as U.N. peacekeeping operations, security force training in Central America, and sharing peace-building expertise in Afghanistan are complementary and advance security throughout the hemisphere and beyond.

Question. I am concerned about the high number of attacks against human rights defenders.

- How would you engage with the Colombian government to protect those facing threats?

Answer. A strong, stable Colombia that protects human rights is in the U.S. interest. I share your concern for the killing of human rights defenders, who have an essential role to play in building a durable peace in Colombia. I understand the Attorney General's Office has made important efforts to improve accountability by prioritizing investigations into recent cases of killings of human rights defenders. It is important that those responsible for these crimes be held accountable. I understand the U.S. government is supporting the Colombian government's efforts to carry out prompt and effective investigations of these cases, and to improve the security situation where these killings are taking place and disrupt the illegal activity that contributes to continued violence. Introducing state services and extending economic opportunity in conflict-affected areas is fundamental to ensure that citizens' rights are protected and to deny a foothold to illegal armed groups and criminal organizations.

The U.S. government has long encouraged Colombia to improve its human rights environment through a variety of approaches, including foreign assistance programming, regular diplomatic engagement, and high-level dialogues with the Colombian government and civil society. If confirmed, I will continue to support Colombia's ef-

forts to ensure human rights defenders and social leaders can accomplish their vital work towards a just and lasting peace.

RESPONSES TO ADDITIONAL QUESTIONS FOR THE RECORD
SUBMITTED TO HON. PHILIP GOLDBERG BY SENATOR JEANNE SHAHEEN

Question. How would you propose expanding efforts to intercept ships heading out of Colombian waters, and how best can we increase coordination between Colombia, SOUTHCOM, the Mexican government and other Central American governments?

Answer. If confirmed, I would make the Colombian Pacific coast an area of key focus for our joint counternarcotics efforts, since the majority of cocaine shipped to the United States flows through this corridor. The best way to tackle this challenge is by helping Colombia expand its multilateral approach to maritime interdiction and go after key drug traffickers in this region. Over the past year, the Colombian Navy led three impressive multi-nation maritime interdiction operations, which included Mexico and several Central American countries, and led to the seizure of nearly 100 metric tons of cocaine, denying narcotraffickers approximately $3.2 billion in revenue. If confirmed, I would support efforts to build on these successes and increase coordination between Colombia, SOUTHCOM, Mexico, and Central America to better disrupt the flow of drugs and prevent siphon off revenue to these criminal groups.

Question. What additional steps would you recommend in order for the U.S. to provide resources and technical assistance to the government of Colombia to investigate and, if necessary, freeze assets and step up asset forfeiture procedures?

Answer. The United States and Colombia have both provided significant resources to address our shared priorities. In particular, the Colombian government is a committed partner in cracking down on money laundering. President Duque's counternarcotics strategy prioritizes countering money laundering and financial crimes as one of its five pillars. If confirmed, I would work with the Colombians to develop mechanisms to re-invest liquidated assets into the relevant institutions in order to transform its asset forfeiture system into a self-sustaining "virtuous circle" that can further support counternarcotics efforts.

Question. How would you assess the commitment and capability of the Colombian government to crack down on money laundering?

Answer. Colombia is one of our strongest partners in the Western Hemisphere, and President Duque's government has demonstrated commitment in cracking down on money laundering. Specifically, President Duque's counternarcotics strategy prioritizes countering money laundering and financial crimes as one of its five pillars. If confirmed, I would ensure the U.S. government continues to work closely with Colombia to support this pillar with robust law enforcement and judicial support in order to expand Colombia's capacity to investigate and prosecute complex financial crimes and most effectively address money laundering challenges.Question 4:

Colombia has taken in thousands of Venezuelan refugees since the escalation of the crisis there. In your assessment, does Colombia have the assistance and resources it needs to meet the needs of the refugee population?

Answer. Colombia's leadership on Venezuela is extraordinary and the generosity of Colombians in hosting fleeing Venezuelans has been a vital component of the regional response to the Venezuelan crisis. To help Colombia respond to this influx of Venezuelans, the U.S. government has committed nearly $130 million in aid to Colombia since FY 2017, including approximately $37 million in development and economic assistance and more than $91 million in humanitarian assistance. This funding complements Colombia's own efforts to assist Venezuelan refugees and migrants and the communities that host them.

Question. If confirmed, how will you work to ensure that U.S. policy in Colombia and across the region addresses the root causes of migration?

Answer. The United States continues to engage all diplomatic and economic options to support Venezuela's Interim President Guaido. Only through a peaceful democratic transition can Venezuela resolve the root causes of the forced displacement of millions of migrants and refugees. To that end, the United States government has made clear that all options remain on the table while it continues to engage on all diplomatic and economic fronts to support Interim Venezuelan President Juan Guaido and the Venezuelan people's pursuit of freedom.

If confirmed, I will work with Colombia on efforts to restore democracy to Venezuela and encourage Colombia to continue their strong engagement with regional partners to ensure a coordinated regional response to the Venezuelan crisis.

RESPONSE TO AN ADDITIONAL QUESTION FOR THE RECORD
SUBMITTED TO HON. PHILIP GOLDBERG BY SENATOR EDWARD J. MARKEY

Question. Should you be confirmed, you will need to address human rights concerns that the United States has in Colombia, including reports of abuses by security forces and threats against human rights defenders, journalists, and indigenous groups. During your time as ambassador to the Philippines, you saw first-hand a government that was committing similar forms of abuses. The Duterte government, which has carried out extrajudicial killings in its war on drugs, has weaponized the legal system to go after journalists and opposition leaders.

- Can you give us your assessment of the state of human rights in the Philippines, and how your experience there will affect how you handle human rights issues in Colombia, if you are confirmed?

Answer. Under my tenure as Ambassador to the Philippines, the United States consistently engaged the Philippine government on human rights issues. This was particularly true during my last few months in the Philippines, when I and the embassy engaged publicly and privately on many occasions to address the new Duterte government's actions. The U.S.-Philippines relationship is built on a history of shared values for democracy and human rights. The United States supported the capacity of Philippine institutions, including through U.S. judicial sector training aimed to strengthen the rule of law, due process, and respect for human rights.

If confirmed, as in the Philippines, I will continue to engage with the Colombian government, civil society, the private sector, and the international community to support Colombia's efforts to secure continued progress on human rights.

RESPONSES TO ADDITIONAL QUESTIONS FOR THE RECORD
SUBMITTED TO DOUGLAS MANCHESTER BY SENATOR ROBERT MENENDEZ

Addressing Employee Complaints

Question. In a Washington Post article describing the work environment at the San Diego Union-Tribune and U-T-TV, you were quoted as saying when you learned of "egregious mistakes" by staff, you took action.

- What were those mistakes?

Answer. I did not manage the day-to-day operations of the company and its subsidiary, but when I learned of the possible mistakes, I directed Human Resources personnel to take appropriate action towards those individuals. Please see, as an addendum to this answer, the San Diego Union Tribune, LLC Employee Handbook, page 24. According to Human Resources, there were violations of our policies as stated in the Employee Handbook.

Question. What actions, specifically, did you take? Did you institute any disciplinary actions? Did you fire anyone?

Answer. I advised Human Resources to take appropriate disciplinary action including termination. I was advised there were two terminations.

Question. Did you institute any reforms or training in response to the concerns that were raised at the San Diego Union-Tribune or U-T-TV?

Answer. Yes, we instituted mandatory multi-hour sexual harassment training required of each employee within six months of employment and continued training every two years.

Question. Did anyone ever raise complaints or concerns with you personally? Did you learn of concerns or complaints through others?

Answer. I have never had any complaints or concerns raised about me personally. In 55 years of business, having founded 27 companies and employed over 6,000 employees, I have never personally been named in any sexual misconduct claims.

Question. Do you commit that, if confirmed, you will take immediate steps to address any claims of harassment or discrimination brought to your attention, and

that you will work to foster a professional environment for all employees, regardless of gender or background?

Answer. Yes, you have my commitment that, if confirmed, I will take immediate steps to address any claims of harassment or discrimination brought to my attention, and I will work to foster a professional environment for all employees, regardless of gender or background.

Question. If confirmed, you will be chief of mission in the Bahamas, meaning you will be in charge of a large staff of U.S. and foreign service national employees, men and women from all different backgrounds.

What are your plans to foster a healthy and inclusive work environment? Please provide concrete examples indicative of your thinking in this area.

Answer. If confirmed, I will work extremely hard to remind everyone that they are doing an incredible job for our country and to build a cooperative team environment that is all-inclusive to all genders, religions and ethnic backgrounds. I will work to foster mutual respect and will remind the employees that their work is appreciated by all those in the United States and the Sovereign nation of the Bahamas. To achieve this I will adopt an open door policy and encourage direct communication.

Question. Have you familiarized yourself with federal government rules and regulations designed to prevent sexual and other forms of harassment and to appropriately respond to claims of such harassment?

Answer.Yes, I have familiarized myself with federal government rules and regulations designed to prevent sexual and other forms of harassment and to appropriately respond to claims of such harassment.

Question. What assurances can you provide to this committee that you will treat all employees, regardless of gender, race, ethnicity, or background, fairly, equally, and with respect?

Answer. With a proven record of 55 years in business, I have always believed that two heads are better than one and three are better than two, etc. I would encourage a team-like atmosphere that would call on all mission personnel to contribute to the success of the mission. Specifically, I would create an environment where all personnel are encouraged to express any concerns or criticism without fear of reprisal.

Question. Did you, in your personal capacity, hire a lobbying or public affairs group to support your nomination process? If so, please provide the name of the entity, the dates of the contract, payment amounts and dates.

- Did Manchester Financial Group hire a lobbying or public affairs group to support your nomination process? If so, please provide the name of the entity, the dates of the contract, and payment amounts and dates.

Answer. Manchester Financial hired Banner Public Affairs in March 2018, initially for a two-month period for an amount of $20,000. Their professional services have included discussions about options for branding and marketing hotels owned by Manchester Financial Group, advocacy options for regulatory issues related to the construction and operation of hotels, public affairs issues related to the nomination of the company's founder to be Ambassador to The Bahamas, rebuttal of inaccurate and misleading statements about the chairman emeritus that appeared in the media as a result of his nomination, and representational contact to gain information about the status of the nomination and seek a vote on the nomination.

Question. In the event that the Manchester Financial Group hired a lobbying or public affairs group to support your nomination process:

- Did you direct the Manchester Financial Group to hire a lobbying or public affairs group to support your nomination? If not, who made that decision?

Answer. Yes

Question. What benefit did the Manchester Financial Group stand to gain from hiring a lobbying or public affairs group on your behalf?

Answer. Manchester Financial Group benefitted from better awareness of options related to its brand and marketing activities, as well as the accurate public perception of its operations and chairman emeritus, including as a result of media stemming from his nomination, which is essential to the operations of the company.

Question. Did you or Manchester Financial Group seek guidance, authorization, or approval from the U.S. Department of State prior to hiring a lobbying or public affairs group to support your nomination process? If not, why not? If yes, did you

receive guidance, authorization, or approval from the U.S. Department of State? If so, please provide a copy and any supporting documentation.

Answer. No, I was not and am not aware of any requirement to do so.

Question. Did a lobbying or public affairs group assist you with your answers to these questions or any other written questions for the record submitted to you by members of the Senate Foreign Relations Committee related to your confirmation hearing on June 20, 2019? If so, please describe what assistance the entity provided you.

Answer.Yes, the lobbying and public affairs group listed above reviewed questions and answers related to its services and provided feedback on questions stemming from media reports.

Question. Do you commit to respond promptly to all requests for information by Members of this committee?

Answer.Yes. I will work through the Department's Bureau of Legislative Affairs to respond to Congressional requests.

Question. Do you commit to appear before this committee upon request?

Answer.Yes.

Question. If you become aware of any suspected waste, fraud, or abuse in the Department, do you commit to report it to the Inspector General?

Answer.I am committed to the highest standards of government accountability. Should I become aware of any waste, fraud, or abuse, I will report it to the appropriate Department authorities to include the Inspector General.

Question. Please list any outside positions and affiliations you plan to continue to hold during your term of appointment.

Answer. I do not plan to hold any positions or affiliations during my term of appointment and if confirmed, I commit to fully comply with all stipulations as outlined in my ethics agreement.

Question. Have you ever been an officer or director of a company that has filed for bankruptcy? If so, describe the circumstances and disposition.

Answer.No, I have not been an officer or director of a company that has filed for bankruptcy.

Question. If you leave this position before the completion of your full term of the next presidential election, do you commit to meeting with the committee to discuss the reasons for your departure?

Answer.Yes.

Question. Other than the claims referred to above, has anyone ever made a formal or informal complaint or allegation of sexual harassment, discrimination (e.g., racial, ethnic, religious, etc.), or inappropriate conduct against you, in a workplace or any other setting? If so, please describe the nature of the complaint or allegation, your response, and any resolution, including any settlements.

Answer. I have never had any complaints or concerns raised about me personally in a workplace or any other setting. In 55 years of business, having founded 27 companies and employed over 6,000 employees, I have never personally been named in any sexual misconduct claims.

Question. Have you ever addressed concerns or allegations of sexual harassment, discrimination (e.g., racial, ethnic, religious, etc.), or inappropriate conduct made against any employee over whom you had supervisory authority? If so, please describe the outcome and actions taken.

Answer. I did not manage the day-to-day operations of the company, but when I learned of possible accusations of sexual harassment, discrimination or inappropriate conduct by any employee, I directed Human Resources personnel to investigate the allegations and if necessary, take appropriate action towards those individuals, including termination. Please see, as an addendum to this answer, the San Diego Union Tribune, LLC Employee Handbook, page 24.

Question. Do you agree that any targeting of or retaliation against career employees based on their perceived political beliefs, prior work on policy, or affiliation with a previous administration, is wholly inappropriate and has no place in the federal government? If confirmed, what will you do to ensure that all employees under your leadership understand that any retaliation, blacklisting, or other prohibited personnel practices will not be tolerated?

Answer. Yes, I do agree that any targeting of or retaliation against career employees based on their perceived political beliefs, prior work on policy, or affiliation with a previous administration, is wholly inappropriate and has no place in the federal government.

I will follow established procedures necessary to assure that anyone that feels that they have been subjected to any retaliation, blacklisting or other prohibited personnel practices is aware of the Department's policies, resources, and procedures that ensure reporting without retaliation.

Question. Following up on one of the answers from Manchester's QFRs, we would like to review copies of any contracts between Manchester Financial Group and Banner Public Affairs.

Answer. Manchester Financial Group entered into an oral contractual agreement with Banner Public Affairs in March 2018. Banner Public Affairs was to advise regarding options for branding and marketing hotels owned by Manchester Financial Group, advocacy options for regulatory issues related to the construction and operation of hotels, public affairs issues related to the nomination of the company's founder to be Ambassador to The Bahamas, rebuttal of inaccurate and misleading statements about the chairman emeritus that appeared in the media as a result of his nomination, and representational contact to gain information about the status of the nomination and seek a vote on the nomination.

I personally paid Banner Public Affairs $10,000.00 on behalf of Manchester Financial Group on March 27, 2018 by wire transfer. Manchester Financial Group also paid a total of $30,000.00 to Banner Public Affairs. The first check was for $10,000.00 on May 14, 2018 and the second check was for $20,000.00 on July 31, 2018.

RELEVANT EXCERPTS FROM THE SAN DIEGO UNION-TRIBUNE EMPLOYEE HANDBOOK

THE SAN DIEGO UNION-TRIBUNE, LLC EMPLOYEE HANDBOOK

APRIL, 2015

Table of Contents

	Page
Introduction	1
SDUT – Inclusion And Diversity Commitment	1
About This Handbook	2
At-Will Employment Relationship	3
Equal Opportunity	3
Employee Classifications	3
Exempt/Non-Exempt Status	4
Employment of Relatives / Non Fraternization	4
Meal and Rest Periods	5
Attendance/Time Off/Leaves of Absence	7
Unexpected Absence	7
Personal Time	7
Leaves of Absence	7
Family and Medical Leave	8
Military Leave	11
Bereavement Leave	11
Jury Duty Leave	12
Parental Leave	12
Time off for Voting	12
Benefits	13
Medical & Dental Coverage	13
Other Insurance Benefits	13
Employee Assistance Program	14
Sick Leave	14
Paid Time Off	**Error! Bookmark not defined.**
Eligibility and Availability	14
Accrual and Payment of Vacation	15
Holidays	15

Paycheck/Direct Deposit 16
Time Cards 16
Mileage and Other Expenses 16
Final Paycheck 16
Records/Employment 17
Information/Reference Requests 17
Communications 17
Open Door Policy 17
Mutual Arbitration of Claims 17
Standards of Conduct 20
Impermissible Conduct 20
Social Media ..... **Error! Bookmark not defined.**
Personal Appearance 22
Telephone 22
Voice Mail 22
Computer Systems 22
Inspection of Company Property 23
Conflict of Interest and Protection of Confidential Information 23
Gifts and Tipping 24
Anti-Harassment/Discrimination. 24
Specifically Prohibited Conduct. 24
Complaint Procedure 25
Retaliation Prohibited. 25
Health/Safety 25
Illness or Injury on the Job 25
Wellness Programs 26
Injury and Illness Prevention Plan 26

Introduction

Welcome to THE SAN DIEGO UNION-TRIBUNE, LLC (the "Company" or the "San Diego Union-Tribune"). You have joined an important team dedicated to being the leader in providing news, information and marketing services indispensable to customers in our diverse region. You will find employees working to achieve this mission virtually 24 hours a day and 365 days a year.

This handbook has been prepared to answer questions about your job, benefits, and the general operation of the Company and to familiarize you with the Company's philosophy and guidelines. It also summarizes the Company's policies and benefits.

Information regarding the Company's benefits programs is provided for information purposes only. The official plan documents control in the event of any discrepancy. Please do not hesitate to ask questions. We welcome your interest and will do our best to give you a prompt response.

SDUT – Inclusion And Diversity Commitment

The Company values diversity at all levels and strives towards an inclusive, culturally-sensitive and respectful environment where the contributions of people of different backgrounds, experiences and perspectives can be recognized and valued. Our employees are comprised of men and women from different nations, cultures, ethnic groups, sexual orientation, generations, backgrounds, skills, and abilities.

We commit ourselves to continuously promote a better understanding and appreciation of each other, and that of the community we serve. Our commitment towards inclusion not only makes our company stronger, but enables us to support and achieve our Mission as a media company– to improve lives and build a stronger community through information, insight and ideas.

In this spirit, every Company employee is expected to embrace and actively support diversity and cultural competence and the richness and advantages they provide.

At-Will Employment Relationship

At The San Diego Union-Tribune, we want to provide opportunities for all employees to grow with us, both personally and professionally. Employment with the Company is at-will, unless otherwise specified in a written employment agreement. This means employment with the Company is not for any specified period and may be terminated by you or the Company at any time, with or without cause or advance notice. In connection with this policy, the Company reserves the right to modify or alter your position, in its sole discretion, with or without cause or advance notice, through actions other than termination, including demotion, promotion, transfer, change in reporting relationships, reclassification or reassignment.

In addition, the Company reserves the right to exercise its managerial discretion in imposing any form of discipline it deems appropriate. No person other than the CEO/President/Publisher has the authority to enter into an agreement contrary to this statement. To be valid, such agreement must be specific, in writing and signed by the CEO/President/Publisher and you.

Equal Opportunity

The Company is committed to providing equal employment opportunity to all persons on the basis of merit, qualifications and competency, without regard to race, color, religion, sex (including actual or perceived pregnancy, childbirth or related medical conditions), sexual orientation, gender identity, gender, national origin, ancestry, age, physical or mental disability, legally protected medical condition, veteran status, marital status or on any other basis protected by state or federal laws. When necessary, the Company makes reasonable accommodations for disabled employees and for pregnant employees who request an accommodation upon the advice of their health care provider.

Employee Classifications

All employees are assigned to an employee status category based upon the needs of the Company. You will be advised of your status at the time of hire and at the time of any change in status. These classifications do not guarantee employment for any specified period of time. Regardless of your status, you are employed at will and your employment relationship can be terminated by you or the Company at any time, with or without cause.

> REGULAR FULL-TIME employees are those who are not in a temporary status and who are regularly scheduled to work the applicable full-time work week. Generally, they are eligible for the Company's benefit package subject to the terms, conditions and limitations of each benefit program.

Records/Employment

It is important that your personnel records be current and up to date. It is your responsibility to notify your supervisor and the Human Resources Department of any change in your name, address or telephone number, emergency contact or vehicle license plate numbers.

Information/Reference Requests

The Company will keep your personnel file confidential, and generally will not disclose the contents of the file without your written permission. However, there are certain times when information may be given to persons outside the Company. These include, by way of example only, in response to a subpoena, court order, or order of an administrative agency; in a legal action in which the Company and you are parties; to administer employee benefit plans; and/or to a prospective employer requesting a verification of your employment (in the latter case, the Company will provide only the dates of your employment, your last or present job title, and confirmation of the fact that you were/are employed by the Company). With your written approval, the Company will release salary information for credit purposes.

Communications

We think that good communication is important to help you do your job, understand the Company and be informed about Company operations, plans and objectives. To that end, we use a variety of employee publications and programs.

Open Door Policy

The Company is committed to maintaining a positive and pleasant environment in which to work. If you encounter work-related problems, you are encouraged to discuss the problems with your immediate supervisor or department manager as soon as possible. If the problems are not solved to your satisfaction at the department level, you should discuss the matter with your department Director, a Human Resources representative and/or the President/CEO. The Company encourages employees, without regard to their positon in the Company, to exercise their privilege of requesting a meeting with any management representative.

Mutual Arbitration of Claims

Although the San Diego Union Tribune believes that most work-related issues can be resolved informally, the Company recognizes that in some instances, it may be necessary to resolve disputes through the legal system. In order to resolve fairly and quickly any and all disputes that may arise, the Company has a mutual

arbitration policy. The following Mutual Arbitration Agreement between you and the Company (and its subsidiaries and affiliates) provides detailed information about the arbitration process.

A. Final and binding arbitration before a single, neutral arbitrator shall be the exclusive remedy for any "Covered Claim" (as that term is hereinafter defined). A "*Covered Claim*" is any claim (except a claim that by law is non-arbitrable) that arises between you and the Company, its past, present, and future: parent(s), subsidiaries, affiliates, and/or their respective past, present, and future: officers, directors and/or employees, including but not limited to claims arising and/or relating in any way to your hiring, your employment with, and/or the severance of your employment with, the Company. This agreement applies to successor entities without the need for a formal assignment by the Company. This agreement includes any Covered Claim brought against a third-party, including but not limited to any client(s) and/or vendor(s) of the Company, and this provision can be enforced by any such third-party through a motion to compel arbitration, to the extent necessary. Covered Claims include, but are not limited to, any claim for breach of contract, for any provision of state labor code or a Wage Order, for unpaid fees, expenses, wages, or overtime, for unpaid compensation or penalties for missed meal or rest breaks, for wrongful termination, for unfair competition, for discrimination, harassment, or unlawful retaliation, for violation of the Fair Labor Standards Act, and for violation of the California Labor Code Private Attorneys General Act of 2004 (the "*PAGA*") or any applicable similar laws, to the full extent permitted by applicable law. Covered Claims do not include claims for workers' compensation, unemployment compensation benefits, disputes covered by a collective bargaining agreement, claims for unfair labor practices covered by the National Labor Relations Act, claims for employee benefits covered by the Employee Retirement Income Securities Act ("*ERISA Plan*"), or claims that are not arbitrable as a matter of law. Covered Claims also do not include any claims that are currently pending in litigation prior to the signing of this agreement. For purposes of this agreement only, "currently pending in litigation" means that a lawsuit has been filed against and served upon the Company. As to any Covered Claim, each party waives to the maximum extent permitted by law the right to jury trial and to bench trial, and the right to bring, maintain, or participate in any class, collective, or representative proceeding, including but not limited to under the PAGA or any other applicable similar laws, whether in arbitration or otherwise, to the full extent permitted by applicable law. Further, Covered Claims must be brought in the individual capacity of the party asserting the claim, and cannot be maintained on a class, collective, or representative basis, to the full extent permitted by applicable law. The arbitrator does not have the authority to consider, certify, or hear an arbitration as a class action, collective action, or any other type of representative action.

B. Arbitration will occur in the county in the United States in which you reside at the time the claim is filed by any of the parties to this agreement. Arbitration will be conducted pursuant to the AAA Employment Arbitration Rules and Mediation Procedures (the "*AAA Rules*"), except as expressly set forth herein or where such rules are not in compliance with applicable state or federal law. A copy of the AAA

Gifts and Tipping

Every customer is entitled to efficient and courteous service. Therefore, employees are not allowed to accept tips or gifts of more than nominal value from customers, visitors or news sources.

Anti-Harassment/Discrimination.

The San Diego Union-Tribune is committed to providing a work environment free of sexual or any other form of unlawful harassment or discrimination. In furtherance of this commitment, the Company provides harassment and discrimination training to its employees.

Harassment or unlawful discrimination against individuals on the basis of age, race, national origin, religion, sex, sexual orientation, gender, gender identity, actual or perceived pregnancy, disability or any other classification protected by local, state, or federal laws is illegal and prohibited by San Diego Union-Tribune policy. Such conduct by or towards any employee, contract worker, customer, vendor or anyone else who does business with the Company will not be tolerated. Any employee or contract worker who violates this policy will be subject to disciplinary action, up to and including termination of his/her employment or engagement. To the extent a customer, vendor or other person with whom the Company does business engages in unlawful harassment or discrimination, the Company will take appropriate corrective action.

Specifically Prohibited Conduct.

Sexual or other unlawful harassment or discrimination includes any verbal, physical or visual conduct based on age, race, national origin, religion, sex, sexual orientation, gender, gender identity, actual or perceived pregnancy, disability or any other classification protected by local, state, or federal laws where:

(i) submission to such conduct is made either explicitly or implicitly a term or condition of an individual's employment or engagement;

(ii) submission to or rejection of such conduct by an individual is used as a basis for decisions concerning that individual's employment or engagement; or

(iii) it creates a hostile or offensive work environment.

Sexual harassment includes unwelcome sexual advances, requests for sexual favors and lewd, vulgar or obscene remarks, jokes, posters or cartoons, and any unwelcome touching, pinching or other physical contact. Other forms of unlawful harassment or discrimination may include racial epithets, slurs and derogatory remarks, stereotypes, jokes, posters or cartoons based on race, national origin, age, disability, marital status or other legally protected categories. Harassing behavior will not be tolerated at the Company.

Complaint Procedure.

Employees or contract workers who feel that they have been harassed or discriminated against, or who witness any harassment or discrimination by an employee, contract worker, customer, vendor or anyone else who does business with the Company, should immediately report such conduct to their supervisor, any other member of management or the Human Resources Department.

Do not allow an inappropriate situation to continue by not reporting it, regardless of who is creating the situation. No employee, contract worker, customer, vendor or other person who does business with this organization is exempt from the prohibitions in this policy. In response to every complaint, the San Diego Union-Tribune will conduct an investigation and, if improper conduct is found to have occurred, appropriate corrective action will be taken.

To the extent that an employee or contract worker is not satisfied with the Company's handling of a harassment or discrimination complaint, he or she may also contact the appropriate state or federal enforcement agency for legal relief. In California, the Department of Fair Employment and Housing can be contacted by consulting the government agency listings in the telephone book. The Department of Fair Employment and Housing will, in appropriate cases, prepare and investigate complaints of harassment or discrimination; after a hearing, the Fair Employment and Housing Commission may award damages to individuals actually injured as a result of such conduct, as well as other remedies.

Retaliation Prohibited.

Employees and contract workers are also protected by law from retaliation for opposing or reporting unlawful harassment or discrimination or for otherwise participating in processes connected with an investigation, proceeding or hearing conducted by the Company or a government agency with respect to such complaints. The Company will take disciplinary action up to and including the immediate termination of any employee who retaliates against another employee or contract worker for engaging in any of these protected activities. Contract workers will be subject to termination of their engagement with the Company for engaging in retaliation.

Please contact a member of the Human Resources Department if you have any questions about this policy or require further information on the subject of sexual or other harassment or discrimination.

Health/Safety

Your safety and good health are important to the Company. There are a number of programs and procedures in place to help maintain a safe work environment and encourage healthy life styles.

Illness or Injury on the Job

AT-WILL EMPLOYMENT AGREEMENT AND ACKNOWLEDGMENT OF RECEIPT OF EMPLOYEE HANDBOOK

I acknowledge that I have received a copy of the San Diego Union-Tribune's Employee Handbook issued April, 2015, which contains important information on the Company's policies, procedures and benefits, including the policies on Anti-Harassment/Discrimination and Confidentiality. I understand that I am responsible for familiarizing myself with the policies in this handbook and agree to comply with all rules applicable to me.

I understand and agree that the policies described in the handbook are intended as a guide only and do not constitute a contract of employment. I specifically understand and agree that the employment relationship between the San Diego Union-Tribune and me is at-will and can be terminated by the Company or me at any time, with or without cause or notice. Furthermore, the Company has the right to modify or alter my position, or impose any form of discipline it deems appropriate at any time. Nothing in this handbook is intended to modify the Company's policy of at-will employment. The at-will employment relationship may not be modified except by a specific written agreement signed by me and the CEO/President/Publisher of the Company. This is the entire agreement between the San Diego Union-Tribune and me regarding this subject. All prior or contemporaneous inconsistent agreements are superseded.

I understand that the San Diego Union-Tribune reserves the right to make changes to its policies, procedures or benefits at any time at its discretion. However, the at-will employment agreement can be modified only in the manner specified above. I further understand that the Company reserves the right to interpret its policies or to vary its procedures as it deems necessary or appropriate.

I have received the San Diego Union-Tribune's Employee Handbook issued April, 2015. I have read (or will read) and agree to abide by the policies and procedures contained in the handbook.

Dated:_____ _____

(signature)

_____

(printed name)

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27

RESPONSES TO ADDITIONAL QUESTIONS FOR THE RECORD
SUBMITTED TO DOUGLAS MANCHESTER BY SENATOR BENJAMIN L. CARDIN

Question. What are your most meaningful achievements to date in your career to promote human rights and democracy? What has been the impact of your actions?

Answer. With a long history in the newspaper business, I am a firm believer that an independent media plays a critical role in exposing human rights violations and building strong democratic systems. If confirmed, I will leverage my experience to address concerns in The Bahamas about due process for migrants without legal status and rights of the Haitian community; judicial system reforms; conditions in prisons and detention centers; and gender-based violence. I believe these challenges to human rights and democracy require close U.S. coordination with local human

rights organizations, civil society, the media, international organizations, and the Bahamian government, and if confirmed, I will look to leverage my background in the media to support the Bahamian government in addressing these challenges.

Question. What are the most pressing human rights issues in the Bahamas? What are the most important steps you expect to take—if confirmed—to promote human rights and democracy in the Bahamas? What do you hope to accomplish through these actions?

Answer. The Bahamas is a constitutional, parliamentary democracy with a long history of respect for the rule of law, human rights, and effective civilian control over the security forces. Nevertheless, several human rights issues deserve attention. If confirmed, I will engage with the government on ensuring due process for migrants and rights of the Haitian community; judicial system reforms; improving conditions in prisons and detention centers; and working to end gender-based violence.

Question. If confirmed, what are the potential obstacles to addressing the specific human rights issues you have identified in your previous response? What challenges will you face in the Bahamas in advancing human rights, civil society and democracy in general?

Answer. The Bahamas' challenge is to use its limited resources to promote respect for the rule of law while respecting human rights in a high-crime environment. If confirmed, I will work with my embassy staff to ensure existing training programs for Bahamian justice-sector officials are as effective as possible, and I would champion U.S. efforts to promote human rights in the country and support the Bahamian government's efforts in this area to achieve lasting results.

Question. Are you committed to meeting with human rights, civil society and other non-governmental organizations in the U.S. and with local human rights NGOs in the Bahamas? If confirmed, what steps will you take to pro-actively support the Leahy Law and similar efforts, and ensure that provisions of U.S. security assistance and security cooperation activities reinforce human rights?

Answer. Yes. I am committed to meeting with human rights, civil society, and non-governmental organizations in the United States and The Bahamas. If confirmed, I would champion U.S. efforts to promote human rights in the country, as well as comply with all requirements under the Leahy Law to ensure provisions of U.S. security assistance and security cooperation activities reinforce human rights.

Question. Will you and your embassy team actively engage with the Bahamas to address cases of key political prisoners or persons otherwise unjustly targeted by the Bahamas?

Answer. The State Department's 2018 Human Rights Report states there were no political prisoners or detainees in The Bahamas in 2018. If confirmed, I will work actively with the embassy team to address any cases of political prisoners or persons unjustly targeted by government entities to ensure their rights and fundamental freedoms are respected.

Question. Will you engage with the Bahamas on matters of human rights, civil rights and governance as part of your bilateral mission?

Answer. Yes. If confirmed, I will engage with The Bahamas on matters of human rights, civil rights, and governance as part of my bilateral mission.

Question. Do you commit to bring to the committee's attention (and the State Department Inspector General) any change in policy or U.S. actions that you suspect may be influenced by any of the President's business or financial interests, or the business or financial interests of any senior White House staff?

Answer. If confirmed, I commit to comply with all relevant federal ethics laws, regulations, and rules and to raise concerns that I may have through appropriate channels.

Question. Do you commit to inform the committee if you have any reason to suspect that a foreign government, head of state, or foreign-controlled entity is taking any action in order to benefit any of the President's business or financial interests, or the interests of senior White House staff?

Answer. I commit to comply with all relevant federal ethics laws, regulations, and rules, and to raise concerns that I may have through appropriate channels.

Question. Do you or do any members of your immediate family have any financial interests in the Bahamas?

Answer. I have owned a home in The Bahamas for many years. My investment portfolio includes diversified mutual funds that may have investments in companies with a presence in The Bahamas; however, these funds are exempt from the conflicts of interest rules. I am committed to ensuring that my official actions will not give rise to a conflict of interest and I will remain vigilant with regard to my ethics obligations.

Question. Research from private industry demonstrates that, when managed well, diversity makes business teams better both in terms of creativity and in terms of productivity. What will you do to promote, mentor and support your staff that come from diverse backgrounds and underrepresented groups in the Foreign Service?

Answer. As the owner of multiple businesses across many sectors, I am a firm believer in a well-managed, diverse workforce. I have promoted to the highest levels of my companies employees and supervisors of all races, gender, ethnicity, religions, national origin, and sexual orientation. If confirmed, I commit to promote, mentor and support all staff, including those from diverse backgrounds and underrepresented groups. I will be guided by U.S. law and policies, but also by my personal appreciation that discrimination can harm not only individual employees but also the workplace and the larger institution. I recognize that each individual employee brings unique strengths and weaknesses; and I will encourage each to do, and achieve, their best, and to help foster a work environment that both reflects and draws upon the rich composition of America's citizenry.

I assure you that, if confirmed, I will consider diversity when seeking to fill high-level positions at the U.S. Mission in The Bahamas. I am committed to mentoring all staff members, but especially those from diverse backgrounds and under-represented groups.

Question. What steps will you take to ensure each of the supervisors at the Embassy are fostering an environment that is diverse and inclusive?

Answer. I believe a diverse and inclusive environment is critical to ensuring every person at our Embassy has the tools necessary to do their work and advance the interests of the United States. If confirmed, I will set the example encouraging such an environment and letting supervisors know it is expected from all Embassy leaders. I will ensure that all Embassy supervisors understand their individual responsibilities to provide mentoring and guidance to all members of their teams, with specific emphasis on diversity and inclusiveness and that performance as it relates to such issues is covered, as appropriate, in ratings and evaluations, as these supervisors seek to advance their own careers and serve as examples for their employees and our institution.

Question. How do you believe political corruption impacts democratic governance and the rule of law generally, and in the Bahamas specifically?

Answer. Corruption saps economic growth, hinders development, destabilizes governments, undermines democracy, and provides openings for dangerous groups like criminals, traffickers, and terrorists. The Department has made anti-corruption efforts a national security priority and works across the globe to prevent graft, promote accountability, and empower reformers. Ranking 29 out of 180 on Transparency International's Corruption Perceptions Index, The Bahamas faces continued challenges in addressing corruption and lack of transparency with the aim of leveling the playing field and improving ease of doing business for both domestic investment as well as ensuring The Bahamas' reputation as a good place to do business and maintain access to international financial markets. Prime Minister Hubert Minnis has indicated that anti-corruption efforts are a priority for his administration. If confirmed, I commit to working to address any corruption and strengthen democratic governance and rule of law in The Bahamas.

Question. What is your assessment of corruption trends in the Bahamas and efforts to address and reduce it by that government?

Answer. According to Transparency International's Corruption Perception indices, the Bahamas ranks 29 out of 180. Prime Minister Hubert Minis of the Free National Movement won elections in a landslide in May 2017 on an anti-corruption, pro-reform platform. The Prime Minister has stated his intent to instill greater transparency and accountability in government operations, reduce the debt and grow the economy, and improve citizen security. If confirmed, I am committed to working with the Bahamian government to address any corruption and strengthen democratic governance and rule of law in The Bahamas.

Question. If confirmed, what steps will you take to strengthen good governance and anticorruption programming in the Bahamas?

Answer. If confirmed, I would prioritize issues of good governance and anti-corruption in U.S. relations with The Bahamas. Prime Minister Minnis has made fighting corruption a key focus of his administration. Working with my Embassy team, I would draw on the expertise and resources of the U.S. government to support those efforts where appropriate. I would also work with civil society and the private sector to promote transparency and good governance and ensure the U.S. Embassy's programs and actions support strong democratic institutions, rule of law, free press, and respect for government transparency and accountability.

Question. I have long advocated for more strategic U.S. diplomatic engagement in the Caribbean. The region is geographically close to the United States and share so many of our values. It is unacceptable that so many have become susceptible to outside foreign interests and vote against the United States and its partners in multilateral fora. If confirmed, how would you help to ensure a closer U.S.-Bahamas partnership?

Answer. The United States and The Bahamas enjoy a deep, broad relationship driven by geographic proximity as well as social, economic, and cultural ties that enable close cooperation and make The Bahamas one of our most enduring partners in the Western Hemisphere. This partnership includes promoting our shared values throughout the region on important U.S. policy priorities such as Venezuela and Nicaragua. If confirmed, I would consult with experts in the Department, in the U.S. interagency community, and this committee on additional ways to advance key U.S. priorities for the bilateral relationship. I would also engage with the U.S. private sector and the Bahamian diaspora to build and strengthen those bilateral ties. I would also consult with my Embassy team to implement the integrated country strategy, promote U.S. goals, and draw on my knowledge of the country to engage with the government and the people.

Question. How would you engage with your fellow chiefs of mission in other Caribbean island nations as part of a concerted effort to engage the region?

Answer. As I understand it, under the new U.S.-Caribbean Resilience Partnership the Department launched a few months ago, the U.S.—Caribbean 2020 Strategy, the Caribbean Basin Security Initiative (CBSI), and multiple other U.S. lines of effort, the United States is deepening its engagement across the Caribbean on both bilateral and regional issues. I would support those efforts and coordinate with my fellow Chiefs of Mission to help promote and implement issues jointly as appropriate. The new U.S.-Caribbean Resilience Partnership offers opportunities to collaborate closely across U.S. embassies in the Caribbean, as does the security-focused Caribbean Basin security initiative. I would also work to support The Bahamas as a leader in CARICOM to advance our shared foreign policy priorities and address challenges in the region.

Question. The Bahamas faces high levels of insecurity that pose a risk to the United States by facilitating drug trafficking and a direct threat to the safety of millions of American visitors every year. What is your assessment of the Caribbean Basin Security Initiative (CBSI), our primary program for addressing regional citizen security?

Answer. It is my understanding that the United States has advanced U.S. security priorities in the Caribbean through the Caribbean Basin Security Initiative (CBSI) since 2010. CBSI has provided more than $600 million in foreign assistance programming to counter the flow of narcotics, combat transnational criminal organizations, strengthen judicial systems, and engage in crime and violence prevention programs targeting at-risk youth and their communities. A key way to counter organized crime is to go after the assets of Transnational Criminal Organizations (TCOs). An example of a successful CBSI multinational interdiction effort is Operation Bahamas, Turks & Caicos (OPBAT), in which U.S. and local law enforcement have worked together to increase interdictions by 755% in FY2019, compared to that seized in all of FY2018. Programs and engagement under CBSI work in concert with efforts to increase engagement with the region. The government Accountability Office issued a review of CBSI in early 2019 that called for increased monitoring and evaluation (M&E) of CBSI programs. If confirmed, I would work closely with the Embassy team to ensure CBSI programs are as effective as possible, that M&E is coordinated among all U.S. agencies working in this space to achieve sustainable results, and that CBSI efforts are connected with increased U.S. engagement in the region.

Question. What adjustments, if any, need to be made to CBSI's implementation in the Bahamas?

Answer. It is my understanding that through CBSI in the Bahamas, we have strengthened our mutual national security and increased citizen security through programs that have effectively worked to dismantle transnational criminal and terrorist organizations, curb the trafficking and smuggling of illicit goods and people, strengthen the rule of law, improve citizen security, and counter vulnerability to terrorist threats. It is also my understanding that CBSI in the Bahamas has worked to professionalize the Royal Bahamas Police Force (RBPF) and Royal Bahamas Defense Force (RBDF) so that they are better able to prevent, disrupt, and dismantle violent and transnational criminal activity, particularly via OPBAT. In particular, as I understand it, U.S. assistance through CBSI has grown the capacity of the RBPF Marine Support Services Unit (MSSU), Canine Unit (K-9), and Drug Enforcement Unit (DEU), and Firearms Tracing and Investigation Unit (FTIU) to stem the flow of trafficking through The Bahamas, enhance citizen security, and improve security along the United States' "Third Border." CBSI has also funded Foreign Military Financing (FMF) projects with the RBDF to enhance maritime domain awareness, long range communications, and maintenance to improve interoperability and combined operations with U.S. forces in the region. While I will want to assess these efforts personally if confirmed, I do plan to prioritize ensuring that all U.S. programs in the Bahamas are effective in meeting U.S. interests.

Question. How would you utilize your position and the Embassy's resources to improve citizen security?

Answer. If confirmed, I will prioritize cooperation with The Bahamas on efforts to strengthen citizen security, promote social and economic development, and reduce illicit trafficking and other transnational crime because a safer Bahamas makes the United States more secure. If confirmed, I do plan to prioritize ensuring that all U.S. programs in the Bahamas are effective in meeting U.S. interests, including those focused on improving citizen security.

Question. As many as 80,000 Haitians currently reside in the Bahamas given the poor economic and security circumstances in Haiti. What is the Bahamian government's ability to address these high migration figures?

Answer. It is my understanding that irregular migration has long been among The Bahamas' highest national priorities, particularly given the large number of Haitians living there without legal status. Interdictions of nationals from other countries such as Cuba, China, and the Dominican Republic occur as well. An estimated 60-80,000 Haitians live in The Bahamas, many of them without legal status. The Bahamas views the magnitude of Haitian migration as a crisis given its population of 351,000. The Bahamas has partnered with the United States to deal effectively with such large migrant flows, taken steps to regularize the status of certain Haitian migrants, and provided due process to those newly interdicted. The government has also reached out to international organizations for assistance in providing humanitarian services to migrants after they arrive. If confirmed, I commit to working with the Bahamian government and international organizations to address this issue.

Question. What is your assessment of the current migration trends? Do you expect the numbers to continue to rise?

Answer. It is my understanding that addressing irregular migration has long been among The Bahamas' highest national priorities given the relatively large number of migrants traveling to and through The Bahamas. The majority of these migrants are Haitian although interdictions of nationals from other countries such as Cuba, China, and the Dominican Republic occur as well. From December 2018 to February 2019, there was a surge in Haitian migration there illegally, and further flows from Haiti will depend on the political and economic situation in Haiti. An estimated 60-80,000 Haitians live in The Bahamas, many of them without legal status. Other countries in the Caribbean have seen increased Venezuelan migrant flows; however, this has not been the case in The Bahamas.

Question. If confirmed, how would you work with the Bahamian government to address these migration flows and ensure adequate protections for those Haitians already in the Bahamas?

Answer. It is my understanding that addressing irregular migration has long been among The Bahamas' highest national priorities given the relatively large number of migrants traveling to and through The Bahamas. The Minnis government is taking steps to regularize the status of certain Haitian migrants while providing both humanitarian services and due process to those newly interdicted. If confirmed, I commit to working with The Bahamas and international organizations, such as the International Organization for Migration and the U.N. High Commissioner for Refu-

gees in this effort, as well as continue our strong cooperation under Operation Bahamas Turks & Caicos (OPBAT). Since October 2018, our joint forces interdicted 41 migrant sea vessels, resulting in the repatriation of over 1,700 migrants there.

Question. Millions of Americans visit the Bahamas every year and the mission you would be running would be responsible for providing a range of consular services to the many visitors who find themselves in need of assistance. How has your experience helped prepare you for this major responsibility?

Answer. Given my long experience in the hospitality and tourism business, I am well prepared to lead the U.S. Embassy team to ensure the safety and security of American citizens visiting The Bahamas. The Bahamas is one of the top overseas tourist destinations for U.S. citizens with over six million Americans visiting The Bahamas in 2018 mostly by cruise ship. Estimates are similar for 2019. Nassau is one of the busiest cruise ship ports in the world. I understand the Embassy is in direct communication with the shipping agents and cruise ship companies about safety and security concerns of U.S. citizens on those ships. Embassy consular officers also work with the Bahamian government to provide services to incarcerated U.S. citizens. If confirmed, I would make the Mission's top priority the safety and security of the large numbers of U.S. citizens traveling through or residing in The Bahamas.

RESPONSES TO ADDITIONAL QUESTIONS FOR THE RECORD
SUBMITTED TO DOUGLAS MANCHESTER BY SENATOR JEANNE SHAHEEN

Question. In September 2017, President Trump designated The Bahamas as a major illicit drug producing and money laundering country due to its role as a significant transshipment point for illicit drugs bound for the U.S. I appreciate that there appears to be strong political will within the government of The Bahamas to tackle drug trafficking an organized crime, and U.S. law enforcement agencies have worked closely with their counterparts in The Bahamas to target trafficking organizations. If confirmed as Ambassador, how will you use the post to facilitate the continued coordination between U.S. and Bahamian agencies and officials, including the use of U.S. financial and technical assistance?

Answer. Although Volume I of the 2019 Money Laundering and Financial Crimes Report lists The Bahamas as a major illicit drug producing and money laundering country, its inclusion on the Majors List is not necessarily a reflection of the Bahamian government's counternarcotics efforts or level of cooperation with the United States. The Bahamas remains one of our most enduring partners in the Western Hemisphere, especially in our efforts to counter illicit trafficking to the United States.

Anti-money laundering and counter terrorist financing (AML/CFT) has been a priority for the Bahamian government as it works to come off the Financial Action Task Force's gray-list in October 2019 and generally meet international standards. If confirmed, I will build on the Embassy's strong relationships with the Bank Supervision Department of the Central Bank of The Bahamas, the Financial Investigations Unit, and the Identified Risk Framework (IRF) Steering Committee, all government institutions that focus on AML/CFT, as well as the Bahamas Financial Services Board, an independent association of local financial institutions, including foreign companies with Bahamian operations, to monitor AML/CFT, identify areas for technical assistance, and convey U.S. expectations and requirements.

It is my understanding that through the Caribbean Basin Security Initiative (CBSI), we cooperate closely with The Bahamas to counter the flow of narcotics, combat transnational criminal organizations, strengthen judicial systems, and engage in crime and violence prevention programs targeting at-risk youth and their communities. An example of a successful CBSI multinational interdiction effort is Operation Bahamas, Turks & Caicos (OPBAT), in which U.S. and local law enforcement have worked together to increase interdictions by 755% in FY 2019, compared to that seized in all of FY 2018.

If confirmed, I will prioritize these programs and coordinate closely with the Department of Treasury, the private sector, and other agencies and regulatory bodies to provide U.S. financial and technical assistance to Bahamian institutions that combat drug trafficking and money laundering in the country.

Question. Do you have any concerns about the use of financial institutions in the Bahamas to launder money related to drug-trafficking?

Answer. As noted in Volume II of the 2019 Money Laundering and Financial Crimes Report, due to its proximity to Florida, The Bahamas remains a transit point for trafficking in illegal drugs, firearms, and persons to and from the United States. Money may be laundered through purchase of real estate, as well as through Designated Non-Financial Businesses or Professions. As an international financial center, the country is also vulnerable to money laundering through financial service companies.

In 2018, The Bahamas took significant steps toward strengthening identified Anti-Money Laundering (AML) deficiencies. The government passed an enhanced Financial Transactions Reporting Act strengthening rules, procedures, and risk assessment obligations for financial institutions and Designated Non-Financial Businesses or Professions. An enhanced Proceeds of Crime Act introduced unexplained wealth orders and non-conviction-based forfeiture, while a comprehensive Anti-Terrorism Act addresses terrorist financing and proliferation. However, The Bahamas needs to address recognized deficiencies in its AML/CFT regime by demonstrating risk-based supervision of non-bank financial institutions and ensuring timely access to adequate beneficial ownership information. If confirmed, I will work with relevant U.S. government departments and agencies, the private sector, and the Bahamian government to make progress in these areas and advance key U.S. priorities.

RESPONSES TO ADDITIONAL QUESTIONS FOR THE RECORD
SUBMITTED TO ADRIAN ZUCKERMAN BY SENATOR ROBERT MENENDEZ

Question. American businesses have faced serious challenges in Romania. I appreciate that during your hearing you committed to making this issue your highest priority if confirmed. What specific steps will you take to encourage the Romanian government to create a fair environment for U.S. businesses if confirmed?

Answer. If confirmed, I will coordinate with the relevant agencies in Washington to advocate for a fair, expeditious, and transparent resolution of the existing or future concerns of U.S. companies, as appropriate. I will also work closely and diligently with the business community to ensure that Romania complies with its bilateral and multilateral trade obligations, and to minimize market access problems affecting U.S. firms. If confirmed, I will encourage Romania to implement policies and practices to improve its business and investment climate and foster a stronger environment for entrepreneurship and innovation.

Question. In April when Romania proposed emergency decrees that would have made it harder to tackle corruption and undermined the judicial system, the U.S. Embassy in Bucharest issued a joint statement with 11 other embassies urging Romania not to enact the decrees. I would expect that as Ambassador, you would take a similar action in such a situation. If confirmed, do you commit to doing everything in your power to oppose efforts, such as those decrees, that would undermine the rule of law in Romania?

Answer. Recent legislative amendments and emergency ordinances issued by the Romanian government threaten the independence of the judiciary and have prompted widespread protests by members of the public and magistrates. The National Anticorruption Directorate is unable to effectively pursue prosecutions against corrupt officials. If confirmed, I will seek to strengthen Romania's democratic institutions and support Romania's progress in fighting corruption.

Question. What specific steps will you take, if confirmed, to support rule of law and anti-corruption efforts in Romania? What would you hope to accomplish through these actions?

Answer. If confirmed, supporting Romania's progress on fighting corruption and supporting rule of law will be among my top priorities. Fighting corruption and supporting judicial independence are vital to the region's long-term prosperity and security as well as to the extraordinary law enforcement and security cooperation between the United States and Romania. I will support Romania's efforts to fight corruption and strengthen its democratic institutions through my advocacy, as well as a whole-of-Mission approach that encompasses our law enforcement programs, security cooperation and other assistance, and Mission Bucharest's cooperation with Romania's anticorruption institutions. If confirmed, I will continue to pay close attention to developments in areas such as court reform, criminal code reform, and media legislation. I will also continue to coordinate closely with our partners in the international community to help strengthen democratic institutions and the rule of law.

Question. On August 22, 2018, President Trump's personal lawyer, Rudy Giuliani, sent a letter to Romania's president, Klaus Iohannis, criticizing Romania's National Anticorruption Directorate (DNA) and supporting amnesty for individuals who had been prosecuted and convicted by the DNA. Mr. Giuliani sent his letter less than two months after the U.S. Embassy in Romania published a joint statement declaring that "Romania has shown considerable progress in combatting corruption and building effective rule of law." Do you believe it is proper for individuals who represent President Trump in his personal capacity to publicly oppose U.S. foreign policy in Romania, or any other country?

Answer. The United States is concerned about the deterioration of rule of law in Romania. If confirmed, I will support Romania's efforts to fight corruption and strengthen its democratic institutions through my advocacy, as well as a whole-of-Mission approach that encompasses our law enforcement programs, security cooperation and other assistance, and Mission Bucharest's cooperation with Romania's anticorruption institutions. The U.S. government, as a general matter, does not endorse or support the views or conclusions of private citizens.

Question. If confirmed as Ambassador, would you make a point in such a situation to publicly state that the views of individuals who represent President Trump in his personal capacity do not reflect the views of the U.S. government?

Answer. As a general matter, the U.S. government does not endorse or support the views or conclusions of private citizens. If confirmed, it is my role to represent the American people and advance the U.S. government's policy in Romania.

Question. If confirmed as Ambassador, would you direct or allow U.S. Embassy staff to provide support to individuals who represent President Trump in his personal capacity if they planned to travel to Romania?

Answer. It is the role of U.S. embassies to assist private citizens traveling abroad in the event of an emergency or a need for routine assistance, but it is not the role of embassies to facilitate private citizens' personal travel outside of emergency situations.

Question. Romania announced that it will auction off the frequency spectrum needed for 5G wireless networks in the fourth quarter of this year, and it will allow companies that use Huawei technology to participate. Romania is a member of NATO, and I am deeply concerned about the security implications of a company using Huawei technology winning this auction. If confirmed, how would you communicate the U.S.'s security concerns regarding Huawei to the Romanian government and urge them to reconsider allowing companies that use Huawei technology to potentially control their 5G frequency?

Answer. The United States advocates for secure telecoms networks and supply chains that are free from suppliers that are subject to foreign government control or undue influence in order to reduce the risks of unauthorized access and malicious cyber activity. If confirmed, I will urge Romania, as a NATO ally, to consider such risks and exercise vigilance in ensuring the security of its own telecoms networks and supply chains. U.S. concerns related to the security and resiliency of 5G systems are applicable to any supplier or vendor that is subject to inappropriate influence or that has a demonstrated record of malign or deceptive behavior. In making decisions on suppliers or vendors for 5G systems, all countries, including Romania, should take prior behavior into account. I will make this a top priority consistent with the Administration's position.

Question. I understand that in recent years that American companies and business people have expressed concern about the rule of law and due process in Romania. This, combined with ongoing corruption concerns in the country, only serve to diminish U.S. business investment and engagement with Romania. Are you familiar with these concerns?

Answer. I am aware of concerns about respect for rule of law in Romania. If confirmed, I would be an advocate for anti-corruption, transparency, and good governance efforts that increase public confidence in democratic institutions and the rule of law. If I am confirmed as ambassador, assisting U.S. businesses in Romania will be a top priority for me.

Question. What will you do to encourage the Romanian government to create a fair environment for U.S. businesses?

Answer. If confirmed, I will be personally involved in advocating and supporting our companies to promote prosperity for the American people. Developing the economic dimension of the U.S.-Romania Strategic Partnership is a key priority. Business plays an important role in advancing our partnership. I also will encourage and

promote Romania's efforts to foster a more investment-friendly and transparent business climate that will help Romania prosper and provide a predictable and legally sound environment in which U.S. companies may operate. Additionally, I will work to promote U.S. values related to entrepreneurship and innovation.

Question. Mr. Zuckerman, in 2008, you were sued for sexual harassment by a legal secretary at your former firm. A number of the claims are very disturbing. The case was settled in 2009, and I understand you maintain the claims are false, but they are a matter of public record and I would like to you ask you a few questions related to that. Have you ever engaged in any inappropriate discussions or behavior with any women that you have worked with, such as showing pictures of women that are not fully clothed, or joking about someone carrying your child?

Answer. I have never engaged in any inappropriate discussions or behavior with any women that I have worked with, such as showing pictures of women that are not fully clothed, or joking about someone carrying my child.

Question. Do you think that type of behavior is appropriate in a work setting?

Answer. I do not think that type of behavior is appropriate in a work setting.

Question. Would you have any objection to Diplomatic Security or the FBI examining this matter prior to your committee vote?

Answer. I do not have any objection to Diplomatic Security or the FBI examining this matter prior to my committee vote.

Question. Does the settlement agreement in the sexual harassment lawsuit include a confidentiality provision that would prevent the plaintiff from speaking to the committee and/or discussing the case publicly? If yes, will you agree to waive that provision in writing prior to the committee vote?

Answer. Yes. Yes, I agree to waive that provision in writing prior to the committee vote.

Question. Has anyone, other than the plaintiff in that case, ever told you that you have engaged in inappropriate behavior or made them feel uncomfortable in the workplace?

Answer. No.

Question. Have you engaged in any other behavior in the workplace that may be viewed as unacceptable?

Answer. No.

Question. Have you entered into any other settlements, other than the 2009 settlement I mentioned, regarding any claims of sexual harassment, workplace discrimination, or inappropriate conduct against you?

Answer. No.

Question. Do you commit to respond promptly to all requests for information by Members of this committee?

Answer. Yes, I will work promptly through the Department's Bureau of Legislative Affairs to respond to Congressional requests.

Question. Do you commit to appear before this committee upon request?

Answer. Yes, I commit to appear before this committee upon request.

Question. If you become aware of any suspected waste, fraud, or abuse in the Department, do you commit to report it to the Inspector General?

Answer. I commit to comply with all relevant federal laws, regulations, and rules, including with regard to waste, fraud, and abuse, and to raise concerns that I may have through appropriate channels.

Question. Please list any outside positions and affiliations you plan to continue to hold during your term of appointment.

Answer. Except for maintaining my bar admissions to the Courts of the State of New York, Federal Courts for the Eastern and Southern District of New York, Second Circuit Court of Appeals and Supreme Court of the United States, I will not hold any outside positions and affiliations if confirmed.

Question. Have you ever been an officer or director of a company that has filed for bankruptcy? If so, describe the circumstances and disposition.

Answer. No.

Question. If you leave this position before the completion of your full term of the next presidential election, do you commit to meeting with the committee to discuss the reasons for your departure?

Answer. Yes.

Question. Other than the claims referred to above, has anyone ever made a formal or informal complaint or allegation of sexual harassment, discrimination (e.g., racial, ethnic, religious, etc.), or inappropriate conduct against you, in a workplace or any other setting? If so, please describe the nature of the complaint or allegation, your response, and any resolution, including any settlements.

Answer. No.

Question. Have you ever addressed concerns or allegations of sexual harassment, discrimination (e.g., racial, ethnic, religious, etc.), or inappropriate conduct made against any employee over whom you had supervisory authority? If so, please describe the outcome and actions taken.

Answer. No.

Question. Do you agree that any targeting of or retaliation against career employees based on their perceived political beliefs, prior work on policy, or affiliation with a previous administration, is wholly inappropriate and has no place in the federal government? If confirmed, what will you do to ensure that all employees under your leadership understand that any retaliation, blacklisting, or other prohibited personnel practices will not be tolerated?

Answer. I believe, as Secretary Pompeo has outlined in his policy on diversity and equal employment opportunity, that all employees should work in a professional, supportive, and teamwork-oriented community where everyone can contribute to the mission. The workplace should be an environment of civility and respect. If confirmed, I would hold myself and all U.S. Embassy staff accountable to uphold equal employment opportunity principles by promoting fairness, equity, and inclusion in the workplace and to help ensure a workplace free of discrimination and bullying. I would not tolerate retaliation and other prohibited personnel practices.

RESPONSES TO ADDITIONAL QUESTIONS FOR THE RECORD
SUBMITTED TO ADRIAN ZUCKERMAN BY SENATOR BENJAMIN L. CARDIN

Question. What are the most important actions you have taken in your career to date to promote human rights and democracy? What has been the impact of your actions?

Answer. In my over thirty years of legal practice, I have represented corporate and individual clients in a wide variety of transactional and civil litigation matters. The fair, transparent, and impartial administration of justice in all legal matters is a bedrock of democracy. In 2017, I chaired the Democratic Party civil court judicial screening committee for the 18th judicial district in New York City—I am proud to say that I was able to guide the twelve-member panel representing the diverse constituencies of New York City to achieve unanimity in its recommendations. To promote human rights, I represented various clients on a pro bono basis. Among those was a Jewish congregation I represented in the purchase of a building to be used as its synagogue and community center and a Korean religious group I represented against efforts of having it evicted from the space it used for church/religious purposes as a result of neighborhood residents alleging various violations of zoning and land use laws and regulations. I have also supported various charitable causes. I was a member of the board of Kids' Corp. which provided support to Newark, NJ underprivileged children to stay in school by providing books, tutoring, clothes, medical care, and summer camp programs.

Question. What are the most pressing human rights issues in Romania? What are the most important steps you expect to take—if confirmed—to promote human rights and democracy in Romania? What do you hope to accomplish through these actions?

Answer. Among the challenges Romania faces, according to the State Department's annual Human Rights and International Religious Freedom Reports, are endemic official corruption, police violence against the Roma, and Holocaust-era restitution issues. Romania has established a working group made up of the local Jewish community, World Jewish Restitution Organization, and the government, under the leadership of the Secretary General of the government, to make progress on pen-

sions for Holocaust survivors and the resolution of private properties, communal properties and conduct research into heirless property. In addition, trafficking in persons is also of great concern, as Romania was downgraded to Tier 2 Watch List in the 2019 Trafficking in Persons Report. If confirmed, I will support Romania's efforts to fight corruption, protect members of vulnerable minorities, and strengthen its democratic institutions and urge that Romania resolve its remaining restitution issues. I will also work with the government to combat and prevent trafficking in persons.

Question. If confirmed, what are the potential obstacles to addressing the specific human rights issues you have identified in your previous response? What challenges will you face in Romania in advancing human rights, civil society and democracy in general?

Answer. Romania and the United States share common values, including the importance of respecting human rights and supporting democracy. The country has a diverse and active civil society, with independent groups that report and advocate on the issues they care about around the country. If confirmed, I will continue the U.S. Embassy's regular engagement with these groups on some of the most pressing issues, and I will continue our work with Romania to ensure the coordination of our efforts on promoting tolerance through civil society empowerment and coalition building. By ensuring that we keep lines of communication open, we will maximize our joint impact on this and other challenges.

Question. Are you committed to meeting with human rights, civil society and other non-governmental organizations in the U.S. and with local human rights NGOs in Romania? If confirmed, what steps will you take to pro-actively support the Leahy Law and similar efforts, and ensure that provisions of U.S. security assistance and security cooperation activities reinforce human rights?

Answer. If confirmed, I am committed to sustaining engagement with a broad spectrum of civil society in Romania, including human rights activists and religious groups and the organizations that represent them. I will also make sure the Embassy follows all appropriate laws and regulations to ensure compliance with the Leahy law.

Question. Will you and your embassy team actively engage with Romania to address cases of key political prisoners or persons otherwise unjustly targeted by Romania?

Answer. The State Department's 2018 Human Rights Report states that there were no reports of political prisoners in Romania.

Question. Will you engage with Romania on matters of human rights, civil rights and governance as part of your bilateral mission?

Answer. If confirmed, I am committed to sustaining engagement with a broad spectrum of civil society in Romania, including human rights activists and religious groups, and the organizations that represent them.

Question. Do you commit to bring to the committee's attention (and the State Department Inspector General) any change in policy or U.S. actions that you suspect may be influenced by any of the President's business or financial interests, or the business or financial interests of any senior White House staff?

Answer. I commit to comply with all relevant federal ethics laws, regulations, and rules, and to raise concerns that I may have through appropriate channels.

Question. Do you commit to inform the committee if you have any reason to suspect that a foreign government, head of state, or foreign-controlled entity is taking any action in order to benefit any of the President's business or financial interests, or the interests of senior White House staff?

Answer. I commit to comply with all relevant federal ethics laws, regulations, and rules, and to raise concerns that I may have through appropriate channels.

Question. Do you or do any members of your immediate family have any financial interests in Romania?

Answer. My investment portfolio includes interests in diversified mutual funds which may hold an interest in companies with a presence in Romania, but which are exempt from the conflict of interest laws by regulation. My investment portfolio also includes a security interest in a company that has a presence in Romania. If confirmed, I have already undertaken that I will divest of this interest. I am committed to ensuring that my official actions will not give rise to a conflict of interest. I will divest all investments the State Department Ethics Office deems necessary

to avoid a conflict of interest, and I will remain vigilant with regard to my ethics obligations.

Question. Research from private industry demonstrates that, when managed well, diversity makes business teams better both in terms of creativity and in terms of productivity. What will you do to promote, mentor and support your staff that come from diverse backgrounds and underrepresented groups in the Foreign Service?

Answer. If confirmed I will implement the same principles of diversity, inclusivity, and respect that I have put into place during my over thirty years of law practice and civic engagement. I have worked with and enjoyed the support of people of different ethnic groups, different genders and different gender identities, various ages and various seniorities throughout my professional life. I will continue to emphasize teamwork, implement a set of values that applies to all, and seek to recruit staff that reflects a priority on diversity and inclusivity.

Question. What steps will you take to ensure each of the supervisors at the Embassy are fostering an environment that is diverse and inclusive?

Answer. If confirmed, I will work diligently to make sure that all people working in the embassy are treated with respect, civility and dignity. I believe, as Secretary Pompeo has outlined in his policy on diversity and equal employment opportunity, that all employees should work in a professional, supportive, and teamwork-oriented community where everyone can contribute to the mission. I will work with supervisors, as well as with the rest of our team, to create an environment that is inclusive for all. All staff regardless of seniority will enjoy an inclusive work environment that complies with our shared values and expectations.

Question. How do you believe political corruption impacts democratic governance and the rule of law generally, and in Romania specifically?

Answer. Despite numerous high-profile prosecutions of officials for corruption, corrupt practices remain widespread in Romania. Bribery is common in the public sector, especially in health care. Corruption is widespread in public procurement. Laws were not always implemented effectively, and officials sometimes engaged in corrupt practices with impunity. Verdicts in corruption cases were often inconsistent, with sentences varying widely for similar offenses. Enforcement of court procedures lagged mostly due to procedural and administrative problems, especially with respect to asset forfeiture.

Question. What is your assessment of corruption trends in Romania and efforts to address and reduce it by that government?

Answer. The United States is concerned about the deterioration of rule of law in Romania. Recent executive orders by the current administration in Romania have threatened the independence of the judiciary and prompted widespread protests by members of the public and magistrates. The National Anticorruption Directorate is unable to pursue effectively prosecutions against corrupt officials. If confirmed, I will seek to strengthen Romania's democratic institutions and support Romania's progress in fighting corruption.

Question. If confirmed, what steps will you take to strengthen good governance and anticorruption programming in Romania?

Answer. If confirmed, supporting Romania's progress on fighting corruption and supporting rule of law will be among my top priorities. Fighting corruption and supporting judicial independence are vital to the region's long-term prosperity and security as well as to the extraordinary law enforcement and security cooperation between the United States and Romania. I will support Romania's efforts to fight corruption and strengthen its democratic institutions through my advocacy, as well as a whole of Mission approach that encompasses our law enforcement programs, security cooperation and other assistance, and Mission Bucharest's cooperation with Romania's anticorruption institutions. If confirmed, I will continue to pay close attention to developments in areas such as court reform, criminal code reform, and media legislation. I also will encourage and promote Romania's efforts to foster a more investment-friendly and transparent business climate that will help Romania prosper and provide a predictable and legally sound environment in which U.S. companies may operate.

Question. In early 2017 and again in the summer of 2018, the Romanian government faced large public protests against legislative proposals to decriminalize corruption offenses and possibly constrain the independence of the judiciary. How do you assess the judicial reforms being pursued by the current government?

Answer. Recent executive orders by the current administration in Romania have threatened the independence of the judiciary and prompted widespread protests by members of the public and magistrates. The National Anticorruption Directorate is unable to pursue effectively prosecutions against corrupt officials. If confirmed, I will seek to strengthen Romania's democratic institutions and support Romania's progress in fighting corruption.

Question. What steps, if any, is the Trump Administration taking to support the rule of law and judicial independence in Romania?

Answer. The U.S. government supports Romania's efforts to fight corruption and strengthen its democratic institutions through advocacy, as well as a whole of Mission approach that encompasses law enforcement programs, security cooperation, and other assistance, and Mission Bucharest works in cooperation with Romania's anticorruption institutions. If confirmed, I will continue to pay close attention to developments in areas such as court reform, criminal code reform, and media legislation.

Question. If confirmed, how would you advance ongoing efforts to support the rule of law and judicial independence in Romania?

Answer. If confirmed, supporting Romania's progress on fighting corruption and supporting rule of law will be among my top priorities. Fighting corruption and supporting judicial independence are vital to the region's long-term prosperity and security as well as to the extraordinary law enforcement and security cooperation between the United States and Romania.

Question. Romania has the largest Romani minority of any country in the EU and Roma are the largest minority in Romania. Many American Roma trace their roots to Romania. If confirmed, will you maintain robust engagement with Romani civil society and elected officials in Romania?

Answer. Embassy Bucharest has played an active role in promoting Roma rights and showing our support for the community, and if confirmed, I will ensure that the Embassy continues this work. Marginalization of the Roma minority remains among the most pressing human rights concerns in Romania. In Romania and elsewhere, the United States calls on governments to take steps to combat intolerance against the Roma and other marginalized groups and enable their full participation in civic and economic life, as doing so promotes stability and democracy.

RESPONSES TO ADDITIONAL QUESTIONS FOR THE RECORD
SUBMITTED TO ADRIAN ZUCKERMAN BY SENATOR JEANNE SHAHEEN

Question. How has Russia been using different forms of soft power in Romania and the region and how have these efforts been working against the priorities of the United States and its allies?

Answer. Russia uses disinformation and other malign tactics in Romania to exploit historical and cultural ties, which include similar eastern Orthodox Christian traditions. Russia also exploits official corruption accompanying political unrest within Romania to erode Romanian citizens' confidence in democratic institutions as well as the progress Romania has made as a member of the Transatlantic community.

Our Embassy in Bucharest works closely with Washington and other embassies throughout the region to counter Russian destabilization efforts. If confirmed, I will engage with civil society and government counterparts to counter disinformation and malign propaganda in Romania. I also will continue to highlight the shared values, history, and experiences that unite the American and Romanian people.

Question. What do you think are the most vulnerable sectors of Romanian society to Russian influence and meddling?

Answer. Romania's view of Russia has been shaped by history. Repeated Russian incursions into historically Romanian territory throughout the past 200 years have left many Romanians wary of Russia. The imposition of the communist regime upon Romania after World War II continues to inform Romanian perceptions about Russia's malign role in the region. In general, Romanians view Russia as their greatest threat. Romania seeks to cooperate with Russia where it can, especially given that the two countries share a maritime border, the Black Sea. Romania remains highly skeptical of Russian intentions, however, especially of the Russian military buildup in Crimea.

One potential vulnerability for Romania, remains endemic corruption. Corruption erodes public confidence in democratic institutions and poses a serious challenge to the rule of law and could open the door for malevolent actors like enemy states, terrorists, and organized criminal elements to influence Romanian decision makers. If I am confirmed, I will make it a top priority to continue the Embassy's strong support for Romania's anti-corruption initiatives and encourage Romanian leaders to undertake reforms in a transparent manner.

Additionally, Russia's efforts encompass a suite of "hybrid" tools used to gain influence. Disinformation poses problems throughout the world: its origins are often hard to trace, affording a degree of deniability. We have seen disinformation that questions the motives behind the presence of U.S. and NATO troops in Romania and suggests that American troops somehow endanger Romania. We have also seen disinformation that tries to sow distrust between Romania and its neighbors, especially between Romania and ethnic Hungarians living in Transylvania.

Question. In your written testimony, you note both the progress that has been made in Romania in the last 30 years as well as what still needs to be done. You mention fighting corruption, creating a business-friendly environment, investing in infrastructure, health and education and strengthening public administration. But last October, Romania held a failed referendum to essentially ban gay marriage, which I find very concerning. If confirmed, will you use your post to support civil society in Romania, including same-sex advocacy groups? Will you fully support LGBTI staff who work for you at the Embassy in Bucharest?

Answer. If confirmed, I am committed to sustaining engagement with a broad spectrum of civil society in Romania. I am also committed to using my position, if confirmed, to defend the human rights and dignity of all people in Romania, no matter their sexual orientation or gender identity. While Romanian law prohibits discrimination based on sexual orientation, there is still societal discrimination. If confirmed, I will pay close attention to developments in this sector and I am prepared to speak privately—and publicly if necessary—about the importance of human rights and dignity of all people in Romania, no matter their sexual orientation or gender identity.

Yes, I will fully support LGBTI staff. I believe, as Secretary Pompeo has outlined in his policy on diversity and equal employment opportunity, that all employees should work in a professional, supportive, and teamwork-oriented community where everyone can contribute to the mission. The workplace should be an environment of civility and respect. If confirmed, I would hold myself and all U.S. Embassy staff accountable to uphold equal employment opportunity principles by promoting fairness, equity, and inclusion in the workplace and to help ensure a workplace free of discrimination and bullying.

Question. Romania joined NATO in 2004 along with six other countries from Eastern and Central Europe. This round of enlargement brought into NATO several of the smallest members of the Alliance-both geographically and in terms of military capability. What has NATO membership meant for Romania in the fifteen years since it joined the Alliance?

Answer. Romania is a reliable NATO Ally that bears its fair share of NATO's defense burden, contributing to the strength and security of the Alliance. Along with the U.S.-Romania bilateral security partnership and membership in the European Union, NATO membership is one of the three pillars of Romanian foreign policy and has provided the country with enhanced security, opportunities for multilateral engagement and cooperation, and greatly strengthened its military modernization and procurement programs. Romania fully supports U.S. and NATO actions to bolster collective defense in Eastern Europe, and it is doing its part as well. In 2018 the Romanian Parliament budgeted 2 percent of its estimated GDP to defense. Of this money, more than 34 percent went to buying new military equipment, much of it from American companies. Romania leads NATO's tailored Forward Presence (tFP) initiatives to protect the southeast flank. tFP efforts include a Multinational Brigade, a Combined Joint Enhanced Training Center, and enhanced Air Policing activities in the Black Sea region. Romania's involvement in the Bucharest Nine, an effort by Eastern Flank countries to coordinate policies and priorities to be more effective members of NATO, reaffirms Romania's commitment to NATO. Romania has undertaken an ambitious multi-year, multi-billion dollar defense modernization program across all of its services. This modernization program reflects Romania's commitment to share defense burdens and enhance NATO capabilities.

Question. How should NATO's experience with the 2004 enlargement not only inform our evaluation of North Macedonia but also other potential candidates in the Balkans or Eastern Europe?

Answer. Since its founding in 1949, NATO's membership has increased from 12 to 29 countries through seven rounds of enlargement. The 2004 round of enlargement included Bulgaria, Estonia, Latvia, Lithuania, Romania, Slovakia, and Slovenia, and it demonstrated that NATO's door is open to European democracies that can meet NATO's high standards and contribute to our common security. Since that time, Romania has been an active and engaged Ally that has contributed to the strength and security of the Alliance.

The invitation to North Macedonia illustrates that NATO's Open Door policy remains strong and will inspire other countries to undertake the reforms and commitments necessary to enhance domestic and regional stability. North Macedonia's membership in the Alliance will solidify two decades of positive momentum towards regional security in the heart of the Balkans, advance the Balkans towards Western integration, and help to ensure long-term self-sustaining stability in the region.

RESPONSES TO ADDITIONAL QUESTIONS FOR THE RECORD
SUBMITTED TO RICHARD NORLAND BY SENATOR ROBERT MENENDEZ

Question. Libya's stability continues to deteriorate, with implications for regional security across the North Africa, the Middle East, and Southern Europe. General Haftar's advance on Tripoli against the internationally recognized government of National Accord has dealt a tremendous setback to U.N.-brokered peace talks while constant and ongoing violations of the U.N. arms embargo sustain the fighting. What are the prospects for a ceasefire and resumption of the U.N.-led political process? What compromises must each side make?

Answer. If confirmed, I will support efforts to achieve an immediate ceasefire agreement and return to U.N. political mediation as soon as possible. U.N. Special Representative of the Secretary-General Ghassan Salame remains in contact with leaders on all sides of the conflict as he works toward a de-escalation of the violence. However, I am under no illusion that a ceasefire will be easy to achieve. The United States should continue to use its influence to get the parties back to the negotiating table and to ensure international unity in support of the U.N.'s efforts. Until negotiations have restarted, I believe it is prudent to refrain from prejudging the specific compromises each side will need to make.

Question. What steps can the U.S. take to enforce the U.N. arms embargo on Libya?

Answer. The United States supports Security Council Resolution 2292, which provides vital authorities for member states to limit the destabilizing flows of arms to and from Libya. The Security Council renewed these authorities most recently in June 2019. If confirmed I would carefully consider how these authorities could be used to hold individuals responsible for arms embargo violations accountable.

Question. Until recently, the U.S. was consistent in its support for the internationally recognized government of National Accord as well as the U.N.-brokered political process. However, that record was muddied by President Trump's April 15 telephone call with General Heftar, which appeared to embolden the General in his advance on Tripoli. Soon after that, the U.S. reportedly vetoed a U.K.-drafted U.N. Security Council Resolution calling for a ceasefire in Libya. What is the Administration's current approach to Libya?

Answer. The United States did not veto a U.N. Security Council Resolution on Libya and, if confirmed, I would support U.S. engagement with partners on the Security Council to advance a Libyan peace process. Consistent with the longstanding approach of the United States with regard to Libya, the U.S. government engages with a range of Libyan leaders, including Prime Minister al-Sarraj and General Haftar, to press all parties to agree to a ceasefire and return to political mediation.

Question. Is it still U.S. policy to back the GNA?

Answer. There has been no change to U.S. policy with regard to recognition of the Libyan government of National Accord (GNA).

Question. It appears the U.S. has not publicly called for a ceasefire since Secretary Pompeo's April 7 press statement. Why?

Answer. In May 21 remarks at a U.N. Security Council briefing on the U.N. Support Mission in Libya (UNSMIL), Ambassador Jonathan Cohen, the Acting U.S. Permanent Representative to the United Nations, stated, "All parties should return to U.N. political mediation, the success of which depends upon a ceasefire in and

around Tripoli." Ambassador Cohen made a similar statement on U.S. policy at a May 8 U.N. Security Council meeting on Libya and the International Criminal Court. Then-Chargé d'Affaires Ambassador Peter Bodde stated on May 23, "I firmly believe that lasting peace and stability in Libya will only come through a political solution derived from an inclusive dialogue representing the perspectives and concerns of communities across Libya: North, South, East and West. The success of that dialogue will depend upon a ceasefire in and around Tripoli." I echoed this position in my own remarks to the Senate Foreign Relations Committee on June 20, and if confirmed would make achieving a ceasefire the principal task at hand.

Question. Does the U.S. support a ceasefire and resumption of U.N.-brokered talks in Libya

Answer. Yes. The United States continues to make clear this position, in public and private.

Question. The U.S. has not had a permanent presence in Libya since the assassination of Ambassador Christopher Stephens on September 11, 2012. If confirmed, what steps will you take to increase U.S. diplomatic presence in Libya?

Answer. The United States suspended Embassy operations in Tripoli in July 2014 due to significant fighting in the capital. If confirmed, my highest priority will be the safety and security of U.S. citizens, including U.S. government personnel. I am very mindful of my nomination for the position once held by Ambassador Stevens, who together with three colleagues gave his life in pursuit of U.S. efforts in Libya. The volatile security situation has thus far prevented the return of a permanent U.S. diplomatic presence in Libya. While the Libya External Office has conducted a number of "daytrips" into Libya, this lack of a permanent presence is a significant obstacle to achieving our foreign policy objectives there. If confirmed, I will work toward the reestablishment of a U.S. presence in Libya when security conditions allow.

Question. What conditions are necessary in order to resume a permanent U.S. diplomatic presence in Tripoli?

Answer. The most important factors in order to resume a permanent U.S. diplomatic presence in Tripoli are the security situation and the availability of adequate facilities. If confirmed, I will work closely with the Department's Bureaus of Diplomatic Security and Overseas Building Operations, among others, to determine appropriate steps that can be taken toward an eventual resumption of a permanent U.S. diplomatic presence in Libya.

Question. Recognizing that diplomatic security must be a top priority for all our foreign service posts, what are the implications of not having a permanent U.S. presence?

Answer. The Libya External Office in Tunis is advancing U.S. policy priorities in Libya, and its relationships with key Libyan political, commercial, and civil society leaders are strong. Nevertheless, the lack of a permanent U.S. diplomatic presence in Libya is a significant obstacle to the realization of U.S. foreign policy objectives in Libya. It is impossible to fully replicate the access to local leaders and citizens, influence, public diplomacy opportunities, and deep understanding of a country that an in-country diplomatic presence provides.

Question. Regional actors have invested significant resources in support of various political actors and militias across the country, sometimes at cross-purposes with United States efforts. Given the current constraints on our diplomatic presence in Libya, how will you engage with all Libyan and regional stakeholders, specifically Egypt, the United Arab Emirates, and Qatar?

Answer. Senior Department officials are engaging with a range of international partners to press them to support a de-escalation of the conflict, including a ceasefire, and the establishment of the conditions necessary for a return to the political process. If confirmed, I will continue this work through direct engagement with the range of international actors with interests in Libya, including through the P3+1 (Italy) and P3+3 (Egypt, Italy, UAE) formats, as well as with Turkey and Qatar among others.

Question. Which of Haftar's external backers holds the most influence with him? How will you engage with those backers to push Haftar to agree to a ceasefire and reaffirm the U.N. process?

Answer. General Haftar maintains relationships to varying degrees with a range of countries. It is not clear that any single country holds outsized influence over him. If confirmed, I will prioritize engagement with foreign backers of the Libyan

parties as an essential part of our diplomatic strategy to press for a ceasefire and a return to U.N.-facilitated political mediation. It is important to emphasize to these countries that the ongoing conflict is endangering our shared interests, particularly by degrading counterterrorism cooperation, fostering instability in Libya's oil sector, and renewing migration pressures across the region.

Question. Libya has long been a destination for migrants seeking work as well as a transit country for migrants, asylum seekers, and refugees. There are currently a few thousand refugees in Libya, but close to 700,000 migrants and IDPs. How would you plan to work with Libyan authorities to ensure that the human rights of ALL those forcibly replaced are protected?

Answer. If confirmed, I will work with my team to continue to address the plight of migrants and refugees detained in Libya and continue to encourage Libyan authorities to coordinate closely with international humanitarian organizations to ensure migrant protection, prevent human rights abuses including human trafficking, and provide humanitarian assistance to vulnerable migrants, IDP's, and refugees. The current conflict in and around Tripoli has exacerbated this problem, highlighting the urgent need for a de-escalation of the violence and achievement of a ceasefire.

Question. What plans would you have for engaging Libyan authorities to improve oversight of and humane treatment in refugee detention centers?

Answer. I take very seriously the troubling allegations of mistreatment and inadequate conditions for migrants and refugees in detention centers in Libya. If confirmed, I will prioritize this issue in my engagements with Libyan authorities at the most senior levels. Targeted U.S. assistance also plays a critical role in addressing humanitarian needs, including of migrants and refugees. Our ability to make progress on these issues will also depend on prospects for ending the current fighting.

Question. How would you diplomatically engage with European governments to persuade humane treatment of refugees and migrants rescued at sea as well as to permit humanitarian NGOs to conduct search and rescue operations without fear of reprisal?

Answer. The Libya External Office meets regularly with European partners on foreign assistance issues, providing a useful forum to address these concerns at the embassy-level in Tunis. If confirmed, I will also work with my colleagues in the Bureau of European Affairs to engage European countries and the European Union to ensure humane treatment of migrants and refugees.

Question. Do you commit to respond promptly to all requests for information by Members of this committee?

Answer. Yes.

Question. Do you commit to appear before this committee upon request?

Answer. Yes.

Question. If you become aware of any suspected waste, fraud, or abuse in the Department, do you commit to report it to the Inspector General?

Answer. I commit to comply with all relevant federal ethics laws, regulations, and rules, and to raise concerns that I may have through appropriate channels.

Question. Please list any outside positions and affiliations you plan to continue to hold during your term of appointment.

Answer. None.

Question. Have you ever been an officer or director of a company that has filed for bankruptcy? If so, describe the circumstances and disposition.

Answer. No.

Question. If you leave this position before the completion of your full term of the next presidential election, do you commit to meeting with the committee to discuss the reasons for your departure?

Answer. Yes.

Question. Has anyone ever made a formal or informal complaint or allegation of sexual harassment, discrimination (e.g., racial, ethnic, religious, etc.), or inappropriate conduct against you, in a workplace or any other setting? If so, please describe the nature of the complaint or allegation, your response, and any resolution, including any settlements.

Answer. No.

Question. Have you ever addressed concerns or allegations of sexual harassment, discrimination (e.g., racial, ethnic, religious, etc.), or inappropriate conduct made against any employee over whom you had supervisory authority? If so, please describe the outcome and actions taken.

Answer. No.

Question. Do you agree that any targeting of or retaliation against career employees based on their perceived political beliefs, prior work on policy, or affiliation with a previous administration, is wholly inappropriate and has no place in the federal government? If confirmed, what will you do to ensure that all employees under your leadership understand that any retaliation, blacklisting, or other prohibited personnel practices will not be tolerated?

Answer. I would not tolerate retaliation and, if confirmed, would ensure embassy employees are aware of their responsibilities and are held accountable, including through the rating and evaluation process.

RESPONSES TO ADDITIONAL QUESTIONS FOR THE RECORD
SUBMITTED TO HON. RICHARD NORLAND BY SENATOR BENJAMIN L. CARDIN

Question. What are your most meaningful achievements to date in your career to promote human rights and democracy? What has been the impact of your actions?

Answer. Advancing human rights has been an important thread throughout my Foreign Service career, from battling apartheid while on the South Africa Desk, to taking part in the struggle against Soviet communism while in Moscow, to promoting an end to sectarian violence in Northern Ireland while in Dublin, to resisting the Taliban while in Afghanistan, to promoting democracy and civil society in Uzbekistan and Georgia. I believe my involvement contributed in some measure to the progress American foreign policy has made in each of these cases. I take particular satisfaction in having helped secure the release of political prisoner Sanjar Umarov in Uzbekistan in 2010.

Question. What are the most pressing human rights issues in Libya?

Answer. The ongoing fighting in Tripoli has resulted in nearly 700 fatalities, including more than 40 civilians, and displaced over 90,000 people. Indiscriminate attacks have been reported on civilian infrastructure including schools, hospitals, migrant detention centers, and public utilities. International NGOs state there has also been an increase in the number of arbitrary detention, abduction, and kidnapping cases as well as the targeting of health professionals in Libya. Migrants and refugees have experienced deteriorating conditions and abuses in detention centers. Impunity for human rights violations is commonplace.

Question. What are the most important steps you expect to take—if confirmed—to promote human rights and democracy in Libya? What do you hope to accomplish through these actions?

Answer. A ceasefire in Tripoli and a return to U.N. political mediation is necessary to address the deteriorating humanitarian situation, support human rights, and build democratic institutions in Libya. If confirmed, I will make the promotion of human rights in Libya one of my highest priorities and work closely with Libyan leaders to press for prompt and transparent government investigations to hold perpetrators of abuses accountable. U.S. assistance also plays a critical role in addressing humanitarian needs, supporting national reconciliation and good governance, and empowering civil society and journalists. Since 2011, the State Department and USAID have provided over $383 million in non-security assistance to Libya in addition to over $169 million in humanitarian assistance. If confirmed, I will continue to ensure U.S. funds are well spent to promote political reconciliation and human rights in Libya.

Question. If confirmed, what are the potential obstacles to addressing the specific human rights issues you have identified in your previous response? What challenges will you face in Libya in advancing human rights, civil society and democracy in general?

Answer. Ongoing conflict and instability in Libya limit the ability of Libyan authorities to address a deteriorating humanitarian situation, advance human rights, and build democratic institutions. The United States has called for an immediate ceasefire and a return to U.N.-facilitated political mediation to allow Libyans to re-

build infrastructure and improve governance. Only a political solution can bring lasting peace and stability to Libya. If confirmed, this goal will be one of my highest priorities.

Question. Are you committed to meeting with human rights, civil society and other non-governmental organizations in the U.S. and with local human rights NGOs in Libya? If confirmed, what steps will you take to pro-actively support the Leahy Law and similar efforts, and ensure that provisions of U.S. security assistance and security cooperation activities reinforce human rights?

Answer. If confirmed, I am committed to continuing my predecessors' tradition of meeting with key human rights, civil society, and other non-governmental organizations that work in Libya. The U.S. Libya External Office (LEO) in Tunis regularly engages with Libyan civil society and human rights defenders to learn about alleged human rights abuses and hear their views on how the United States can be more effective in promoting our human rights agenda in Libya. U.S. assistance and public diplomacy programs also work closely with civil society actors by partnering with international and local NGOs in Libya to carry out activities. If confirmed, I plan to regularly engage with non-governmental organizations that work on Libya.

The Department of State is committed to ensuring that security force units or members that commit gross violations of human rights do not receive U.S. training or assistance. If confirmed, I will continue our strong compliance with the Leahy law, including maintaining robust vetting procedures.

Question. Will you and your embassy team actively engage with Libya to address cases of key political prisoners or persons otherwise unjustly targeted by Libya?

Answer. Yes. If confirmed, my embassy team and I will engage with Libyan authorities to free any political prisoners unjustly detained by Libya. We will also continue to address the plight of migrants and refugees detained in Libya and continue to encourage Libyan authorities to coordinate closely with international humanitarian organizations to ensure migrant protection, prevent human rights abuses including human trafficking, and provide humanitarian assistance to vulnerable migrants and refugees.

Question. Will you engage with Libya on matters of human rights, civil rights and governance as part of your bilateral mission?

Answer. Yes. If confirmed, I will make promoting human and civil rights and good governance one of my highest priorities. The United States supports a political solution to the conflict in Libya that would allow Libya to transition to a stable, unified, and inclusive government capable of providing security and prosperity for its people and responding to citizens' needs.

Question. Do you commit to bring to the committee's attention (and the State Department Inspector General) any change in policy or U.S. actions that you suspect may be influenced by any of the President's business or financial interests, or the business or financial interests of any senior White House staff?

Answer. I commit to comply with all relevant federal ethics laws, regulations, and rules, and to raise concerns that I may have through appropriate channels.

Question. Do you commit to inform the committee if you have any reason to suspect that a foreign government, head of state, or foreign-controlled entity is taking any action in order to benefit any of the President's business or financial interests, or the interests of senior White House staff?

Answer. I commit to comply with all relevant federal ethics laws, regulations, and rules, and to raise concerns that I may have through appropriate channels.

Question. Do you or do any members of your immediate family have any financial interests in Libya?

Answer. Neither I nor any member of my immediate family has any financial interests in Libya.

Question. Research from private industry demonstrates that, when managed well, diversity makes business teams better both in terms of creativity and in terms of productivity. What will you do to promote, mentor and support your staff that come from diverse backgrounds and underrepresented groups in the Foreign Service?

Answer. I fully recognize the importance of promoting diversity and as Ambassador will prioritize efforts to ensure that all laws and regulations that promote diversity, protect against discrimination and enhance equal opportunity for all employees are observed and enforced. If confirmed, this will begin with introductory calls with all new members of the staff in which I will remind incoming officers of the standards to which we will all be held, and it will extend to the rating and eval-

uation process as well. Town hall meetings and mentoring sessions with entry level as well as supervisory staff will also be useful tools in this regard. I will work to ensure that violations of Equal Employment Opportunity (EEO) principles and merit system principles are reported and investigated in accordance with Department policy.

Question. What steps will you take to ensure each of the supervisors at the Embassy are fostering an environment that is diverse and inclusive?

Answer. I will make clear to all section chiefs and agency heads that they have a responsibility to help foster a diverse and inclusive work environment, that the Deputy Chief of Mission and I will be reviewing their performance in this respect as well as with respect to upholding equal employment opportunity principles, and that the rating and evaluation process will reflect supervisors' performance in these areas.

Question. How do you believe political corruption impacts democratic governance and the rule of law generally, and in Libya specifically?

Answer. I believe corruption fundamentally undermines the democratic process and rule of law. With respect to Libya specifically, corruption, lack of transparency in distribution of Libya's oil wealth, and graft by political and non-state actors fuel the conflict in Libya and limit Libya's economic potential. Alleged infiltration by militias of key government economic institutions, including the Central Bank of Libya and Libya's sovereign wealth fund, presents a significant challenge for effective governance and future efforts at security sector reform and disarmament, demobilization, and reintegration of armed groups (SSR/DDR).

The United States has continually engaged Libyan authorities to encourage increased fiscal transparency and a dialogue on equitable resource distribution between regions. The Department of State, together with the Department of Treasury, has convened a series of "Economic Dialogues" bringing together Libyan economic actors, government officials, and international experts from the World Bank and International Monetary Fund (IMF) to discuss needed economic reforms to combat corruption and increase transparency. The United States has also supported a U.N. effort to launch an audit of the Central Bank of Libya and its rival in the east.

U.S. assistance programs support efforts to improve public financial management at the national and municipal level, rule of law development, and planning for eventual SSR/DDR.

Question. What is your assessment of corruption trends in Libya and efforts to address and reduce it by that government?

Answer. Ongoing conflict and instability in Libya has limited the government of Libya's ability to address issues related to corruption and diversion of economic resources by state and non-state actors. Militias' role providing security in Tripoli allows them to exert control over economic resources. Lack of rule of law and effective policing has also contributed to economic diversion outside of Tripoli. The National Audit Bureau in Libya investigates and documents cases of illegitimate use of government funds, but has limited ability to investigate such offenses or refer them for prosecution.

Question. If confirmed, what steps will you take to strengthen good governance and anticorruption programming in Libya?

Answer. If confirmed, I will encourage Libyan authorities to adopt measures aimed at increasing fiscal transparency, fighting corruption, and limiting militia influence. As conditions allow, I will continue to convene Libyan actors in the "Economic Dialogue" format to address these issues. Under my leadership, the State Department and USAID will also continue to support assistance programs aimed at improving public financial management and rule of law development and capacity building.

Question. Human Rights Watch's World Report 2019 outlines the Libyan National Army's documented record of indiscriminate attacks on civilians, summary executions of captured fighters, and arbitrary detention. According to the U.N. Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (OCHA) there have been a minimum of 167 civilian casualties, including 42 civilian deaths as of June 10.

If confirmed, will you ensure that the United States seeks to hold individuals responsible for human rights abuses in Libya accountable?

Answer. Yes. If confirmed I will engage Libyan authorities to press for accountability for individuals responsible for human rights abuses in Libya. I will also carefully evaluate the applicability of the many tools the United States has to hold individuals responsible for human rights violations accountable.

Question. If confirmed, will you ensure that the United States seeks to hold individuals responsible for arms embargo violations involving Libya accountable? If so, how?

Answer. The United States supports U.N. Security Council Resolution 2292, which provides vital authorities for member states to limit the destabilizing flows of arms to and from Libya. On June 10, the United States voted in favor of U.N. Security Council Resolution 2473, which extends authorizations for Member States to inspect vessels on the high seas off the Libyan coast when reasonable grounds exist to believe they violated the arms embargo. These measures are important tools to prevent a destabilizing flow of weapons to Libya. If confirmed I would carefully consider how these authorities could be used to hold individuals responsible for arms embargo violations accountable.

Question. If confirmed, what will be your human rights priorities as Ambassador to Libya?

Answer. If confirmed, I will continue the U.S. government's efforts to assist all parties to achieve an immediate ceasefire in Tripoli and return to U.N. political mediation, which is crucial to restore stability and address violations of human rights in Libya. Impunity is a major concern in Libya and I will work closely with Libyan leaders, including civil society, to press for prompt and transparent government investigations to hold perpetrators of abuses accountable.

Question. How will you engage with the Libyan government to advance those priorities?

Answer. If confirmed, I will continue my predecessors' efforts to engage a range of Libyan authorities to address both specific cases of human rights violations as well as systemic problems. I will encourage Libyan authorities to coordinate closely with international humanitarian organizations and international human rights organizations to ensure protection of vulnerable populations and prevention of human rights abuses.

Question. Should the Libyan National Army Forces of Khalifa Haftar cease their operations near Tripoli? Under what conditions, if any?

Answer. Yes, military operations in and around Tripoli should cease in the context of U.N.-facilitated political mediation. The United States continues to press the parties to agree to a ceasefire, ideally without conditions, and return to U.N.-facilitated political mediation.

Question. If confirmed, how will you propose to better assist Libyan authorities in eliminating the role of militias in security in the capital, Tripoli?

Answer. The role of militias in Libya, including in Tripoli, poses a number of challenges for Libyan authorities. Armed groups have engaged in economic predation of resources that should rightfully benefit the Libyan people, as well as violence against and arbitrary detention of civilians. The lack of effective government control has led to impunity in many cases. If confirmed, I will support efforts to end the current conflict in Tripoli, which is further entrenching the role of militias. I plan to work closely with the U.N. Support Mission in Libya on future security sector reform and disarmament, demobilization, and reintegration (SSR/DDR) activities. The Department is currently implementing FY 2017 Peacekeeping Operations programming that aims to develop and implement a comprehensive Libyan SSR/DDR strategy, by providing technical advisory mechanisms and other strategic-level support.

Question. What is your view of the continuation of the U.N. arms embargo and asset freeze for Libya?

Answer. On June 10, the United States voted in favor of U.N. Security Council Resolution 2473, which extends authorizations for Member States to inspect vessels on the high seas off the Libyan coast when reasonable grounds exist to believe they violated the arms embargo. These measures are important tools to prevent a destabilizing flow of weapons to Libya, and to protect Libyan assets for the benefit of the Libyan people.

Question. If confirmed, will you propose that the President use U.S. executive orders to impose additional sanctions against those undermining Libya's transition? If so, what sanctions would you suggest?

Answer. As part of a broader diplomatic strategy and in coordination with international partners, U.S. sanctions have been an important tool in preventing the misuse of Libyan resources, upholding human rights, and imposing consequences for those who threaten Libya's peace, security, and stability or undermine its transition.

If confirmed, I will follow the proper interagency process for the consideration of potential sanctions and ensure any proposed sanctions support our broader strategic objectives of restoring stability andabling Libyan authorities to provide a more secure and prosperous future for all Libyans.

RESPONSES TO ADDITIONAL QUESTIONS FOR THE RECORD
SUBMITTED TO HON. RICHARD NORLAND BY SENATOR JEANNE SHAHEEN

Question. In your view, what is the potential risk of a humanitarian disaster with General Haftar's recent advance on Tripoli and how can U.S. leadership in the international community mitigate that risk?

Answer. Ongoing fighting in Tripoli between the "Libyan National Army" and government of National Accord has resulted in nearly 700 fatalities, including more than 40 civilians, and displaced over 90,000 people. Attacks on critical infrastructure have resulted in electricity and water interruptions among other services. Prolonged fighting risks fueling a greater humanitarian emergency that could affect as many as 1.5 million civilians, including 500,000 children based on U.N. estimates. To help address the deteriorating humanitarian situation, the United States has called for an immediate ceasefire in Tripoli and a return to U.N.-mediated political negotiations. The United States has also provided more than $36 million in humanitarian assistance for Libya since fiscal year 2018, including to those affected by the conflict in Tripoli. If confirmed, I will work with our Libyan and international partners to press for a cessation of hostilities in Tripoli and a return to the political process.T

Question. The Administration took an important step by unveiling the mandated Women, Peace and Security Strategy, but now we need to implement that policy in the most serious conflicts that we face. As Ambassador, how would you ensure that women are involved in any negotiation that finally brings peace and stability to Libya?

Answer. The Women, Peace, and Security Strategy shows U.S. leadership in promoting women's equality and increasing women's leadership in political and civic life in conflict environments like Libya. The meaningful inclusion of women in the political and peace processes in Libya is critical to building a stable, inclusive government in Libya. If confirmed, I will advocate for women's participation in political negotiations, as well as for a reduction in barriers that prevent women from having a formal say in the shaping of their society. Libyan women have long been active in informal peace processes, and must now be included at the negotiating table to inform the conflict resolution and decision-making processes. U.S. assistance to Libya promotes inclusion of women in political reconciliation and governance at the national and sub-national level. U.S. public diplomacy programs complement these foreign assistance efforts, with a focus on outreach to women and programs to advance their contributions to civil society.

RESPONSES TO ADDITIONAL QUESTIONS FOR THE RECORD
SUBMITTED TO HON. RICHARD NORLAND BY SENATOR JEANNE SHAHEEN

Question. In your view, what is the potential risk of a humanitarian disaster with General Haftar's recent advance on Tripoli and how can U.S. leadership in the international community mitigate that risk?

Answer. Ongoing fighting in Tripoli between the "Libyan National Army" and government of National Accord has resulted in nearly 700 fatalities, including more than 40 civilians, and displaced over 90,000 people. Attacks on critical infrastructure have resulted in electricity and water interruptions among other services. Prolonged fighting risks fueling a greater humanitarian emergency that could affect as many as 1.5 million civilians, including 500,000 children based on U.N. estimates. To help address the deteriorating humanitarian situation, the United States has called for an immediate ceasefire in Tripoli and a return to U.N.-mediated political negotiations. The United States has also provided more than $36 million in humanitarian assistance for Libya since fiscal year 2018, including to those affected by the conflict in Tripoli. If confirmed, I will work with our Libyan and international partners to press for a cessation of hostilities in Tripoli and a return to the political process.T

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RESPONSES TO ADDITIONAL QUESTIONS FOR THE RECORD
SUBMITTED TO JONATHAN COHEN BY SENATOR ROBERT MENENDEZ

Sinai/Security Assistance/Human Rights

Question. In addition to the worrying state of human rights in mainland Egypt, I am increasingly concerned about civilian casualties and other human rights abuses in the north of the Sinai Peninsula as Egypt continues its campaign against ISIS there.

- If confirmed, what steps will you take to increase U.S. oversight over the use of U.S. weapons systems in North Sinai and to ensure that all Egyptian military units that receive U.S.-origin weapons receive appropriate vetting, including Leahy vetting, when appropriate?

Answer. Egypt faces a real terrorist threat in the Sinai, which U.S.-Egypt counterterrorism cooperation and the continuing strong military-to-military partnership is helping to counter. Egypt has increasingly acknowledged the need for a more comprehensive approach in its Sinai counterterrorism campaign and announced its intent to use economic and social development to counter the effects of the campaign on Sinai residents.

If confirmed, I look forward to discussing these development efforts with the Egyptian government, and will continue to emphasize the need for protection of the civilian population and the importance of implementing a more holistic counterterrorism approach. To help the United States have greater insight into the Sinai Peninsula to verify whether U.S.-provided weapons are being used appropriately, I also will continue to request appropriate travel for relevant U.S. officials into the Sinai as security conditions permit, and urge Egypt to grant journalists and NGOs more access to the Sinai.

Question. Do you believe that withholding some foreign military financing, as required under current appropriations law, is a useful point of leverage in pushing the Egyptian government to improve human rights and political freedom in Egypt? What other points of leverage are available?

Answer. Our support to Egypt furthers U.S. national security interests by countering terrorism and its causes in Egypt and by accelerating Egyptian recovery from the effects of terrorism. If confirmed, I will uphold all laws pertaining to our assistance and continue to ensure that we work with Egypt in planning for the effective use of U.S. security assistance to support counterterrorism, border security, and other shared security interests, and I will work with Egypt both publicly and privately to encourage Egypt's respect for and protection of basic rights and freedoms. I will take up the message Secretary Pompeo delivered in his speech in Cairo in January, encouraging President al-Sisi to "unleash the creative energy of Egypt's people, unfetter the economy, and promote a free and open exchange of ideas." I also will discuss with civil society and NGO leaders as well as members of Congress how else we can advance the human rights agenda, and will carefully consider relevant suggestions.

Question. Do you believe that the end of cash flow financing for Egypt and the provision of foreign military financing for specific categories such as counter ter-

rorism and border security have been helpful in addressing Egypt's current security threats? How will you engage with the Egyptian government to ensure that these two assistance policies remain and increase in effectiveness?

Answer. To support Egypt's counterterrorism efforts, U.S. government assistance should remain flexible and responsive to Egypt's fluid security requirements. The Department has found that we can help Egypt plan for emerging threats, secure its borders, and counter terrorism and its causes without cash flow financing. If confirmed, I will work with Egypt to ensure U.S. security assistance is well targeted to achieve bilateral security objectives. I also will work with Egypt to ensure our counterterrorism partnership continues to reduce threats to U.S. interests.

Question. As the United States provides significant military assistance to Egypt, I am concerned about their deepening relationship with Russia. I am specifically concerned about Egypt's reported purchase of 20 Russian Sukhoi SU-35s and the loan that Moscow has provided to construct the nuclear power plant at Dabaa. If confirmed, how will you engage with the Egyptian government to stress that these sorts of deals run against the spirit of that partnership and, in the case of the Sukhois, make it liable for sanctions under CAATSA?

Answer. As Secretary Pompeo testified on April 9, we have been very clear with senior levels of the Egyptian government that CAATSA Section 231 requires the imposition of sanctions on any person that knowingly engages in a significant transaction with the Russian defense or intelligence sectors. Egyptian officials have indicated that they understood. U.S.-Egypt ties remain strong, and if confirmed, I will continue to engage Egypt to ensure the United States remains its partner of choice.

Question. How much influence does Egypt have with General Haftar?

Answer. Egypt has a national security interest in Libyan security and stability. Within that context, Egypt has influence with a number Libyan parties and leaders including Khalifa Haftar. The Department is encouraging Egypt and other partners to use their influence to press Libyans including Haftar and Prime Minister al-Sarraj to de-escalate the conflict and support implementation of an immediate ceasefire and work for a peaceful solution.

Question. If confirmed, how will you engage with the Egyptian government, to push for a ceasefire and political solution in Libya? What leverage do you think we have to do that?

Answer. Egypt is a key partner in seeking regional stability and building a sustainable government in Libya and has said that Libya is its number one security concern. This shared interest provides space for us to work jointly to engage Libyan leaders to de-escalate the conflict and support implementation of an immediate ceasefire and work for a peaceful solution. If confirmed, I will prioritize further outreach with Egypt to align our approaches to Libya

Question. What are Egypt's main interests in Sudan and what leverage do we have to encourage the Egyptians to support fully the establishment of a civilian-led transitional authority in keeping with the calls from the AU PSC?

Answer. We believe that a civilian-led government in Sudan is not only in the best interest of the Sudanese people, but also necessary for the stability of the region, which is key for Egypt. The United States is actively and frequently engaging Egypt on the Sudan crisis via our Undersecretary for Political Affairs, Special Envoy to Sudan Ambassador Booth, and our U.S. Embassy. In our discussions, we have encouraged coordination of effort and the use of our collective leverage to press the Transitional Military Council to stop violence and come to agreement with the Forces for Freedom and Change on a civilian-led government, and we welcomed Egypt's recent statements condemning the June 3 violence and calling for renewed dialogue. As Sudan's neighbor and current chair of the African Union Assembly, Egypt is in a position to encourage collaborative efforts with the African Union and to influence other Gulf States' thinking on transition efforts in Sudan.

Question. What specific steps will you take, if confirmed, to bring Egypt in line with U.S. diplomatic efforts related to a democratic transition in Sudan?

Answer. If confirmed, I am committed to raising the issue of Sudan at the highest levels with Egyptian officials and working with Special Envoy Ambassador Booth and other U.S. officials to help align efforts and coordinate international support.

Question. What immediate steps, if confirmed, will you take to prevent Egypt from engaging in efforts that encourages "forum shopping" by parties to the political dialogue in Sudan?

Answer. We have encouraged Egypt to engage with the Forces for Freedom and Change directly, and welcomed its recent engagement. Our Embassy in Cairo is supporting the travel of U.S. Envoy to Sudan Ambassador Booth to Cairo to engage directly and influence helpful behavior from Egyptian interlocutors who have insights and direct contacts with the various parties in Sudan.

Question. Will you commit to raising the need for a civilian-led transition in Sudan at the highest levels in Egypt upon your arrival and accreditation as ambassador to Egypt?

Answer. If confirmed, I am committed to raising at the highest levels in Egypt the need for a civilian-led transition in Sudan and the need for Egypt to work with us to promote regional cooperation and security.

Question. Do you commit to respond promptly to all requests for information by Members of this committee?

Answer. Yes.

Question. Do you commit to appear before this committee upon request?

Answer. Yes.

Question. If you become aware of any suspected waste, fraud, or abuse in the Department, do you commit to report it to the Inspector General?

Answer. Yes.

Question. Please list any outside positions and affiliations you plan to continue to hold during your term of appointment.

Answer. None.

Question. Have you ever been an officer or director of a company that has filed for bankruptcy? If so, describe the circumstances and disposition.

Answer. No.

Question. If you leave this position before the completion of your full term of the next presidential election, do you commit to meeting with the committee to discuss the reasons for your departure?

Answer. Yes.

Question. Has anyone ever made a formal or informal complaint or allegation of sexual harassment, discrimination (e.g., racial, ethnic, religious, etc.), or inappropriate conduct against you, in a workplace or any other setting? If so, please describe the nature of the complaint or allegation, your response, and any resolution, including any settlements.

Answer. No.

Question. Have you ever addressed concerns or allegations of sexual harassment, discrimination (e.g., racial, ethnic, religious, etc.), or inappropriate conduct made against any employee over whom you had supervisory authority? If so, please describe the outcome and actions taken.

Answer. No.

Question. Do you agree that any targeting of or retaliation against career employees based on their perceived political beliefs, prior work on policy, or affiliation with a previous administration, is wholly inappropriate and has no place in the federal government? If confirmed, what will you do to ensure that all employees under your leadership understand that any retaliation, blacklisting, or other prohibited personnel practices will not be tolerated?

Answer. Yes, I agree. The commitment to diversity, inclusiveness and EEO will be embedded in the work requirements of each supervisor under my charge, will be raised by me often, from introductory meetings to counseling sessions to routine work reviews, and will be underscored by my own comportment and my insistence that all employees under my supervision take required courses relevant to these principles. Plus, I will uphold and publicly underscore my insistence on a zero tolerance policy when it comes to retaliation, blacklisting, and other prohibited personnel practices.

RESPONSES TO ADDITIONAL QUESTIONS FOR THE RECORD
SUBMITTED TO JONATHAN COHEN BY SENATOR BENJAMIN L. CARDIN

Question. What are your most meaningful achievements to date in your career to promote human rights and democracy? What has been the impact of your actions?

Answer. Through 33 years in the Foreign Service, I have promoted human rights and democracy in virtually every assignment, including by contributing to country human rights, trafficking in persons and religious freedom reports: as a refugee protection officer in Thailand; as the Desk Officer responsible for the OSCE's Human Dimension at the State Department; developing Holocaust Education, Remembrance, and Research to counter the growth of neo-Nazism in Sweden; helping to establish the first post-Saddam government in Iraq as part of the Coalition Provisional Authority; supporting the Committee on Missing Persons and preserving cultural heritage in Cyprus; hosting programs to support women's rights, speaking out in support of minorities and religious freedoms, and developing a stabilization program to get Internally Displaced People home to areas liberated from ISIS as DCM in Baghdad; leading U.S. delegations seeking the liberation from wrongful imprisonment of U.S. citizens and U.S. government employees in Turkey; pressing the Turks to end their extended State of Emergency; arguing for the restoration of press freedoms in Turkey and testifying before the Helsinki Commission on the weakening of democracy in Turkey under the State of Emergency. In my current position, I have used the Security Council to shine a light on world's most egregious human rights abuses and have hosted events on human rights in Burma and North Korea, as well as a commemoration of the Minsk Ghetto's liberation and a window display seen by thousands in USUN's First Avenue windows to commemorate Tiananmen Square.

I believe my contributions in this field have underscored the commitment of the U.S. government and the American people to advancing human rights and democracy, improved conditions for thousands of Vietnamese, Cambodia and Lao refugees in Thai camps, put neo-Nazism in context for school children throughout Europe, placed Iraq on a path toward democratic governance, helped over a million Iraqi IDPs get home quickly and safely after ISIS had deprived them of their most basic human rights and caused them to flee their homes, and underscored the impact of human rights abuses on international peace and security and the merit of addressing human rights in the U.N. Security Council. If confirmed, I will continue to champion human rights and democracy in Egypt.

Question. What are the most pressing human rights issues in Egypt? What are the most important steps you expect to take—if confirmed—to promote human rights and democracy in Egypt? What do you hope to accomplish through these actions?

Answer. The Egyptian political environment has become severely constrained in recent years, leaving limited outlet for peaceful dissent. To ensure Egypt's long-term stability and prosperity, it is crucial that the Egyptian people be allowed space to express their views without reprisal and that the security forces be held accountable for any abuses of power. If confirmed, I will continue to work with Egypt to advance our strategic partnership and address our common challenges, which includes encouraging Egypt's respect for and protection of basic rights and freedoms. I will emphasize the vital role that respect for fundamental freedoms and rule of law have played in the progress of democracies and building prosperous and stable nations.

Question. If confirmed, what are the potential obstacles to addressing the specific human rights issues you have identified in your previous response? What challenges will you face in Egypt in advancing human rights, civil society and democracy in general?

Answer. I share your concerns about the human rights situation in Egypt. If confirmed, I will deliver sensitive messages about our concerns, in public and private, and I trust that diplomatic engagement on these issues can make an impact. One of my most important responsibilities would be to deliver these messages, and I would look forward to leading the Mission in engaging with civil society and government counterparts consistently and at the highest possible levels on these issues.

Question. Are you committed to meeting with human rights, civil society and other non-governmental organizations in the U.S. and with local human rights NGOs in Egypt? If confirmed, what steps will you take to pro-actively support the Leahy Law and similar efforts, and ensure that provisions of U.S. security assistance and security cooperation activities reinforce human rights?

Answer. A critical component of stability is respect for and protection of human rights and fundamental freedoms, accountability, and greater political space for civil society and dissenting views. If confirmed, I will welcome meetings with a diverse array of stakeholders, including Egyptian human rights, civil society, and other activists to hear their valuable perspectives.

All security assistance, including to Egypt, is subject to the Leahy laws and end use monitoring requirements. Units that commit gross violations of human rights are ineligible for assistance. Embassy Cairo, and the Department as a whole, continues to vet such assistance and to develop and implement procedures to enhance this vetting. If confirmed, I will join their efforts and continue to ensure that our assistance meets these requirements.

Question. Will you and your embassy team actively engage with Egypt to address cases of key political prisoners or persons otherwise unjustly targeted by Egypt?

Answer. If confirmed, I will continue to raise our concerns with the Egyptian government's restrictions on peaceful dissent in general, as well as specific cases of key political prisoners or persons otherwise unjustly targeted by Egypt.

Question. Will you engage with Egypt on matters of human rights, civil rights and governance as part of your bilateral mission?

Answer. Societies are strengthened by expressions of opinion and dissent, and freedom of expression plays an important role in ensuring more prosperous, stable countries—a key U.S. goal for Egypt. The United States continues to encourage Egypt to allow space for its citizens to express their views without reprisal and hold security forces accountable for any abuses of power. As the Secretary said in his speech in Cairo in January, "we encourage President Al-Sisi to unleash the creative energy of Egypt's people, unfetter the economy, and promote a free and open exchange of ideas." If confirmed, I will continue to raise these issues to the Egyptian government at senior levels.

Question. In many ways, Egypt is a strong U.S. partner, but their record on human rights, including religious freedom and freedom of expression, is concerning to say the least. According to an April report from Reuters, Egypt blocked a petition website after it reached 60,000 signatures against an upcoming constitutional referendum. This is not the first time such action has been taken. If confirmed, how would you use our partnership with Egypt to advocate for better human rights protections?

Answer. If confirmed, I am committed to continuing to work with Egypt to advance our strategic partnership and to strengthen Egypt's stability and prosperity. Ensuring that fundamental human rights are respected and space is allowed for Egyptians to express their views is a vital part of that, and in Egypt's own interest. I look forward to working with you on ways to advance these fundamental freedoms in Egypt, including raising these issues both publicly and privately.

Question. Do you commit to bring to the committee's attention (and the State Department Inspector General) any change in policy or U.S. actions that you suspect may be influenced by any of the President's business or financial interests, or the business or financial interests of any senior White House staff?

Answer. I commit to comply with all relevant federal ethics laws, regulations, and rules, and to raise concerns that I may have through appropriate channels.

Question. Do you commit to inform the committee if you have any reason to suspect that a foreign government, head of state, or foreign-controlled entity is taking any action in order to benefit any of the President's business or financial interests, or the interests of senior White House staff?

Answer. I commit to comply with all relevant federal ethics laws, regulations, and rules, and to raise concerns that I may have through appropriate channels.

Question. Do you or do any members of your immediate family have any financial interests in Egypt?

Answer. Neither I nor any members of my immediate family have any financial interests in Egypt.

Question. Research from private industry demonstrates that, when managed well, diversity makes business teams better both in terms of creativity and in terms of productivity. What will you do to promote, mentor and support your staff that come from diverse backgrounds and underrepresented groups in the Foreign Service?

Answer. In 2017-2018, I was selected and served actively as a mentor in a pilot program connecting underrepresented groups in the Foreign Service with senior officers to help them chart a course to the senior ranks. I have played similar men-

toring roles for subordinates of diverse backgrounds throughout my career and will continue to do so in the future. I highly value the diversity of our outstanding workforce at USUN and am a strong supporter of EEO. I will ensure that EEO principles are applied enthusiastically without exception in any workplace I supervise.

In 2011, I was nominated for the Arnold Raphel Award given to the State Department's most outstanding mentor. The nomination cited me for "sustained and exemplary leadership and mentoring of Foreign Service employees in all phases of career development." I was also commended for mentoring by the Office of Inspector General, whose lead for the 2010 Embassy Nicosia inspection wrote, "I have not seen a more conscientious or effective mentor of First and Second Tour employees in the many embassies I have inspected over the last five years."

Question. What steps will you take to ensure each of the supervisors at the Embassy are fostering an environment that is diverse and inclusive?

Answer. The commitment to diversity, inclusiveness, and Equal Employment Opportunity (EEO) will be embedded in the work requirements of each supervisor under my charge, will be raised by me often, from introductory meetings to counseling sessions to routine work reviews, and will be underscored by my own comportment and my insistence that all employees under my supervision take required courses relevant to these principles.

Question. How do you believe political corruption impacts democratic governance and the rule of law generally, and in Egypt specifically?

Answer. Political corruption constrains citizens' ability to participate in their government and advocate for needed change. The Egyptian government has spoken out publicly against corruption. If confirmed, I will raise these issues to the Egyptian government consistently and at the highest possible levels.

Question. What is your assessment of corruption trends in Egypt and efforts to address and reduce it by that government?

Answer. Over the past few years, the Egyptian political environment has become increasingly constrained, impeding citizens' ability to act as watchdogs on their government. Egypt has, however, minimized its off-budget accounts, authorized government institutions to combat corruption, and expressed interest in moving toward more transparent, less corruptible government processes, which the U.S. supports, including through assistance.

Question. If confirmed, what steps will you take to strengthen good governance and anticorruption programming in Egypt?

Answer. If confirmed, I will advocate at the highest levels for the Egyptian people to be allowed space to express their views about their government without reprisal and for the Egyptian government to move toward greater fiscal transparency—not only because these are the right things to do, but also because they will make Egypt more stable and prosperous in the long-term.

Question. A 2016 GAO report detailed major gaps in Egypt's compliance with end-use verifications of the use and security of certain equipment transferred or sold to the Egyptian military. What specific can the State Department take to improve verification of U.S. weapons and equipment transferred to Egyptian security forces to ensure that weapons have not been transferred illegally to pro-government militias in North Sinai?

Answer. The Department examines all-source information reporting for evidence of misuse of U.S. weapons and equipment. As we examine this all-source information reporting, if we identify potential incidents of concern, we attempt to investigate further to identify any additional information that might corroborate the allegations, and we respond to discourage any misuse in the future. If confirmed, I will continue to implement end-use monitoring procedures, and to help the United States have greater insight into the Sinai Peninsula to verify whether U.S.-provided weapons are being used appropriately, I will continue to request appropriate travel for relevant U.S. officials into the Sinai as security conditions permit, and I will urge Egypt to grant journalists and NGOs more access to the Sinai to increase the chances of observing misuse.

Question. What additional steps would you recommend be taken to ensure that U.S. weapons and equipment are not being used to further human rights abuses in North Sinai?

Answer. Egypt faces a real terrorist threat in the Sinai, which U.S.-Egypt counterterrorism cooperation and the continuing strong military-to-military partnership is helping to counter. To help the United States have greater insight into the

Sinai Peninsula to verify whether U.S.-provided weapons are being used appropriately, if confirmed, I will continue to request appropriate travel for relevant U.S. officials into the Sinai as security conditions permit, and I will urge Egypt to grant journalists and NGOs more access to the Sinai to increase the chances of observing misuse.

Question. If confirmed, what specific steps will you recommend that the administration take to improve processes of end-use verifications of equipment used by the Egyptian army in North Sinai? What specific steps will you recommend that the administration take to improve the vetting of Egyptian military units per Leahy law requirements?

Answer. All security assistance, including to Egypt, is subject to the Leahy laws and end use monitoring requirements. Units that commit gross violations of human rights are ineligible for assistance. Embassy Cairo, and the Department as a whole, continues to vet such assistance and to develop and implement procedures to enhance this vetting. If confirmed, I will join their efforts and continue to ensure that our assistance meets these requirements, and to help the United States have greater insight into the Sinai Peninsula to verify whether U.S.-provided weapons are being used appropriately, I will continue to request appropriate travel for relevant U.S. officials into the Sinai as security conditions permit, and I will urge Egypt to grant journalists and NGOs more access to the Sinai to increase the chances of observing misuse.

Question. President Trump has hosted Egyptian President al-Sisi at the White House multiple times since coming into office, most recently in April 2019, two days prior to a public referendum in Egypt on constitutional amendments that dramatically expanded President Sisi's power. Do you believe that the Trump administration has been successful in utilizing private tactics to encourage Egyptian officials to be rights-respecting? If so, please outline specifically how these tactics have been successful.

Answer. The Administration continues to work with President al-Sisi to advance our strategic partnership and address our common challenges, which includes encouraging Egypt's respect for and protection of human rights and fundamental freedoms, accountability, and greater political space for civil society and dissenting views. The Administration engages publicly and privately with the Egyptian government on these issues, including regarding our serious concerns about restrictions on civil society and cases concerning American citizens. Egypt has released detained American citizens and in December 2018, an Egyptian court acquitted U.S. NGO employees previously convicted in the Case 173 NGO trial. President al-Sisi has spoken out publicly about the need for religious equality, and Egypt has continued the steady if slow licensing of new churches.

Question. Will you commit to using, if confirmed, both public and private tactics to advocate for human rights protections?

Answer. I share your concerns about the human rights situation in Egypt. If confirmed, I will work with Egypt both publicly and privately to advance our strategic partnership and address our common challenges, which includes encouraging Egypt's respect for and protection of basic rights and freedoms. I will emphasize the vital role that respect for fundamental freedoms and rule of law have played in the progress of democracies and building of prosperous economies. One of my most important responsibilities would be to deliver that message, and I would look forward to leading the Mission in engaging with civil society and government counterparts on these issues.

Question. Egypt is a vital ally for regional stability and, in fact, after a recent visit to the White House a statement was released noting "Egypt's longstanding role as a lynchpin of regional stability." What is your assessment of how Egypt, under President al-Sisi, can be an essential ally for regional stability given the dramatic uptick in repression over the last few years, draconian restrictions on civil society, and ongoing crisis in the Sinai?

Answer. Egypt remains an important partner and its stability is critical to U.S interests. To aid Egypt's and the region's stability, including Egypt's maintenance of a productive relationship with Israel, we focus on strengthening Egypt's counterterrorism effectiveness and border security, economic reforms that attract investment and lead to inclusive growth, and encouraging Egypt to play a constructive role regionally. Addressing challenging human rights issues is a component of each of these lines of effort, such as encouraging the Egyptian government to allow space for its people to express their views without reprisal and to hold security forces accountable for any abuses of power. If confirmed, I will take up the message Sec-

retary Pompeo delivered in his speech in Cairo in January, encouraging President al-Sisi to "unleash the creative energy of Egypt's people, unfetter the economy, and promote a free and open exchange of ideas."

Question. In late April, Egypt hosted African leaders on emergency talks on the upheavals in Sudan and Libya, at which time Sisi called for "African solutions to African problems" and urged the country's political actors to "safeguard the state's institutions . . . in order to prevent a slide into chaos." What role is Egypt playing with regard to the unrest and transition in neighboring Sudan?

Answer. The United States is actively and frequently engaging Egypt on the Sudan crisis via our Undersecretary for Political Affairs, Special Envoy to Sudan Ambassador Booth, and our Embassy in Cairo. In our discussions, we have encouraged coordination of effort and the use of our collective leverage to press the Transitional Military Council to stop violence and come to agreement with the Forces for Freedom and Change on a civilian-led government. As Sudan's neighbor and current chair of the African Union Assembly, Egypt is in a position to encourage collaborative efforts with the African Union and to influence other Gulf States' thinking on transition efforts in Sudan.

Question. How could Egypt play a more constructive role in Sudan's transition?

Answer. We believe that a civilian-led government in Sudan is not only in the best interest of the Sudanese people, but also necessary for the stability of the region, which is key for Egypt. We have encouraged Egypt to engage with the Forces for Freedom and Change directly, and welcome its recent engagement and its statements condemning the June 3 violence and calling for renewed dialogue. Our Embassy in Cairo is supporting the travel of U.S. Envoy to Sudan Ambassador Booth to Egypt to engage directly and influence helpful behavior from Egyptian interlocutors who have insights and direct contacts with the various parties in Sudan.

Question. During the late April talks, President Sisi met with Khalifa Haftar, the commander of eastern-based Libyan forces, who is under international pressure to halt an advance on the capital Tripoli:

- What role is Egypt playing with regard to the Libyan National Army's operations in neighboring Libya?

Answer. Egypt has a national security interest in Libyan security and stability. Within that context, Egypt has influence with a number Libyan parties and leaders including Khalifa Haftar. The Department is encouraging Egypt and other partners to use their influence to press Libyans including Haftar and Prime Minister al-Sarraj to de-escalate the conflict and support implementation of an immediate ceasefire and work for a peaceful solution.

Question. How could Egypt play a more constructive role in bringing peace to Libya?

Answer. Egypt is a key partner in seeking regional stability and building a sustainable government in Libya and has said that Libya is its number one security concern. This shared interest provides space for us to work jointly to engage Libyan leaders to de-escalate the conflict and support implementation of an immediate ceasefire and work for a peaceful solution. If confirmed, I will prioritize further outreach with Egypt to align our approaches to Libya.

Question. As you know, the Egyptians have recently allowed a few U.S. government officials—including the USAID administrator—into Sinai. These are important but insufficient developments given the opacity that surrounds the situation in the Sinai:

- What steps would you take to convince the Egyptians to go a step further and grant regular and consistent access to humanitarian organizations, human rights organizations, and independent media to North Sinai?

Answer. Egypt faces a real terrorist threat in the Sinai, which U.S.-Egypt counterterrorism cooperation and the continuing strong military-to-military partnership is helping to counter. Egypt has increasingly acknowledged the need for a more comprehensive approach in its Sinai counterterrorism campaign and announced its intent to use economic and social development to counter the effects of the campaign on Sinai residents.

If confirmed, I look forward to discussing these development efforts with the Egyptian government, and will continue to emphasize the need for protection of the civilian population and the importance of implementing a more holistic counterterrorism approach. To help the United States have greater insight into the Sinai Peninsula to verify whether U.S.-provided weapons are being used appropriately, I also will continue to request appropriate travel for relevant U.S. officials into the

Sinai as security conditions permit, and urge Egypt to grant journalists and NGOs more access to the Sinai.

Question. Will you commit to raising this in each meeting with Egyptian officials, if confirmed?

Answer. If confirmed, I commit to raising this matter with senior Egyptian officials. I would look forward to discussing development efforts with the Egyptian government, and will continue to emphasize the need for protection of the civilian population and the importance of implementing a more holistic counterterrorism approach. To help the United States have greater insight into the Sinai Peninsula to verify whether U.S.-provided weapons are being used appropriately, I also will continue to request appropriate travel for relevant U.S. officials into the Sinai as security conditions permit, and urge Egypt to grant journalists and NGOs more access to the Sinai.

Question. Egypt has been a strong ally in combatting ISIS in the Sinai Peninsula and other terrorist groups, but there have similarly been reports of human rights abuse and civilian targeting by security forces:

- If confirmed, how would you work to ensure Egypt's security services better respect human rights in their counter-terror efforts?

Answer. Egypt faces a real terrorist threat in the Sinai, which U.S.-Egypt counterterrorism cooperation and the continuing strong military-to-military partnership is helping to counter. Egypt has increasingly acknowledged the need for a more comprehensive approach in its Sinai counterterrorism campaign and announced its intent to use economic and social development to counter the effects of the campaign on Sinai residents. If confirmed, I look forward to discussing these development efforts with the Egyptian government, and will continue to emphasize the need for protection of the civilian population and the importance of implementing a more holistic counterterrorism approach. To help the United States have greater insight into the Sinai Peninsula to verify whether U.S.-provided weapons are being used appropriately, I also will continue to request appropriate travel for relevant U.S. officials into the Sinai as security conditions permit, and urge Egypt to grant journalists and NGOs more access to the Sinai.

RESPONSES TO ADDITIONAL QUESTIONS FOR THE RECORD
SUBMITTED JONATHAN COHEN TO BY SENATOR EDWARD J. MARKEY

Question. Could you give me your assessment of how Egypt, under President al-Sisi, can be an essential ally for regional stability given the dramatic uptick in repression over the last few years, draconian restrictions on civil society, and ongoing crisis in Sinai?

Answer. Egypt remains an important partner and its stability is critical to U.S interests. To aid Egypt's and the region's stability, we focus on strengthening Egypt's CT effectiveness and border security, economic reforms that attract investment and lead to inclusive growth, and encouraging Egypt to play a constructive role regionally. Addressing challenging human rights issues is a component of each of these lines of effort, such as encouraging the Egyptian government to allow space for its people to express their views without reprisal and to hold security forces accountable for any abuses of power. If confirmed, I will take up the message Secretary Pompeo delivered in his speech in Cairo in January, encouraging President al-Sisi to "unleash the creative energy of Egypt's people, unfetter the economy, and promote a free and open exchange of ideas."

Question. If confirmed, how specifically do you intend to use your public position and the resources of the embassy to address Egypt's troubling human rights and democracy record?

Answer. I share your concerns about the human rights situation in Egypt. If confirmed, I will continue to work with Egypt to advance our strategic partnership and address our common challenges, which includes encouraging Egypt's respect for and protection of basic rights and freedoms. I will emphasize the vital role that respect for fundamental freedoms and rule of law have played in the progress of democracies and building of prosperous economies. One of my most important responsibilities would be to deliver that message, and I would look forward to leading the Mission in engaging with civil society and government counterparts on these issues.

Question. Do you believe that the Trump Administration has been successful in utilizing private tactics to encourage Egyptian officials to be rights-respecting? If so, please outline specifically how these tactics have been successful.

Answer. The Administration continues to work with President al-Sisi to advance our strategic partnership and address our common challenges, which includes encouraging Egypt's respect for and protection of human rights and fundamental freedoms, accountability, and greater political space for civil society and dissenting views. The Administration engages publicly and privately with the Egyptian government on these issues, including regarding our serious concerns about restrictions on civil society and cases concerning American citizens. Egypt has released detained American citizens and in December 2018, an Egyptian court acquitted U.S. NGO employees previously convicted in the Case 173 NGO trial.

RESPONSES TO ADDITIONAL QUESTIONS FOR THE RECORD
SUBMITTED TO JOHN RAKOLTA, JR. BY SENATOR ROBERT MENENDEZ

Question. UAE involvement in a number of regional conflicts risks prolonging or intensifying them. From Yemen where they are a major partner in the Saudi-led coalition to Libya, where they have provided significant support, including airstrikes for General Khalifa Heftar to Sudan, where UAE support for the Transitional Military Council has emboldened the delay to a civilian-led transition, facilitating a violent crackdown on peaceful protesters.

- What steps can the UAE take to play a more productive role in each of these conflicts?

Answer. I understand the UAE regularly participates in multilateral diplomatic fora such as the Yemen Quad (US-UK-Saudi Arabia-UAE) and with the P3+3 on Libya (France, Italy, UK, Egypt, the UAE, and the United States). The UAE government has publicly expressed continued support for the efforts of the U.N. Special Envoy to Yemen, and in April 2019 the UAE issued a joint statement on Libya with France, Italy, the UK, and the United States, urging all parties to immediately de-escalate tensions and expressing strong support for the efforts of U.N. Special Representative Ghassan Salame. The Administration is engaged with the UAE on Sudan issues, including high-level calls and a recent Quad meeting on Sudan in London. The UAE should continue to closely coordinate its humanitarian assistance to Yemen with the United Nations and its Humanitarian Response Plan. Constructive actions such as these are more likely to lead to a negotiated peace process in all three conflicts.

Question. If confirmed, how will you engage with the UAE government to push it to take those steps?

Answer. If confirmed, I will seek opportunities to engage regularly with diplomatic and military leadership to encourage them to coordinate closely.

Question. Foreign diplomacy under this Administration has been frequently carried out by unofficial diplomats, including Jared Kushner, the president's son-in-law and White House senior advisor. Given Kushner's close relationship with senior Emirati leaders, how to you plan to navigate those challenges?

Answer. If confirmed, I look forward to developing good working relations with senior Emirati leaders in my capacity as the President's official envoy to the United Arab Emirates.

Question. The Associated Press, Human Rights Watch, Amnesty International, and the U.N. Panel of Experts on Yemen have all issued reports detailing the torture of Yemeni detainees by Yemeni forces receiving support from the UAE. There are also allegations that at times UAE forces themselves have directly participated in the torture and illegal detention of Yemeni detainees in a network of secret prisons. Have you read these reports?

Answer. Yes.

Question. Given the findings of these reports, do you agree or disagree with their conclusions that the UAE has responsibility for the torture and disappearances of detainees in Yemen by its own forces or by Yemeni forces under the UAE's effective control or direction?

Answer. The United States takes all allegations of abuse seriously. These reports are disturbing, however, I am not in a position to make such a determination at this time. If confirmed, I would consult with experts in the Department of State and

the Administration in order to better understand the allegations and underlying facts. Once I have a more complete understanding, I will urge UAE officials to take appropriate actions, which could include conduct a thorough investigation.

Question. If confirmed as the Ambassador to the UAE, what will your role be in investigating the allegations of illegal detention and torture?

Answer. If confirmed, I would consult with experts in the Department of State and the Administration in order to better understand the allegations and underlying facts. Once I have a more complete understanding, I will urge UAE officials to conduct a thorough investigation.

Question. What steps will you take to push the UAE to release any and all unjustly held individuals in UAE-run facilities in Yemen and to hold accountable those responsible for arbitrary detention and torture?

Answer. I understand that the administration has raised concerns about these allegations with UAE government and military officials. If confirmed, I will seek to better understand the underlying facts and will urge UAE officials to conduct a thorough and transparent investigation and to hold those responsible accountable.

Yemen Weapons Transfers

Question. I remain concerned over reports that the UAE has transferred U.S. origin weapons, including small arms, anti-tank missiles and armored vehicles to armed Yemeni groups that include affiliates of al Qaeda fighters and hardline Salafi militias. Such transfers are in direct violation of sales agreements made between the U.S. and the UAE.

- To date, I do not have confidence that the Department's investigation is sufficiently thorough. If confirmed, what will your role be in ensuring there is a thorough investigation into these transfers and ensuring that they do not happen again?

Answer. I understand the Department continues to investigate the allegations regarding transfers from the UAE to groups in Yemen. If confirmed, I will ensure that we continue to reiterate our end-use requirements to our partners, and to facilitate investigations in the event that we become aware of allegations of end-use violations.

Question. Going forward, what steps should the U.S. take to prevent such transfers that were not taken in this instance?

Answer. If confirmed I would seek to reiterate the end-use responsibilities of our partners, resolve any potential misunderstandings our partners may have regarding their end-use obligations, and promptly investigate any allegations of violations in the future.

Question. I am very concerned by reports that the UAE has hired a U.S. firm with retired U.S. military personnel to conduct assassinations in Yemen and has hired former National Security Agency employees to build a mercenary cyberespionage/hacking unit that has targeted dissidents and opposition figures, including U.S. citizens.

- Please confirm that you are now familiar with these reports.

Answer. I am now familiar with these reports and share your concerns. Reports of the extrajudicial killings of clerics in and around Aden are very troubling. The Administration condemns all unlawful or extrajudicial killings, including the killing of religious or political rivals. These acts greatly undermine the prospects for a Yemen political settlement that is legitimate and representative. The security situation in Aden continues to be tenuous. Presence of a variety of violent extremist organizations and the lack of U.S. government representation on the ground in Yemen hampers our ability to get more information to make relevant assessments. I also agree reports of NSA employee involvement in building UAE hacking units are disturbing. If confirmed, I will give them greater scrutiny.

Question. If confirmed, what steps will you take to investigate the role that U.S. citizens have played in these efforts and to ensure that they are not involved in assassinations or cyber-espionage?

Answer. If confirmed, I will work within the Department of State and in coordination with other relevant U.S. government agencies to evaluate any evidence of violations of law as they become available.

Question. The 2018 State Department Human Rights report highlighted human rights concerns in the UAE that included allegations of torture in detention as well

as arbitrary arrest and detention, including incommunicado detention, by government agents.

- If confirmed, what steps will you take to push the UAE government to address these and other allegations of human rights abuses?

Answer. If confirmed, I will make clear that the United States takes all allegations of abuse seriously. I will urge the government of the United Arab Emirates to ensure freedom from arbitrary and unlawful detention, transparency, and rule of law. If confirmed as Ambassador, I will call on the government of the United Arab Emirates to treat prisoners and detainees humanely, and to ensure that allegations of abuse are investigated quickly and thoroughly and anyone found responsible is held accountable.

Question. China's interest in the Persian Gulf has expanded beyond the region's hydrocarbon resources to encompass its One Belt One Road project. Chinese companies have recently signed a number of deals in the Persian Gulf, including a new terminal for COSCO Shipping Ports in Abu Dhabi's al-Khalifa Port.

- What challenges does Chinese expansion into the UAE and the rest of the Persian Gulf raise for U.S. interests in the UAE and the region as a whole?

Answer. The UAE has an expanding trade and investment relationship with China.

If confirmed, I look forward to learning more about the ways in which this relationship is growing, and to working with our embassy staff to ensure U.S. business interests, policy priorities, and national security concerns are clearly communicated to the UAE government.

Question. What are the prospects for limiting Chinese influence in the UAE and how will you engage with the Emirati government to counter growing Chinese influence there?

Answer. The UAE is an important trade and security partner of the United States. Open and fair competitiveness is the strength of U.S. business. If confirmed, I will work to ensure U.S. business interests and policy priorities are prioritized. This includes U.S. concerns about non-proliferation as well as U.S. commercial interests.

Question. The UAE has sided firmly with Saudi Arabia in the GCC rift with Qatar, which shows no sign of ending even as tensions rise with Iran.

- What steps do you think the UAE can take to resolve the conflict? What steps do you think the UAE wants to see Qatar take?

Answer. The President and Secretary Pompeo have been clear that the Gulf dispute has gone on too long. The dispute benefits our adversaries and harms our mutual interests. The Administration continues to underscore to the parties the shared political, economic, security, and social benefits of Gulf unity, especially in light of the threat from Iran.

Question. If confirmed, what role do you think you can play in facilitating a resolution? How will you engage with the Emirati government to push them to resolve the conflict?

Answer. I understand there have been some positive signs, but no moves by any of the parties that would suggest a readiness to address and resolve rift's core issues. GCC+2 countries have participated together in many events and exercises, most recently at a June meeting of the Middle East Strategic Alliance in Washington. While aware of the deep divisions that led to the rift, I am hopeful the parties will take additional steps to build confidence and end the dispute, and if confirmed I look forward to engaging with the Emirati government on this and other matters. Significant political, economic, security, and human linkages underpin Gulf relations, and an immediate end to the dispute will help all parties involved and rekindle the unity of the Gulf.

Question. Are you familiar with the financial and business interests of the Trump Organization in the UAE, including former and current business partners?

Answer. My knowledge of the Trump Organization's financial and business interests in the UAE is limited to public media reporting.

Question. What steps will you take to ensure that you do not in any way provide preferential treatment to the President's financial interests or business partners?

Answer. If confirmed, I will adhere to all applicable ethics rules, legal standards of neutrality, and due diligence when performing my duties as the Chief of Mission.

Question. The U.N. Special Rapporteur for extrajudicial, summary or arbitrary executions released her report this week. She found that there is "credible evidence warranting further investigation of high-level Saudi officials' individual liability, including the crown prince's."

- Have you read the report? If not, will you commit to reading it before you arrive at post?

Answer. I have not read the report. If confirmed, I commit to reading it before I arrive at post.

Question. Do you commit to assisting any U.S. government efforts to investigate the cause of Khashoggi's murder?

Answer. Yes.

Question. Do you believe that any individuals, regardless of who they are, should be held responsible?

Answer. Yes.

Question. Do you commit to advocating within the Emirati government to urge Saudi Arabia to conduct trials that are free and fair, and to investigate the individuals responsible for Khashoggi's murder?

Answer. Yes.

Question. Saudi Arabia and the United Arab Emirates agreed to provide $3 billion in aid to the Sudanese military junta that took power after ousting longtime President Omar al-Bashir. Critics suggest that the financial lifeline along with hosting Abdul Fattah al-Burhan, head of Sudan's Transitional Military Council. What is the relationship between UAE and leaders of the Transitional Military Council-specifically al-Burhan, and Mohamed Hamdan Dagalo, or "Hemeti", and how is that impacting UAE's actions with regards to the political crisis in Sudan?

Answer. The UAE has been active in Sudan, including after the April 11, 2019 ouster of former President Bashir and through the tenure of the Transitional Military Council (TMC). Sudan provides military personnel to the Saudi-led Coalition's operations in Yemen, which gives Sudan some leverage with the UAE and Saudi Arabia.

Question. What leverage do we have to encourage the Emiratis to fully support the establishment of a civilian-led transitional authority in keeping with the calls from the African Union Peace and Security Council?

Answer. The Administration has met with all stakeholders to press for a political outcome that is acceptable to the people of Sudan. The Sudanese demonstrators and political negotiators have demanded a civilian-led government, achieved through either a majority on a sovereign council or through a free and fair electoral process.

It is my understanding that the U.S. has engaged with the UAE on its policy in support of a transition to a civilian-led interim government as soon as possible. As part of those discussions, I understand that the Administration has encouraged the UAE to be prudent in its support of the Transitional Military Council, including by way of judicious handling of the reported $3 billion assistance package reported in late April. I further understand that the Administration welcomed and encouraged the UAE's participation in dialogue with international partners such as the late June "Friends of Sudan" meeting hosted by the German government.

Question. What specific steps will you take, if confirmed, to bring the Emirates in line with U.S. diplomatic efforts related to a democratic transition in Sudan?

Answer. If confirmed, I look forward to working closely with my Department colleagues to continue to engage Emirati leadership on this important issue, through consistent messaging and regular discussions with senior UAE officials, participation in multilateral engagements, and close coordination.

Question. What immediate steps, if confirmed, will you take to prevent the Emirates from engaging in efforts that encourages "forum shopping" by parties to the political dialogue in Sudan?

Answer. I am not in a position at this time to develop a specific plan of diplomatic engagement with the Emiratis on this question.

Question. Will you commit to raising the need for a civilian-led transition in Sudan at the highest levels of government upon your arrival and accreditation as ambassador to the United Arab Emirates?

Answer. Yes.

Question. Do you commit to respond promptly to all requests for information by Members of this committee?

Answer. Yes.

Question. Do you commit to appear before this committee upon request?

Answer. Yes.

Question. If you become aware of any suspected waste, fraud, or abuse in the Department, do you commit to report it to the Inspector General?

Answer. Yes.

Question. Please list any outside positions and affiliations you plan to continue to hold during your term of appointment.

Answer. I hold membership in the following organizations which will continue during my term of appointment. I intend to ask if my membership can be inactive during my absences.

- Oakland Hills Country Club—Bloomfield, MI
- Bloomfield Hills Country Club—Bloomfield Hills, MI
- The Bear's Club—Jupiter, FL
- Harbor Point Golf Club—Harbor Springs, MI
- Detroit Athletic Club—Detroit, MI

Question. Have you ever been an officer or director of a company that has filed for bankruptcy? If so, describe the circumstances and disposition.

Answer. No.

Question. If you leave this position before the completion of your full term of the next presidential election, do you commit to meeting with the committee to discuss the reasons for your departure?

Answer. Yes.

Question. Has anyone ever made a formal or informal complaint or allegation of sexual harassment, discrimination (e.g., racial, ethnic, religious, etc.), or inappropriate conduct against you, in a workplace or any other setting? If so, please describe the nature of the complaint or allegation, your response, and any resolution, including any settlements.

Answer. No.

Question. Have you ever addressed concerns or allegations of sexual harassment, discrimination (e.g., racial, ethnic, religious, etc.), or inappropriate conduct made against any employee over whom you had supervisory authority? If so, please describe the outcome and actions taken.

Answer. There have never been any concerns or allegations of harassment, discrimination or inappropriate conduct against any employee over whom I have direct supervisory authority. With respect to individuals over which I do not have direct supervisory authority there is a strict code administered by the HR department of my company. Every employee is required to sign this code. It emphasizes respect for people, values diversity and contains a strong policy against harassment and discrimination. It includes a "hotline" where individuals can anonymously report a concern. Every employee is required to review and re-affirm their commitment to the code of conduct every year, as part of mandatory training.

Question. Do you agree that any targeting of or retaliation against career employees based on their perceived political beliefs, prior work on policy, or affiliation with a previous administration, is wholly inappropriate and has no place in the federal government? If confirmed, what will you do to ensure that all employees under your leadership understand that any retaliation, blacklisting, or other prohibited personnel practices will not be tolerated?

Answer. I agree that targeting or retaliation against individuals due to their political beliefs, role in policy-making, or involvement in prior administrations is wholly inappropriate and has no place in the federal government or elsewhere. In my role as CEO of Walbridge, I have always had direct reports that do not share my political views and I welcome their opinions. I have championed dissenting and alternative viewpoints as they are the bedrock of any society and organization. They are essential to successfully capture the best ideas and create an culture of equal opportunity, innovation, respect and world class results. If confirmed, I will continue this philosophy and will strive to make sure that all individuals feel safe with their beliefs and understand that their differing views are welcomed and valued.

RESPONSES TO ADDITIONAL QUESTIONS FOR THE RECORD
SUBMITTED TO JOHN RAKOLTA, JR. BY SENATOR BENJAMIN L. CARDIN

Question. What are your most meaningful achievements to date in your career to promote human rights and democracy? What has been the impact of your actions?

Answer. I was chairman of New Detroit, Inc., an organization whose purpose was to close the gap in terms of income, education and health care between Detroit citizens and others, from 2003 to 2010. This organization was formed after the riots in Detroit in 1967. I ushered in a new era of commitment, responsibility, transparency and openness to difficult dialogue. I started a "Dinner Series" that brought 800 corporate, government, labor, education, and not-for-profit individuals together for over 80 dinners to discuss race and its impact not only on Detroit, but on America today. It was a defining moment for our community, as it opened a pathway for Detroit to move forward. In doing so, it opened my eyes to the possibility of identifying and implementing far-reaching solutions never before thought possible.In 2014, the Detroit Public School System was on the verge of bankruptcy and collapse. Successive administrations of Emergency Managers had failed to turn the system around academically; instead of focusing on the schoolchildren, they focused on balancing an impossible budget at the expense of what they should have been doing. If you can't master the fundamentals of education there is no hope of a bright and thriving future. Eighth grade proficiency level in 12th grade just won't cut it in today's world. There is no way out for them. I was asked to join the Coalition for the Future of Detroit's Schoolchildren (CFDSC) and help save the system and put it on a more successful pathway. I was one of five co-chairs and, more importantly, the public face of the effort to convince the Republican-controlled Legislature to save the system through a massive injection of new capital by the State of Michigan. I used my political capital, hard work and sound arguments and was proud to take a public position on this. Children of Detroit have a right to a bright future. Despite staggering odds, we prevailed and won legislation that was landmark in nature. The effort also led to Launch Michigan tackling the broader issue of K-12 education on a statewide basis.

Question. What are the most pressing human rights issues in the U.A.E.? What are the most important steps you expect to take—if confirmed—to promote human rights and democracy in the U.A.E.? What do you hope to accomplish through these actions?

Answer. The State Department's most recent Human Rights Report on the United Arab Emirates documents significant restrictions on freedom of expression and civil society. Human rights issues included allegations of torture in detention. arbitrary arrest, and detention. The United Nations, human rights groups, and others alleged that some UAE military operations as part of the Saudi-led Coalition in Yemen have killed civilians, damaged civilian infrastructure, and exercised bias in the delivery of humanitarian aid. Further, human rights groups alleged UAE-backed security forces in Yemen committed torture, sexual assault, and mistreatment against detainees. The UAE government rejected allegations that members of its security forces serving in Yemen had committed human rights abuses, and there was no publicly available information on whether the government carried out any investigations into these reported incidents.If confirmed, I will make clear that the United States takes all allegations of abuse seriously. I will urge the government of the United Arab Emirates to thoroughly and quickly investigate allegations of abuse, ensure fair trial guarantees, freedom from unlawful and extrajudicial detention, transparency, and rule of law. If confirmed as Ambassador, I will call on the government of the United Arab Emirates to treat prisoners and detainees in line with international obligations and commitments.Questions for the Record Submitted to

Question. If confirmed, what are the potential obstacles to addressing the specific human rights issues you have identified in your previous response? What challenges will you face in the U.A.E. in advancing human rights, civil society and democracy in general?

Answer. I am not currently in a position to speak authoritatively to these questions, however, I understand that the ongoing conflict in Yemen presents challenges for those seeking to ascertain the underlying facts with respect to the treatment of detainees. In addition, the Administration's advocacy is challenged by the absence of any UAE law protecting freedoms of religion and thought, expression, peaceful assembly, and association.

Question. Are you committed to meeting with human rights, civil society and other non-governmental organizations in the U.S. and with local human rights

NGOs in the U.A.E.? If confirmed, what steps will you take to pro-actively support the Leahy Law and similar efforts, and ensure that provisions of U.S. security assistance and security cooperation activities reinforce human rights?

Answer. Yes. If confirmed, I intend to meet with the full range of Emirati society, as well as non-governmental organizations in the United States that work on issues related to the United Arab Emirates. I will make clear to Emirati leadership that the United States supports the important role civil society plays in every country. I will commit to uphold the Leahy Law, and will also commit to our Conventional Arms Transfer policies that require human rights to be considered as a factor in any arms transfer or licensing decision.

Question. Will you and your embassy team actively engage with the U.A.E. to address cases of key political prisoners or persons otherwise unjustly targeted by the U.A.E.?

Answer. Yes.

Question. Will you engage with the U.A.E. on matters of human rights, civil rights and governance as part of your bilateral mission?

Answer. Yes.

Question. As the world's oldest democracy and the largest arms exporter, would you agree that the human rights standards the U.S. sets on arms transfers has global ramifications?

Answer. I understand the United States weighs human rights in arms transfer decisions. This reflects our values, serves our nationals security interests, and sets an important model for the world. If confirmed, I will keep human rights issues and U.S. security in mind on all potential arms sales.

Question. Should the United States continue to facilitate arms sales to foreign governments like the U.A.E credibly suspected of acts that may amount to war crimes?

Answer. I understand the United States weighs human rights in arms transfer decisions, and is working with partners including the UAE to provide training and other support related to human rights and avoiding civilian harm in combat. If confirmed, I will support these efforts.

Question. What are your views on the position put forth by Secretary Pompeo that, in effect, continuing to arm and otherwise support Saudi Arabia and the U.A.E in Yemen is the best way to support human rights there?

Answer. Our military cooperation with the UAE supports U.S. strategic interests. We provide training and other support related to human rights and avoiding civilian harm in combat. If confirmed, I will support these efforts.

Question. Conflicts of Interest: Do you commit to bring to the committee's attention (and the State Department Inspector General) any change in policy or U.S. actions that you suspect may be influenced by any of the President's business or financial interests, or the business or financial interests of any senior White House staff?

Answer. Yes.

Question. Do you commit to inform the committee if you have any reason to suspect that a foreign government, head of state, or foreign-controlled entity is taking any action in order to benefit any of the President's business or financial interests, or the interests of senior White House staff?

Answer. Yes.

Question. Do you or do any members of your immediate family have any financial interests in the U.A.E.?

Answer. Yes. In 2014 I made a passive private equity commitment to Abraaj Growth Markets Trust, a Delaware statutory trust feeder constructed to invest all of its investible assets in Abraaj Global Growth Markets Fund, L.P., a Cayman Island exempted limited partnership. To the best of my knowledge, the fund previously owned three investments based in the UAE, all of which have been divested. Abaaj Growth Markets Trust is on my OGE Ethics Agreement Divestiture list, meaning I will divest from this fund within 90 days if confirmed.

Question. Research from private industry demonstrates that, when managed well, diversity makes business teams better both in terms of creativity and in terms of productivity. What will you do to promote, mentor and support your staff that come from diverse backgrounds and underrepresented groups in the Foreign Service?

Answer. It is my firm belief, based on years of successful efforts in my own company that all stakeholders to any effort should benefit from their collective efforts. Only when all stakeholders have equal access to opportunity and success does the "extended enterprises chain" stay competitive and sustainable for the long term. There are no shortcuts; I don't believe in them. When harmony is threatened, results are compromised. Diverse thinking makes for better decisions. As a society we have a lot of work to do in this realm. I feel an inherent responsibility to this and it is foundational to my very being. It starts with core values, embraced by and fully supported by the leadership. It must be implemented across all management and endorsed by all employees and other stakeholders. If confirmed, I pledge to lead from the top, as the Ambassador.

Question. What steps will you take to ensure each of the supervisors at the Embassy are fostering an environment that is diverse and inclusive?

Answer. If confirmed, I would begin with a written plan, personal involvement, and sufficient resources. I would follow my tried and proven methodology of PDCA—Plan (in writing), Do (assign implementation responsibility), Check (short time out to measure results), Act (make corrections and start the process again). I would assign a senior level embassy officer the responsibility to manage its implementation. My leadership team and I would provide mentoring and networking opportunities. I would work closely with section chiefs to ensure that all supervisors foster a diverse and inclusive environment.

Question. How do you believe political corruption impacts democratic governance and the rule of law generally, and in the U.A.E. specifically? What is your assessment of corruption trends in the U.A.E. and efforts to address and reduce it by that government? If confirmed, what steps will you take to strengthen good governance and anticorruption programming in the U.A.E.?

Answer. Political corruption undermines the legitimacy of any form of governance, especially democratic governance, by eroding support for public institutions and undermines popular confidence in the rule of law. If confirmed, I will engage with the UAE authorities to encourage increased political and fiscal transparency and a dialogue on responsive governance. I will also work to ensure that U.S. assistance programs promote professionalism among the UAE's public servants and efforts to improve public financial management as well as rule of law development.

Question. U.A.E and Saudi Arabia have come under substantial international criticism for contributing to a humanitarian crisis in Yemen. Both chambers of Congress have separately passed resolutions directing the Trump Administration to reduce logistical support for the Arab coalition fighting in Yemen. To what extent are the humanitarian effects and other consequences of the war in Yemen an irritant in the U.S.-U.A.E relationship?

Answer. I am told the UAE has been among the largest donors to international efforts to provide relief to Yemenis affected by the ongoing conflict. We have encouraged Saudi Arabia and the UAE to contribute to the humanitarian response in Yemen by channeling contributions through the United Nations; on February 26, the U.N. announced that Saudi Arabia and the UAE each pledged $750 million toward the 2019 response. The UAE is also an important political, economic, and military partner of the United States on our most pressing regional challenges, including Syria, Iraq, Iran, Afghanistan, and in the global fight against ISIS and al-Qa'ida. I understand the Administration coordinates closely with UAE leadership on its policy in Yemen, as it does on other key areas of concern.

Question. In your view, should the U.S. contemplate changing its level of support for the Saudi-led coalition in that war, of which the U.A.E is a key part?

Answer. As I understand it, U.S. support to and engagement with the Coalition has played an important role in facilitating the U.N.-led political track to end the Yemen conflict, minimizing harm to civilians, addressing the dire humanitarian crisis. The Coalition partners have engaged the parties at key junctures to ensure their constructive participation in the U.N. process, and the threat of Coalition military pressure has ensured the Houthis—who have backed out of numerous prior agreements—remain at the negotiating table. Ongoing U.S. support to the Coalition is also vital to deterring Iran's ambitions on the Arabian Peninsula. If confirmed, I will work through my offices to ensure U.S. support to the Coalition promotes long-term U.S. interests of stability in Yemen and in the region as a whole.

Question. Should the U.S. push to have the U.A.E commit additional funds for U.N. humanitarian operations in Yemen and to ensure low food prices so that Yemeni people can afford to feed their families?

Answer. I understand that the Emiratis have been among the largest humanitarian donors to Yemen, but that they are still in the process of disbursing the funds they pledged during the February 26 U.N. Conference in Geneva, and that State Department officials support calls for the Saudis and Emiratis to disburse the remaining funds immediately to avoid a gap in the humanitarian response. If confirmed, I will continue to emphasize to my Emirati counterparts the important role that their humanitarian contributions play in preventing the worsening of the humanitarian crisis, and explore the potential for greater UAE engagement with the Central Bank of Yemen on capacity building to forestall the depreciation of the Yemeni riyal, so that Yemenis can afford the food they desperately need.

Question. The 2018 State Department Country Reports on Human Rights list several human rights issues associated with the U.A.E. Among them include allegations of torture in detention, arbitrary arrest and detention, undue restrictions on free expression and the press, and substantial interference with the rights of peaceful assembly and freedom of expression. If confirmed, what is your plan to tackle this list of issues? To what extent is the country's treatment of dissenters and activists who a factor in U.S. policy toward the U.A.E? If confirmed, how would you wish to change this, if at all?

Answer. I understand from the Human Rights Report released by the State Department that the UAE's constitution prohibits torture and arbitrary arrest and detention, but authorities reportedly often hold persons in custody for extended periods without charge, access to an attorney, or a preliminary judicial hearing—including some reportedly detained because of their political views or affiliations. I also understand citizens and noncitizens have access to the courts to seek damages for, or cessation of, human rights violations. If confirmed, my embassy team and I will engage with credible civil society groups and human rights advocates, as well as UAE authorities to uphold their constitutional obligations to respect human rights and civil liberties.Questions for the Record Submitted to

Question. To date, the GCC rift has defied U.S., Kuwaiti, and other mediation efforts. If confirmed, what further steps would you take to advance the U.S. objective of ending the intra-GCC rift with Qatar? What are the key obstacles to resolving that dispute?

Answer. The President and Secretary Pompeo have been clear that the Gulf dispute has gone on too long. The dispute benefits our adversaries and harms our mutual interests. The Administration continues to underscore to the parties the political, economic, security, and social benefits of Gulf unity, especially in light of the threat from Iran. I believe having the Ambassador at post will add strength and frequency to our argument. If confirmed, I would make this a top priority.

Question. To your knowledge, what are the Administration's main goals for a U.S.-GCC summit that has been long delayed?

Answer. Significant political, economic, security, and human linkages underpin Gulf relations, and the Administration's view is that greater cooperation and more dialogue between the Gulf countries is in U.S. interests. The U.S. is actively working to strengthen our partnership with the GCC states via significant engagement on regional security, nonproliferation, alternative energy development (including nuclear energy and renewables), and support for economic diversification.

On the political front, I understand the Administration consults with our Gulf partners to coordinate efforts to manage regional political, diplomatic, and security challenges, including threats posed by Iran.

Question. What preconditions are there, if any, for the summit? Do you believe there should be preconditions?

Answer. I am not aware of any preconditions for a GCC Summit. If confirmed, I look forward to learning more about the underlying positions and policy concerns of individual GCC member countries. I believe dialogue is important and if confirmed, I would fully support the Administration's efforts to bring the GCC countries together for a summit.

Question. Do you expect the meeting to be held in 2019?

Answer. I am not yet in a position to predict when such a meeting might be held. The Administration hosted a successful GCC+2 (Egypt and Jordan) Ministerial in September 2018, and GCC members have convened since then in several different fora. On that basis, it seems reasonable to expect the GCC Summit could be held in 2019.

Trafficking in Persons

Question. The U.A.E is considered a "destination country" for women trafficked from Asia and the former Soviet Union. In your view, what does the U.A.E need to do to improve its efforts to counter trafficking in persons?

Answer. In the annual Trafficking in Persons report it releases to the public, the Department said the UAE continued to make important progress toward meeting the minimum standards for the elimination of trafficking enshrined in the Trafficking Victims Protection Act. The report states that in order to continue to improve on their ongoing efforts, the UAE needs to increase the number of investigations, especially by investigating potential forced labor crimes indicators, the trafficking of domestic workers, and officials complicit in trafficking crimes, and that it also needs to finish implementing regulations and implement the domestic worker law that expands protections for domestic workers, expand reforms to the sponsorship-based employment system, and regularly employ standard victim identification procedures. If confirmed, I will seek to better understand the ways in which sponsorship laws contribute to vulnerability to trafficking, particularly for domestic employees, by restricting the ability of employees to leave or change employers, and giving employers the power to cancel residence permits, deny employees permission to leave the country, and threaten employees with abuse of legal processes.

RESPONSES TO ADDITIONAL QUESTIONS FOR THE RECORD
SUBMITTED JOHN RAKOLTA, JR. TO BY SENATOR JEANNE SHAHEEN

Question. In the fiscal year 2019 National Defense Authorization Act, Congress established firm benchmarks for recipients of U.S. military sales on avoiding civilian casualties in Yemen.

- In your view, has the UAE in its coalition with Saudi Arabia undertaken appropriate measures to mitigate humanitarian strife and to support a diplomatic solution?

Answer. I understand the UAE pledged to contribute $750 million in 2019 to support United Nations efforts to provide relief to Yemenis affected by the ongoing conflict. I also understand the Department has encouraged Saudi Arabia and the UAE to fulfill these pledges immediately. These contributions are critical to enable the U.N. to continue supporting life-saving health, nutrition, and food assistance programs. The UAE continues to support U.N.-led efforts to bring both sides to the conflict together for negotiations. I understand the Administration coordinates closely with UAE leadership on its policy in Yemen, as it does on other key areas of concern.

Question. As Ambassador, how would you ensure that the UAE adheres to its commitments on humanitarian concerns?

Answer. I understand that the Emiratis are still in the process of disbursing the funds they pledged during the February 26 U.N. Conference in Geneva, and that State Department officials support calls for the Saudis and Emiratis to disburse the remaining funds immediately to avoid a gap in the humanitarian response. If confirmed, I will emphasize to my Emirati counterparts the important role that their humanitarian contributions play in preventing the worsening of the humanitarian crisis, and explore the potential for greater UAE engagement with the Central Bank of Yemen on capacity building to forestall the depreciation of the Yemeni riyal, so that Yemenis can afford the food they desperately need.

LETTER FROM RANKING MEMBER SENATOR ROBERT MENENDEZ TO ANDREW BREMBERG

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United States Senate
COMMITTEE ON FOREIGN RELATIONS
WASHINGTON, DC 20510–6225

June 20, 2019

Andrew Bremberg
Assistant to the President
The White House
1600 Pennsylvania Avenue, N.W.
Washington, D.C. 20500

Mr. Bremberg:

I write regarding one of your recent responses to a pre-hearing question for the record. As you know, on April 26, 2019, I sent a number of questions asking your views on a range of policy issues. On June 13, 2019, you submitted your responses. One of the issues in question relates to the Administration's addition of a citizenship question to the Census.

Specifically, I asked:

> "Did you have any contacts or communications with officials from the Department of Commerce, the Department of Justice, Steve Bannon, Kris Kobach, or Stephen Miller in 2017 about adding questions about immigration and citizenship status to the census? If so, please describe."

You answered:

> "Yes, I discussed my opinion on including the census question with other White House staff. In light of the confidentiality interests that attach to executive branch decision making, I am unable to answer this question."

As a preliminary matter, it is unclear whether you are asserting that your discussions with other White House staff, including Mr. Bannon and Mr. Miller, are subject to a privilege and what the nature or scope of that asserted privilege may be. Further, your assertion that there may be "confidentiality interests" in any communications between you and Mr. Kobach, who is neither a White House advisor, nor a member of the Executive Branch, let alone a government employee, has no basis in law.

The White House's recent attempts to extend Executive Privilege to individuals beyond the Executive Branch, while similarly unfounded, have no applicability here. Adding a question to the census questionnaire—a function statutorily delegated to, and carried out

by, a federal agency—is far from a core, non-delegable presidential power, which is the subject of a narrow OLC opinion cited by the White House.[1]

In contrast, evaluating the suitability of individuals subject to confirmation by the U.S. Senate is at the core of one of the Senate's constitutional duties: to advise and consent on the president's nominees. Therefore, any privilege claim must be weighed against the Senate's need for full, frank, and specific information regarding the nominees the Senate is being asked to confirm. In exercising its constitutional duty, the Senate's claim is at its strongest.

I will be following up with additional questions for you, and I look forward to your full and complete response—particularly because at today's hearing, you stated that you were not asserting any privilege. As the Senate Foreign Relations Committee continues to consider your nomination, I expect that you will be fully forthcoming in assisting the Committee evaluate whether to recommend advancing your nomination to the full Senate.

Sincerely,

Robert Menendez
Ranking Member

CC:
Pat Cipollone, White House Counsel

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[1] *See* 31 O.L.C. Op. 5-6 (2007) (noting the communications in question involved a "'quintessential and nondelegable Presidential power,' such as the authority to nominate or to remove U.S. Attorneys").

AMNESTY INTERNATIONAL REPORT SUBMITTED FOR THE RECORD BY SENATOR MARKEY

'THE MOUNTAIN IS IN FRONT OF US AND THE SEA IS BEHIND US'

THE IMPACT OF US POLICIES ON REFUGEES IN LEBANON AND JORDAN

AMNESTY INTERNATIONAL

Amnesty International is a global movement of more than 7 million people who campaign for a world where human rights are enjoyed by all.

Our vision is for every person to enjoy all the rights enshrined in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights and other international human rights standards.

We are independent of any government, political ideology, economic interest or religion and are funded mainly by our membership and public donations.

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CONTENTS

GLOSSARY 1

INTRODUCTION: 'WE EITHER DIE OR SAVE OUR LIVES AND LEAVE OUR COUNTRY, SO WE CHOSE TO LEAVE OUR COUNTRY TO PROTECT OUR FAMILIES' 2

INTERNATIONAL STANDARDS FOR REFUGEE PROTECTION 7

REFUGEE RESETTLEMENT: A VANISHING LIFELINE 11

REFUGEES IN LEBANON AND JORDAN: 'JUST GIVE US HOPE' 17

CASE STUDIES: REFUGEE VOICES FROM JORDAN AND LEBANON 24

CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS 31

GLOSSARY

TERM	DESCRIPTION
Asylum-seeker	An asylum-seeker is someone who has left their country seeking protection but has yet to be recognized as a refugee. During the time that their asylum claim is being examined, the asylum-seeker must not be forced to return to their country of origin. Under international law, being a refugee is a fact-based status, and arises before the official, legal granting of asylum.
Fiscal Year	The US government classifies some official information by the Fiscal Year (FY), which runs from October 1 to September 30 of each year.
Muslim Ban	Executive orders signed by US President Trump in January and March 2017 temporarily suspending the US refugee program, cutting refugee admissions to the USA, and barring admission of nationals from multiple Muslim-majority countries.
Presidential Determination	The Presidential Determination for Refugee Admissions establishes the overall admissions levels and regional allocations of all refugees for the fiscal year in the USA. After consulting with the US Congress and relevant US federal departments, the US President ultimately sets the annual number of refugee admissions.
PRS	Palestinian refugees from Syria
Refugee	Refugees are individuals who fled from their countries-of-origin due to a well-founded fear of persecution, from which their governments cannot, or will not, protect them. Asylum procedures are designed to determine whether someone meets the legal definition of a refugee. When a country recognizes an asylum-seeker as a refugee, it gives them international protection as a substitute for the protection of their home country.
Resettlement	Resettlement is the relocation of "vulnerable" refugees, from host countries where they have initially fled, to safe third countries, where they can restart their lives in dignity.
UNHCR	UN Refugee Agency (UN High Commissioner for Refugees)
UNRWA	UN Relief and Works Agency for Palestinian Refugees in the Near East
USRAP	US Refugee Admissions Program

INTRODUCTION:

'WE EITHER DIE OR SAVE OUR LIVES AND LEAVE OUR COUNTRY, SO WE CHOSE TO LEAVE OUR COUNTRY TO PROTECT OUR FAMILIES'

Every day, people around the world make one of the most difficult decisions in their lives: to leave their homes in search of safety. These people are refugees – men, women, and children who cannot return to their own country because they are at risk of serious human rights violations there.[1]

Under the administration of US President Donald Trump, the USA's discriminatory and restrictive policies, starting with the Muslim ban signed in January 2017, have had a devastating impact on the lives of refugees everywhere. This impact is felt acutely in Lebanon, which hosts the largest number of refugees in the world relative to its size, and Jordan, which hosts the second largest refugee population in proportion to its national population.[2] One in six people in Lebanon is a refugee registered with the UN Refugee Agency (UNHCR), while in Jordan, one in 14 people is a refugee.

Since 2017, the current US administration's policies targeting refugees from Muslim-majority countries have decimated refugee resettlement from Jordan and Lebanon.[3] Starting with the Muslim ban, and followed by successive refugee bans, cuts to refugee admissions, and extreme vetting, resettlement from both Jordan and Lebanon to the USA has plummeted and not recovered. UNHCR attributes a four-fold decrease in the resettlement of refugees from Jordan alone to the change in US policies.

Syrian refugee resettlement to the USA from Jordan and Lebanon has plummeted 94 percent in just over three years because of US policies targeting refugees from Muslim-majority countries. Ninety-nine percent of refugees in Lebanon are Syrian, while 87 percent of refugees in Jordan are. Yet, at the end of April 2019, only 219 Syrian refugees had arrived to the United States from Jordan and Lebanon this calendar year, putting the USA on pace to resettle just over 650 by the end of 2019. In contrast, in calendar year 2016, 11,204 Syrian refugees were resettled to the USA from Jordan and Lebanon.

But not only Syrians are impacted – resettlement to the USA from Jordan and Lebanon of Iraqis, Sudanese, and other nationalities from Muslim-majority countries has precipitously dropped due to the Muslim ban and the successive refugee bans and other policies hindering resettlement to the USA.

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1 This report focuses on all persons considered refugees – those under the mandate of the UN Refugee Agency (UNHCR) and those under the mandate of UN Relief and Works Agency for Palestinian Refugees in the Near East (UNRWA). While encompassing all refugees, the report's primary focus is the impact of the USA's discriminatory policies on refugees under UNHCR's mandate, including how these policies have decimated the resettlement of refugees from Muslim-majority countries out of Jordan and Lebanon to the USA. For discussion of refugees under the protection of UNHCR and UNRWA, see Amnesty International, *Tackling the global refugee crisis: From shirking to sharing responsibility* (Index: POL 40/4905/2016), 2016 (hereinafter: *Amnesty International, Tackling the global refugee crisis*), available at: www.amnesty.org/download/Documents/POL404905201 6ENGLISH.PDF

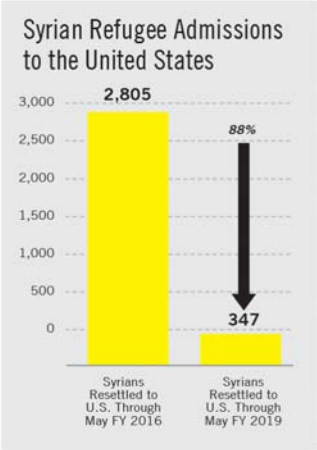
2 UNHCR, *Operations: Lebanon*, February 2019 (hereinafter: UNHCR, *Lebanon Operations*), available at: http://reporting.unhcr.org/node/2520; UNHCR, *Facd Sheet: Jordan*, April 2019 (hereinafter: UNHCR, *Jordan Facd Sheet*), available at: https://data2.unhcr.org/en/documents/download/69371; see UNHCR-Jordan, *Who We Are*, December 2018, available at: www.unhcr.org/jo/who-we-are. According to UNHCR, "Lebanon hosts the largest number of refugees relative to its national population, where 1 in 6 people was a refugee under the responsibility of UNHCR. Jordan (1 in 14) and Turkey (1 in 23) ranked second and third, respectively. When Palestinian refugees under UNRWA's mandate are included, the figures rise to 1 in 4 for Lebanon and 1 in 3 for Jordan." UNHCR, *Global Trends: Forced Displacement in 2017* (hereinafter: UNHCR, *Global Trends*), available at: www.unhcr.org/5b27be547.pdf

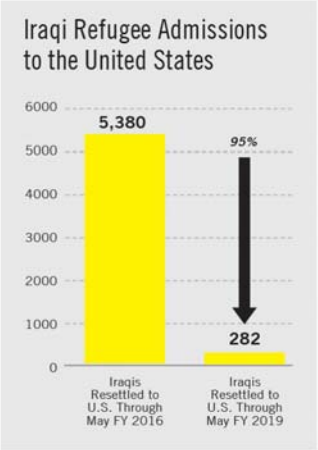
3 Other countries such as Kenya, for example, which hosts a very large population of refugees from Muslim-majority countries such as Somalia have been affected. See, e.g., Bill Frelick, "Trump's Policies Are Harming Refugees Worldwide," *Foreign Policy in Focus*, 30 May 2019, available at: https://fpif.org/trumps-policies-are-harming-refugees-worldwide; Jason Burke, "Refugees in Kenya hit by US travel ban after years of waiting for asylum," *The Guardian*, 30 January 2017, available at: www.theguardian.com/world/2017/jan/30/refugees-in-kenya-may-face-return-to-somalia-after-us-travel-ban
Amnesty International last accessed UNHCR data on 14 June 2019. See footnote 58.

> ***"When someone has to leave his country, he would feel heartbroken . . . We were obliged, we either die or save our lives and leave our country, so we chose to leave our country to protect our families."***
>
> ***– Salman, Syrian refugee in Jordan***

Over the course of two weeks, Amnesty International interviewed 48 refugee families and individuals in Jordan and Lebanon to document the experiences of the women, men, and children who fled war and persecution. As the current US administration has rationalized drastic cuts in refugee resettlement on purported security concerns, it has discounted the very real human cost on the ground – people whose lives are on hold, unable to return home or move on to a third country like the USA. Instead they are forced to remain in countries where they have limited access to work, education, and health care.[4]

A generation of refugee families bears the weight of the USA's discriminatory policies and struggles to survive. The majority of Syrian refugees in both countries live below the poverty line, with their assets depleted and dwindling humanitarian assistance. Already an option available to only a very small percentage of refugees, resettlement has become even more of a chimera of refugee protection. Even as the need for action has never been greater, fewer and fewer refugees are referred for resettlement to a third country due to countries like the USA closing its doors. The US is leading this race to the bottom.





4 See Amnesty International, *Amnesty International Report 2017/18: The State of the World's Human Rights*, "Lebanon 2017/2018" (hereinafter: *Amnesty International Report 2017/18*), available at: www.amnesty.org/en/countries/middle-east-and-north-africa/lebanon/report-lebanon; UNHCR, *Operations: Jordan* (hereinafter: UNHCR, *Jordan Operations*), available at: http://reporting.unhcr.org/node/2549; UNHCR, *Lebanon Operations*.

Lost in the US national security debate is one simple fact: refugees are not numbers. Refugees are women, men, and children with unique stories to tell. Amnesty International interviewed teachers, artists, engineers, laborers, and homemakers living out the abrupt shift in US policies. Many of them once owned property, but they now live in refugee camps in trailer-like structures or makeshift accommodations in dense urban environments. All they want is what any person in their situation would want: safety, a place to call home, work to support themselves, and education for their children. They want to live with dignity. Amara, a Syrian refugee in Lebanon, told Amnesty International, *"We don't want to just think about food, and our basic needs . . . we want to live lives."*

For these refugees and untold others as well as the countries hosting them, the US government is abandoning its duty to share responsibility for refugee protection. A fundamental principle of refugee protection is responsibility-sharing and international cooperation. These are required to reduce the impact of large-scale refugee populations on host countries, and each state should contribute to the maximum of its capacity.[5]

Instead of upholding its responsibilities, the USA is abdicating responsibility for refugee protection. It is repeatedly and drastically cutting the number of refugees considered for resettlement to the USA. Resettlement is a key component of responsibility-sharing and allows States to support each other by agreeing to settle refugees from host countries.[6]

It is also imposing discriminatory and restrictive policies that undercut refugee admissions. Nondiscrimination on grounds including nationality, ethnicity, sex, gender, race, and religion is a core provision in all international human rights instruments.[7] Executive orders and policies intended to discriminate against Muslims, and that have the effect of disadvantaging Muslims, are unjustifiable under international human rights law.[8]

"We want to thank the US people, and we still have the hope that they will make a decision to help the refugees. We know that America sacrificed too many [people] during wars, and that is happening now with us [in Syria]."

– Manar, Syrian refugee in Jordan

The causes of the so-called global refugee crisis are amplified and sustained by bad policies such as these – a failure of wealthier countries such as the USA to share responsibility for refugee protection. As the USA seeks to keep out refugees, it and other wealthy countries are asking lower- and middle-income countries to do more than their fair share: 85 percent of the world's refugees live in developing countries.[9]

Amnesty International calls on the USA to reaffirm its commitment to sharing responsibility for refugee protection by admitting more refugees, abandoning policies that undermine resettlement, and adhering to the principle of nondiscrimination in refugee protection. The USA should admit all 30,000 refugees set in the Presidential Determination for Fiscal Year[10] (FY) 2019, and commit to resettling 95,000 refugees in

5 Amnesty International, *'I want a safe place': Refugee women from Syria uprooted and unprotected in Lebanon* (Index: MDE 18/3210/2016), February 2016, p. 8 (hereinafter: Amnesty International, *'I want a safe place'*), available at: www.amnesty.org.pl/wp-content/uploads/2016/02/I-want-a-safe-place-1.pdf

6 Amnesty International, *Amnesty International urges governments to make the Global Compact on Refugees fit for the future* (Index: IOR 40/8227/2018), April 2018, available at: www.amnesty.org/download/Documents/IOR408227ENGLISH.PDF

7 See Amnesty International, *'I want a safe place,'* p. 23.

8 See Amnesty International, *'My family was in shock': The Harm caused by President Trump's Executive Orders on travel to the US* (Index: AMR 51/6207/2017), 2017 (hereinafter: Amnesty International, *'My family was in shock'*), available at: www.amnestyusa.org/files/my_family_was_in_shock_report.pdf

9 Amnesty International, *The world's refugees in numbers*, available at: www.amnesty.org/en/what-we-do/refugees-asylum-seekers-and-migrants/global-refugee-crisis-statistics-and-facts; UNHCR, *Global Appeal: 2019 Update* (hereinafter: UNHCR, *Global Appeal*), available at: http://reporting.unhcr.org/sites/default/files/ga2019/pdf/Global_Appeal_2019_full_lowres.pdf

10 The US government's fiscal year (FY) for operations does not correspond to the calendar year. The fiscal year runs from October 1 until September 30.

the Presidential Determination for FY 2020.[11] US authorities should reverse policies that hinder resettlement to the USA, and ensure processing of resettlement cases is timely and all refugees are considered fairly and fully and without discrimination for resettlement to the USA. The USA should robustly fund the US Refugee Admissions Program (USRAP) and ensure critical humanitarian aid reaches refugees and displaced populations, including for Palestinian refugees.

The US government has the power to change the lives of the refugees with whom Amnesty International met, and the many more whose story goes untold. Amnesty International urges the US government to reaffirm its commitment to resettling the world's most vulnerable refugees without discrimination and ensuring critical humanitarian aid reaches all refugees.

METHODOLOGY

This briefing draws on 48 interviews Amnesty International conducted in November 2018 with refugee families and individuals registered with UNHCR and with the UN Relief and Works Agency for Palestinian Refugees in the Near East (UNRWA). Amnesty International conducted some of the interviews in the refugee camps of Zaatari and Azraq in Jordan, and the Palestinian refugee camps of Shatila and Burj Barajneh in Lebanon. The organization also interviewed refugee protection professionals from UNHCR, UNRWA, international and national agencies, local refugee service providers, and community-based organizations in Jordan and Lebanon. Amnesty International has withheld names and other personal details of those who spoke to researchers for their privacy and security.

Amnesty International thanks all the women, men, and children who generously gave their time to share their experiences of displacement and life as refugees in Jordan and Lebanon. Amnesty International also thanks the advocates, refugee protection professionals, local refugee service providers, and community-based organizations who shared their expertise.

11 The US Immigration and Nationality Act requires that each year US executive branch officials, in consultation with the US Congress, set refugee admissions for the fiscal year. Sections 207(d)(1) and (e) of the Immigration and Nationality Act. After consultations with US federal departments and the US Congress, the president signs the Presidential Determination on Refugee Admissions. The Presidential Determination establishes the overall admissions levels and regional allocations of all refugees for the upcoming fiscal year. No refugees may be admitted in the new fiscal year until the Presidential Determination has been signed. See US Department of Homeland Security, US Citizenship and Immigration Services, "The United States Refugee Admissions Program (USRAP) Consultation & Worldwide Processing Priorities" (hereinafter: *USRAP Consultation & Worldwide Processing Priorities*), available at: www.uscis.gov/humanitarian/refugees-asylum/refugees/united-states-refugee-admissions-program-usrap-consultation-worldwide-processing-priorities

KEY RECOMMENDATIONS

To the US President and relevant federal agencies[12]

- Admit 30,000 refugees as set in the Presidential Determination on Refugee Admissions for Fiscal Year 2019
- Ensure that each regional allocation as set in the Presidential Determination for Fiscal Year 2019 is met, including the regional allocation of 9,000 refugee admissions for the "Near East/South Asia" region. If the regional allocation is unable to be met, a clear justification should be provided to the US Congress on what steps were taken to meet the regional allocation, and what steps have been taken to ensure the overall refugee admissions goal is met
- Set the Presidential Determination for Fiscal Year 2020 to admit at least 95,000 refugees
- Reverse policies and procedures limiting refugee resettlement, including those that disproportionately impact refugees from Muslim-majority countries and unnecessarily prolong and delay resettlement processing
- Apply the provisions of the 1951 Refugee Convention and the 1967 Protocol to refugees without discrimination
- Restore in full critically needed funding for UNRWA at levels consistent with the US's historical contributions

To the US Congress

- Hold the US Presidential Administration and relevant federal agencies accountable to admitting 30,000 refugees set in the Fiscal Year 2019 Presidential Determination, including ensuring each regional allocation is met
- Call on the US Presidential Administration and relevant federal agencies to set the Fiscal Year 2020 Presidential Determination to admit at least 95,000 refugees, and conduct vigorous oversight to ensure the US administration works to achieve the goal it set
- Appropriate robust funding for the US Department of Health and Human Services' Refugee and Entrant Assistance account; the US Department of State's Migration and Refugee Assistance account and Emergency Refugee and Migration Assistance account; and the US Agency for International Development's (USAID) International Disaster Assistance account to provide life-saving and life-preserving international assistance for refugee and displaced populations around the world
- Appropriate robust funding to ensure the US Refugee Admissions Program is provided the resources needed to resettle the amount of refugees expected each Fiscal Year
- Further strengthen and make explicit policies of non-discrimination protections in both US refugee and asylum systems
- Co-sponsor and pass the National Origin-Based Antidiscrimination for Nonimmigrants Act, otherwise known as the NO BAN Act (H.R. 2214/S. 1123), which would amend the Immigration and Nationality Act to explicitly prohibit discrimination based on religion
- Co-sponsor and pass the Guaranteed Refugee Admission Ceiling Enhancement Act, otherwise known as the GRACE Act (H.R. 2146/S. 1088)
- Appropriate funding to restore humanitarian assistance to UNRWA at levels consistent with the US' historical contributions

12 The US President, along with the US Department of State, the US Department of Homeland Security, and the US Department of Health and Human Services, collectively determine, coordinate, and implement refugee admissions and integration to the USA. While the president consults with US federal departments and agencies, along with the US Congress as required by US law, in setting the Presidential Determination on Refugee Admissions, ultimately it is the president that sets the Presidential Determination at the start of each fiscal year in October.

INTERNATIONAL STANDARDS FOR REFUGEE PROTECTION

The international community came together in a commitment of solidarity and legal protection for refugees through the 1951 UN Refugee Convention and its accompanying 1967 Protocol.[13] The Refugee Convention defines a refugee as someone who "owing to a well-founded fear of being persecuted for reasons of race, religion, nationality, membership of a particular social group or political opinion, is outside the country of his nationality and is unable or, owing to such fear, is unwilling to avail himself of the protection of that country."[14] The US Congress incorporated this definition into US immigration law in the Refugee Act of 1980.

Refugees have a right to international protection and fall under the mandate of UNHCR, which is charged with overseeing the implementation of the Refugee Convention.[15] UNHCR pursues three durable solutions for refugees: voluntary return to countries of origin, local integration in host countries, or resettlement or relocation through alternative pathways to a third country.[16] The resettlement process is normally coordinated by UNHCR, which identifies recognized refugees based on a set of vulnerability criteria and submits their cases to countries that have offered resettlement places who then decide whether to accept them for resettlement.[17] If a resettlement country agrees to admit a refugee, it then actively facilitates the safe transport of refugees to and their integration in their country.[18]

States have the power to control admissions by non-citizens to their territory within limits imposed by their obligations under international law.[19] In particular, differences in treatment between different categories of non-citizens can only be justified under international human rights law if they are necessary to achieve a legitimate objective, including, among others, the protection of national security.[20]

In human rights terms, resettlement is needed because a refugee's "life, liberty, safety, health or fundamental human rights are at risk in the country where they sought refuge."[21] UNHCR prioritizes "vulnerable" refugees for resettlement, including survivors

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13 UN Convention Relating to the Status of Refugees (1961), 189 UNTS 137, available at: www.unhcr.org/3b66c2aa10. Although the United States did not ratify the 1961 Convention itself, it acceded to the 1967 Protocol, by which it became bound by Articles 2 to 34 of the 1951 Convention. Protocol Relating to the Status of Refugees (1967), 606 UNTS 267, available at: www.refworld.org/cgi-bin/texis/vtx/rwmain?docid=3ae6b3ae4

14 UN Convention Relating to the Status of Refugees.

15 Statute of the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (1960), available at: www.unhcr.org/3b66c39e1.html

16 UNHCR, "Solutions for Refugees: Chapter 7," *The 10-Point Plan*, 2007, available at: www.unhcr.org/50a4c17f9.pdf

17 Amnesty International, *Hardship, Hope and Resettlement: Refugees from Syria tell their stories* (Index MDE24/0004/2015), 4 February 2015 (hereinafter: Amnesty International, *Hardship, Hope and Resettlement*), available at: www.amnesty.org/en/documents/mde24/0004/2015/en

18 Amnesty International, *Hardship, Hope and Resettlement*.

19 See UN Human Rights Committee, General Comment No. 31[80], Nature of the General Legal Obligations Imposed on States Parties to the Covenant, CCPR/C/21/Rev.1/Add.13 (26 May 2004).

20 According to Article 12(3) of the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights (ICCPR), restrictions on rights can only be justified if they "are provided by law, are necessary to protect national security, public order (order public), public health or morals or the rights and freedoms of others, and are consistent with the other rights recognized in the present Covenant." See Amnesty International, *'My family was in shock.'*

21 Amnesty International, *'I Want a Safe Place'* (citing UNHCR, *Resettlement Handbook*, 2011).

of violence and torture; those with serious medical needs; women and girls at risk of gender-based violence; people discriminated against due to their sexual orientation or gender identity; and unaccompanied children.[22]

The principle of responsibility sharing, rooted in international human rights and refugee law, requires the international community to share responsibility for hosting and supporting the global refugee population by resettling the most "vulnerable" refugees and by ensuring that UN appeals for funding are met. States have obligations to assist each other to host refugees, and obligations to seek, and provide, international cooperation and assistance to ensure that refugees can enjoy international protection.[23]

'WE NEED SOMEONE TO GIVE US HUMAN RIGHTS': PALESTINIAN REFUGEES IN LEBANON AND JORDAN

Since US President Donald Trump took office in January 2017, US government policies have had a devastating impact on the lives of refugees in Jordan and Lebanon – particularly on Syrian and Palestinian refugees, including Palestinian refugees from Syria (PRS). Whether under the mandate of UNHCR or UNRWA,[24] refugees in Lebanon and Jordan are part of one global ecosystem for international refugee protection, and the international community should address their needs holistically.

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Just over five million of the world's 25.4 million refugees are Palestinians.[25] The majority live in Jordan, Lebanon, Syria, the Gaza Strip, and the West Bank.[26] Palestinian refugees, both those who are long-term residents of Lebanon and Jordan and those who have fled from Syria,[27] are excluded from UNHCR's resettlement program because they are under UNRWA's mandate in its countries of operation. However, UNRWA has no authority to refer Palestinian refugees for resettlement to third countries, as this goes beyond its mandate of providing humanitarian assistance, including access to primary health care and primary education, housing assistance, and emergency food aid.

22 Amnesty International, *Tackling the global refugee crisis.*

23 First reflected in the Preamble to the 1951 Refugee Convention, the principle of responsibility-sharing was then included in the 1967 UN General Assembly Declaration on Territorial Asylum and the 1969 OAU Convention on Specific Aspects of Refugee Problems in Africa. See also Article 2(1) of the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights (ICESCR). The importance of resettlement, a key aspect of burden- and responsibility-sharing, has been repeatedly emphasized by the Executive Committee of High Commissioner's Programme (ExCom), the governing body of UNHCR. See UNHCR, A Thematic Compilation of Executive Committee Conclusions, pp 471–478, available at: www.unhcr.org/53b26db69.html

24 Established in 1949, UNRWA serves Palestinian refugees in Jordan, Lebanon, Syria, and the Occupied Palestinian Territories (OPT) of the West Bank and the Gaza Strip. Palestinian refugees and their descendants fled their homes in what is now Israel between late 1947 and the first half of 1949 to escape the violence linked to the creation of the state of Israel and the Arab-Israeli war of 1948; others became refugees in 1967 when Israel occupied territory, including in Gaza and the West Bank. Under international law, Palestinians who fled or were otherwise forcibly displaced from their homes and land in the original territory of Mandate Palestine and their descendants – have the right to return. Amnesty International, *'I Want a Safe Place'*; see Amnesty International, *Israel and the Occupied Territories/Palestinian Authority: The right to return: The case of the Palestinians* (Index: MDE 15/013/2001), 29 March 2001, available at: www.amnesty.org/en/documents/MDE15/013/2001/en

25 UNHCR reports that there are 25.4 million refugees globally – over half of whom are under the age of 18. UNHCR, *Figures at a Glance*, 19 June 2018 (hereinafter: UNHCR, *Figures at a Glance*), available at: www.unhcr.org/en-us/figures-at-a-glance.html. More than a fifth of these are Palestinians under the care of UNRWA. UNHCR, *Figures at a Glance.* Sixty-eight percent of all refugees registered with UNHCR come from just five countries: Syria (6.3 million); Afghanistan (2.6 million); South Sudan (2.4 million); Myanmar (1.2 million); and Somalia (986,400). UNHCR, *Global Appeal.*

26 Amnesty International, *Tackling the global refugee crisis.*

27 Palestinian refugees from Syria have been severely affected by the ongoing armed conflict and limited humanitarian access. Amnesty International, *Denied Refuge: Palestinians from Syria seeking safety in Lebanon* (Index: MDE 18/002/2014), April 2016, available at: www.amnesty.org/en/documents/MDE18/002/2014/en

"We depend on UNRWA. UNRWA can't be replaced. NGOs can't take the role of UNRWA because it provides services for all Palestinians."

– Awad, Palestinian refugee in Lebanon

"We need someone to give us human rights. We need our rights, especially in Lebanon. Life is so hard to be here. We need basic rights in schooling, jobs, to be able to move freely."

– Hiba, Palestinian refugee in Lebanon

Approximately 450,000 Palestinian refugees are registered with UNRWA in Lebanon and reside in formal and informal camps.[28] Although the majority were born in the country and have lived there all their lives, they cannot acquire Lebanese nationality, and many remain stateless and deprived of access to public services including medical care and education.[29] Discriminatory laws bar Palestinians from practicing over 30 professions, including medicine, dentistry, law, architecture, and engineering.[30] Such restrictions have trapped many Palestinian refugees in deprivation and poverty.

Around 2.1 million Palestinian refugees live in Jordan, of whom 370,000 live in camps where conditions are generally sub-standard.[31] Approximately three quarters of Palestinian refugees in Jordan have been granted Jordanian citizenship, giving them access to health care and education. However, over 600,000 Palestinian refugees have never been naturalized, including some 150,000 who fled to Jordan from the Gaza Strip following the 1967 Israeli-Arab conflict, and as a result do not have sufficient access to public services.[32]

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28 UNRWA, *Where We Work: Lebanon* (hereinafter: UNRWA, *Where Work: Lebanon*), available at: www.unrwa.org/where-we-work/lebanon; see UNHCR, *Lebanon Crisis: Response Plan 2017-2020*, available at: https://data2.unhcr.org/en/documents/download/68655]. An official census conducted in 2017 recorded the number of Palestinian refugees in Lebanon as 174,422 individuals, living in 12 official camps and 156 informal camps. A much higher number of Palestinian refugees – some 450,000 – are registered in Lebanon with UNRWA, which runs the official camps, but the agency acknowledges that many of them live outside the country. Amnesty International, *Seventy+ years of suffocation* (hereinafter: Amnesty International, *Seventy+ years of suffocation*), available at: https://nakba.amnesty.org/en/about

29 Amnesty International, *Seventy+ years of suffocation*.

30 UNRWA, Employment of Palestine Refugees in Lebanon: An Overview, May 2016, available at: www.unrwa.org/sites/default/files/content/resources/2017_employment_of_palestine_refugees_in_lebanon_arabic_and_english_ve.pdf

31 UNRWA, Where We Work: Jordan (hereinafter: UNRWA, Where We Work: Jordan), available at: www.unrwa.org/where-we-work/jordan; Amnesty International, *Seventy + years of suffocation*.

32 For discussion of the complex reasons why some 600,000 Palestinian refugees in Jordan were not naturalized, see Amnesty International, Seventy + years of suffocation: Chapter 2: Jordan, available at: https://nakba.amnesty.org/en/chapters/jordan

DISPLACED ONCE MORE: PALESTINIAN REFUGEES FROM SYRIA

Palestinian refugees in Syria have been severely affected by the ongoing armed conflict and limited access of humanitarian organizations. According to UNRWA, almost all of the 560,000 Palestinian refugees inside Syria require humanitarian assistance. Of these, some 120,000 have fled to neighboring countries, including Lebanon and Jordan – both of which have imposed tight restrictions on their entry – and to Europe.

Nearly ten thousand PRS have fled to Jordan since 2011. UNRWA estimates that the majority of them live in poverty and with irregular status.[33] There are approximately 32,000 Palestinian refugees from Syria living in Lebanon; almost 90 percent live under the poverty line and 95 percent are "food insecure."[34] In Jordan and Lebanon, UNRWA provides healthcare, education, and cash assistance to cover the basic needs of Palestinian refugees from Syria. Aside from exceptional cases, Palestinian refugees from Syria in Jordan and Lebanon are generally not resettled to third countries.

The majority of those who have remained in Syria have been displaced multiple times and are disproportionately affected by the conflict, due to their proximity to conflict areas inside Syria and high rates of poverty.

In 2018, the US administration *eliminated* funding for UNRWA. This draconian action by the current US administration severely threatens the agency's ability to provide assistance to Palestinian refugees. Since 2008, the USA has on average contributed more than $277 million yearly to UNRWA, a quarter of the agency's budget.[35] Even with stop-gap funding from other donors, UNRWA has been forced to make many cuts in basic services.[36] Future funding that originally offset some of the USA's funding cuts is not guaranteed to continue, with devastating implications for UNRWA's ability to provide resources to meet basic needs and services such as food and shelter assistance, health care, and education.[37]

Palestinian refugees Amnesty International interviewed consistently reported that UNRWA support is the difference between surviving and having nothing.[38] Humanitarian assistance provided by UNRWA was the only way they could meet basic needs – shelter, food, heat and electricity, medical care, schooling for children. With limited opportunities to work and without assistance and access to UNRWA services, options for finding adequate shelter and food for their families, let alone schooling and medical care, are extremely limited.

Amnesty International is gravely concerned that the current US administration's decision to eliminate funding for UNRWA is prioritizing political interests over the urgent humanitarian needs and human rights of Palestinian women, men, and children.[39]

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33 UNRWA, *Where We Work: Jordan.*

34 UNRWA, *Where We Work: Lebanon.*

35 UNRWA, *Donor Charts*, available at: www.unrwa.org/how-you-can-help/how-we-are-funded

36 UNRWA, *Impact of U.S. Budget Cuts on UNRWA Operations*, 2019.

37 Amnesty International interview with anonymous refugee protection professionals in November 2018.

38 Amnesty International interview with anonymous Palestinian refugees in November 2018.

39 NGO Letter to Members of the US Congress, 27 March 2019, available at: https://static1.squarespace.com/static/5d6c8ea1e4b01d9450dd53f5/t/5c9c0c47ee6eb02cd983b235/1563730634813/Letter+to+Members+of+Congress+on+Aid+to+Palestinian+Civilians.pdf

REFUGEE RESETTLEMENT: A VANISHING LIFELINE

Unable to return home, the majority of refugees stay in their host country where they try to build a new life, but for a small minority with specific protection risks staying in their initial host country is not an option and resettlement is necessary.

WHAT IS RESETTLEMENT AND WHY IS IT IMPORTANT?[40]

Resettlement is the relocation of "vulnerable" refugees from countries where they have initially fled to safe third countries where they can restart their lives in dignity. Resettlement benefits refugees who are facing particular hardships or vulnerabilities. Resettlement also relieves some of the pressure on countries hosting large numbers of refugees.

UNHCR initially identifies vulnerable refugees for resettlement according to set criteria. Those with serious medical needs, survivors of torture/violence, women and girls at risk, children and adolescents at risk, and lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender and intersex (LGBTI) people are among some of those prioritized for resettlement. Once refugees have been identified by UNHCR, their cases are put forward to resettlement countries which then decide whether to accept them for resettlement. If accepted, these governments actively facilitate the safe transport of refugees to their country and help them to integrate into their new countries.

In addition to UNHCR-coordinated resettlement, Amnesty International encourages other means of relocating refugees safely including through other admission pathways, such as humanitarian admission programs, family reunification, and sponsorship programs so long as they guarantee the rights of refugees.

Fewer than one percent of the world's refugees will have the opportunity to resettle in a third country like the United States.[41] Refugees do not get to choose to resettle to the USA or any specific country. A refugee is only admitted to the USA after referral to the US resettlement program by UNHCR and then undergoing extensive security checks and being found eligible for admission under US immigration laws.[42]

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40 Amnesty International, *Hardship, Hope and Resettlement*.

41 UNHCR, *Less than 5 per cent of global refugee resettlement needs met last year*, 19 February 2019, available at: www.unhcr.org/en-us/news/briefing/2019/2/5c6bc9704/5-cent-global-refugee-resettlement-needs-met-year.html. UNHCR defines resettlement as "[resettlement] involves the selection and transfer of refugees from a State in which they have sought protection to a third State which has agreed to admit them as refugees with permanent residence status. The status provided ensures protection against *refoulement* and provides a resettled refugee and his/her family or dependants with access to rights similar to those enjoyed by nationals. Resettlement also carries with it the opportunity to eventually become a naturalized citizen of the resettlement country." UNHCR, *Resettlement Handbook*, available at: www.unhcr.org/46f7c0ee2.pdf

42 Not all refugees considered for resettlement to the USA are referred by UNHCR. There are three priorities for resettlement consideration to the USA: 1) "Priority 1": Cases identified and referred to the US refugee program by UNHCR, a US Embassy, or a designated NGO; 2) "Priority 2": Groups of special humanitarian concern identified by the US refugee program; 3) "Priority 3": Family reunification cases involving close relatives of persons admitted as refugees or granted asylum. Most refugees are referred to the USA for resettlement consideration by UNHCR. See USRAP Consultation & Worldwide Processing Priorities.

Resettlement is a lifeline for refugees with specific protection risks, and the USA has historically resettled the largest number of refugees annually from around the world.[43] Since the USRAP was established by the 1980 Refugee Act,[44] and until 2017, US administrations have, on average, set the ceiling for refugee resettlement to the USA at 95,000. Annual admissions to the USA have averaged 80,000 refugees.[45]

> ***"We came to Jordan in 2013. The revolution started [in Syria] in 2011, so we lived for three years there under bombing, war pressure, checkpoints, and kidnapping. We faced lots of tragedies there but we weren't thinking about leaving despite all of that. But at the end we didn't have another choice. There was no way: either we die or we leave... we didn't have another choice or solution."***
>
> ***– Saad, Syrian refugee in Jordan***

Under the current US administration, that lifeline has been strangled, with grave implications for resettlement to the USA and worldwide. Since January 2017, a series of Muslim and refugee bans, various policies imposing additional security screening measures, and drastic cuts to the annual ceiling for refugee admissions have made the US refugee program a shadow of what it was only a few years ago.

Within a week of taking office, President Trump reversed nearly 40 years of US support for refugee protection through a

43 See UNHCR, *Resettlement Data*; see also Pew Research Center, *For the first time, U.S. resettles fewer refugees than the rest of the world*, 5 July 2018 (hereinafter: Pew Research Center, *For the first time, U.S. resettles fewer refugees than the rest of the world*), available at: www.pewresearch.org/fact-tank/2018/07/05/for-the-first-time-u-s-resettles-fewer-refugees-than-the-rest-of-the-world. Donald Kerwin, "How America's refugee policy is damaging to the world and to itself," *The Economist*, 19 June 2018, available at: www.economist.com/open-future/2018/06/19/how-americas-refugee-policy-is-damaging-to-the-world-and-to-itself

44 The US Refugee Admissions Program (USRAP) is an interagency effort involving a number of US government actors and NGO partners both overseas and in the United States. USRAP is managed by the US Department of State in cooperation with the US Department of Homeland Security and US Department of Health and Human Services and involves coordination with UNHCR, Resettlement Support Centers (RSC), the International Organization for Migration (IOM), and NGOs. See USRAP Consultation & Worldwide Processing Priorities.

45 US Department of State, Bureau of Population, Refugees, and Migration, Refugee Processing Center, Admissions & Arrivals (hereinafter: Refugee Processing Center, Admissions & Arrivals), available at: www.wrapsnet.org/admissions-and-arrivals; see also Migration Policy Institute, *U.S. Annual Refugee Resettlement Ceilings and Number of Refugees Admitted, 1980-Present*, available at: www.migrationpolicy.org/programs/data-hub/charts/us-annual-refugee-resettlement-ceilings-and-number-refugees-admitted-united

single discriminatory act with catastrophic consequences. On 27 January 2017, he signed the Muslim ban, which suspended the USRAP for 120 days and imposed an indefinite ban on the resettlement of refugees from Syria, among other provisions.[46] A revised executive order took effect in March 2017, which lifted the indefinite ban on Syrian refugees but still suspended the US refugee resettlement program.[47] A June 2017 ruling by the US Supreme Court allowed a limited version of the March executive order to take effect.

Refugees whom Amnesty International interviewed continue to live out the consequences today of the Muslim ban. Their cases were put on hold after this initial Muslim ban and 2.5 years later, they are still awaiting resettlement to the USA.

Ahmed Amari* and his family are Syrian refugees who fled to Beirut, Lebanon, in 2013. They registered as refugees with UNHCR in 2014, and were accepted for resettlement to the USA in late 2016. In December 2016, he and his family were told to prepare for their new home in Virginia. When President Trump signed the Muslim ban in January 2017, Ahmed inquired about his case. He told Amnesty International that he learned "he was banned." He and his family were shocked. He was told to wait until the ban was over and then his case would proceed. Since January 2017, his case has been stuck, subjected to seemingly endless review.

Nine months into his presidency, Trump continued to systematically roll back US systems for refugee protection. On 24 October 2017, even as President Trump signed an executive order to resume the USRAP "with enhanced vetting procedures," he also imposed an additional 90-day ban on refugees from 11 countries while ordering that changes to security vetting procedures be applied retroactively.[48] Nine of the 11 countries in the new refugee ban were Muslim-majority, and accounted for 43 percent of US refugee admissions for the previous fiscal year, 2017.[49] In January 2018, the US administration issued a memorandum ordering additional security procedures for refugees from the 11 countries designated in the October 2017 executive order.[50] These successive discriminatory executive orders and memorandum set in motion long-term and negative consequences for refugee resettlement, disproportionately affecting refugees from Muslim-majority countries.

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46 Executive Order 13769, Protecting the Nation from Foreign Terrorist Entry into the United States, 27 January 2017, available at: www.whitehouse.gov/presidential-actions/executive-order-protecting-nation-foreign-terrorist-entry-united-states. US President Trump's original executive order barred the entry of nationals of seven majority-Muslim countries (Iran, Iraq, Libya, Somalia, Sudan, Syria, and Yemen) for at least 90 days; suspended the US refugee resettlement program for 120 days; cut the total number of refugees admitted for resettlement to 50,000 in FY 2017; and imposed an indefinite ban on Syrian refugees. See Amnesty International, *'My family was in shock.'*

47 Executive Order 13780, Protecting the Nation From Foreign Terrorist Entry Into the United States, 6 March 2017, available at: www.whitehouse.gov/presidential-actions/executive-order-protecting-nation-foreign-terrorist-entry-united-states-2. Amnesty International has previously stated that "[m]otivated by anti-Muslim animus, and disproportionately impacting Muslims, both executive orders violate the principle of nondiscrimination, codified in treaties binding upon the United States. They evince a view of immigrants and other non-citizens that is intolerant, bigoted, and offensive. Amnesty International, *'My family was in shock.'*

48 Executive Order 13815, Resuming the United States Refugee Admissions Program with Enhanced Vetting Capabilities, 24 October 2017, available at: https://www.whitehouse.gov/presidential-actions/presidential-executive-order-resuming-united-states-refugee-admissions-program-enhanced-vetting-capabilities. Executive Order 13815 placed a 90-day ban on refugees from Egypt, Iran, Iraq, Libya, Mali, North Korea, Somalia, Sudan, South Sudan, Syria, and Yemen.

49 Following are the approximate percentages of the populations of the nine Muslim-majority countries affected by the 90-day refugee ban: Egypt, 94.6 percent; Iran, 99.4 percent; Iraq, 99 percent; Libya, 96.6 percent; Mali, 92.6 percent; Somalia, 98.6 percent; Sudan, 97 percent; Syria, 92.2 percent, and Yemen, 99.1 percent. In FY 2017, they accounted for 23,166 refugee admissions, out of 53,716. Pew Research Center, *Mapping the Global Muslim Population*, 7 October 2009, available at: www.pewforum.org/2009/10/07/mapping-the-global-muslim-population; see Amnesty International, *'My family was in shock.'*

50 US Department of Homeland Security, *DHS Announces Additional, Enhanced Security Procedures for Refugees Seeking Resettlement in the United States*, 31 January 2018, available at: www.dhs.gov/news/2018/01/29/dhs-announces-additional-enhanced-security-procedures-refugees-seeking-resettlement

> ***"We would like to thank the American people for standing by the Syrian people. They wanted to help the Syrian people in a better way, but all of a sudden, the support stopped. We don't know what the reason is. I mean, America is the country of freedom. The country that doesn't oppress people."***
>
> ***– Fatima, Syrian refugee in Jordan***

The current US administration has further dismantled refugee protection by drastically limiting refugee admissions in the yearly Presidential Determination, which designates the annual number of refugees to be resettled to the USA. One of President Trump's first acts in office was to cut refugee admissions from 110,000 for FY 2017, as set under President Obama in his last year in office, to 50,000. For FY 2018, President Trump lowered the ceiling to 45,000, breaking precedent. It was the lowest refugee admissions ever set. Compounding this harm, the USA then barely resettled 22,000 refugees – the lowest number admitted through the USRAP in the history of the program.[51]

The downward spiral continues: the ceiling for refugee resettlement in FY 2019 is 30,000 – setting a new record for the lowest ceiling for refugee admissions since the US refugee program started in 1980. As of May 2019, the USA is on pace to resettle fewer than 25,000 refugees for the current fiscal year. Similarly, it is not on pace to reach the 9,000 allocation for refugee admissions for countries under the category of "Near East/South Asia."[52] In contrast, in FY 2016, the USA resettled nearly 85,000 refugees.

The USA has turned its back on refugees – and renounced its commitments to share responsibility for hosting refugees. The bare math of refugee resettlement tells the story. Under the current US administration, refugee resettlement dropped 74 percent in three

51 Refugee Processing Center, Admissions & Arrivals (last accessed 14 June 2019).

52 The current US administration has precipitously cut refugee resettlement from the Near East/South Asia: in FY 2016, the regional allocation was 38,000, in FY 2019, it was 9,000.

years.[53] President Trump has decimated the USA's global leadership on resettlement, not only by cutting refugee admissions to the USA, but also exemplified by the dramatic renunciation of US policy commitments in President Obama's Leaders' Summit in 2016 and the global compacts on refugees and migrants.

US policies have undermined the international refugee protection system itself. The decline in global resettlement since 2017 – despite the urgent and consistent need – is due in large part to policies enacted by the current US administration. The number of refugees resettled worldwide dropped nearly 50 percent from 2016 to 2017. During that same period, the USA resettled 65 percent fewer refugees.[54]

As the USA has cut its refugee admissions and enacted discriminatory refugee policies, starting with the Muslim ban, fewer refugees have simply been resettled worldwide because the US has shut its doors and other countries have not filled the gap. This failure is due partly to other countries' inability to offer a larger number of resettlement slots because they do not have the same infrastructure for processing refugee admissions.[55] The US refugee program was, as Amnesty International was told, built for size.[56] It is also because the USA's policies have emboldened other countries to adopt similarly restrictive policies that undermine responsibility-sharing, including limiting resettlement, and create unwelcoming environments for refugees.[57]

Once a leader in resettlement, since 2017 the USA has the cut the number of refugees it admits more than any other resettling country.[58] In 2016, the USA resettled 62 percent of all refugees referred by UNHCR. In 2017, this number dropped to 38 percent. In 2018, the USA was resettling only half of the number of the world's refugees that it once did – it resettled only 31 percent of all refuges referred by UNHCR. As of the end of April 2019, the USA had resettled only 38 percent of all refugees referred by UNHCR for resettlement around the world.[59] While this number indicates the USA is on pace this calendar year to resettle slightly more refugees of all those referred by UNHCR, the USA still resettles around half as many refugees that the UNHCR refers for resettlement globally as it once did.

The shocking reduction in resettlement of refugees from Muslim-majority countries since the Muslim ban has further eroded refugee protection.

Since FY 2016, resettlement to the USA of refugees from Muslim-majority countries listed in the Muslim ban and other executive orders has dropped 98 percent as of June 2019.[60] To put a finer lens on it, even as 42 percent of the world's refugees requiring resettlement are from Syria,[61] only 347 Syrians have been resettled to the USA through May in FY 2019.[62] In contrast, at this same point in FY 2016, the USA had resettled 2,805 Syrians. By the end of FY 2016, the USA had resettled 12,587 Syrians, whereas the USA is on pace to resettle just over 500 Syrian refugees in total in FY 2019. Similarly, 282 Iraqis have been resettled through May in FY 2019 as compared to 5,380 resettled at the same point in FY 2016.[63] By the end of FY 2016, the USA had resettled a total of 9,880 Iraqi refugees, but is on pace to only resettle just over 400 Iraqis in FY 2019.

53 Refugee Processing Center, Admissions & Arrivals, reflecting FY 2016, FY 2017, and FY 2018 (last accessed 14 June 2019).

54 UNHCR, *Global Trends*.

55 Amnesty International interview with anonymous refugee protection professionals and service providers in November 2018.

56 Amnesty International interview with anonymous refugee protection professionals and service providers in November and April 2018.

57 Amnesty International interview with anonymous refugee protection professionals and service providers in November 2018.

58 UNHCR, *Resettlement Data*, May 2019 (hereinafter: UNHCR, Resettlement Data), available at: www.unhcr.org/en-us/resettlement-data.html; see, e.g., Pew Research Center *For the first time, U.S. resettles fewer refugees than the rest of the world*. Amnesty International last accessed UNHCR data on 14 June 2019. UNCHR reports that data reflects resettlement through April 2019; however, according to UNCHR, "some data presented may differ from statistics published previously due to retroactive changes or the inclusion of previously unavailable data. In addition, resettlement departure figures reported by UNHCR may not match resettlement statistics published by States as Government figures may include individuals who were resettled outside of UNHCR processes."

59 UNHCR, *Reseettlement Data* (last accessed 14 June 2019).

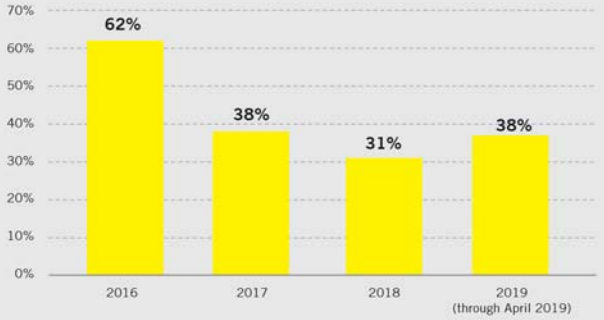
60 US Department of State, Bureau of Population, Refugees, and Migration, Refugee Processing Center, Interactive Reporting: Admissions and Arrivals (hereinafter: Refugee Processing Center, Interactive Reporting: Admissions and Arrivals), available at: http://ireports.wrapsnet.org/
Refugees from these Muslim-majority countries reflected 43 percent of total resettlement in FY 2016; at the current pace of resettlement in FY 2019, they will represent less than five percent of all refugees resettled to the USA.

61 The top three nationalities in need of resettlement are: Syrian (42 percent); Congolese from the Democratic Republic of the Congo (11 percent); and South Sudanese (11 percent). UNHCR, *Global Appeal*. Given their urgent needs and the impact on host countries, UNHCR in 2019 has designated the "resettlement out of Egypt, Iraq, Jordan, Lebanon and Turkey in the context of the Syrian Arab Republic (Syria) situation a priority." UNHCR, *Global Appeal*.

62 Refugee Processing Center, Admissions & Arrivals (last accessed 14 June 2019).

63 Refugee Processing Center, Admissions & Arrivals (last accessed 14 June 2019).

Percentage of UNHCR-Referred Refugees Resettled to the United States



A SHADOW OF ITSELF

The US refugee program is now a shadow of itself. In multiple interviews, Amnesty International was told how processes that could be done in several weeks now take a year or longer due to changes in vetting. Because of changes to the security vetting process, it is a challenge at best to estimate how long it will take someone to move through the refugee resettlement pipeline. Not only are more human resources needed, the process also needs to be faster. Changes implemented to purportedly improve the system have harmed it instead. This has resulted in significant processing delays and a continued inability to meet the annual refugee admissions ceiling set by the Presidential Determination.

Amnesty International also observed the toll taken on refugee protection professionals working with refugees. Amnesty International was told of the types of impossible decisions facing them: whether a 63-year-old man with end-stage cancer or a 13-year-old with a medical need should be put forward first for resettlement, knowing that the elderly man may not live until the security processing is completed, even for an expedited case, due to the backlog. Cases simply do not move quickly. This, coupled with the inability to provide answers to those waiting beyond a general statement that their case is in "security checks," have resulted in deep stress to employees seeking to fulfill their mission.

Through successive and discriminatory policies restricting refugee resettlement to the USA, the current US administration is failing to share responsibility for refugee protection. According to the principle of responsibility sharing and international cooperation, the USA, like all countries, should do its fair share to support refugee protection through resettling refugees. But it is not. When the USA abrogates its responsibilities, not only does it harm individual lives in grave danger who might have been resettled to the USA, it also shrinks the protection space for refugees worldwide.

REFUGEES IN LEBANON AND JORDAN: 'JUST GIVE US HOPE'

In Jordan and Lebanon, the impact of the USA cutting its resettlement commitments has had an acute impact on the international protection system and on refugees themselves. People feel hopeless, and US policies have contributed to that.

Due to the current US administration's targeting of refugees from Muslim-majority countries and the high concentration of refugees from some of these countries in Jordan and Lebanon,[64] *resettlement out of Jordan and Lebanon has been decimated.* UNHCR reports that resettlement out of Jordan dropped by more than four-fold from 2016 to 2017, "primarily due to the change in the US resettlement policy at the beginning of 2017."[65] It anticipates that in 2019, resettlement from Jordan will remain around the 2017 levels.[66] While the effect of US policies on Lebanon has not been as marked, it has contributed to the drawing down: to date, resettlement out of Lebanon has dropped 89 percent since 2016.[67]

According to UNHCR, in calendar year 2016, 11,596 refugees were resettled from Jordan to the USA alone, out of a total of 19,303.[68] In calendar year 2017, the USA resettled 1,374 refugees from Jordan – only 12 percent of its commitment in 2016. In calendar year 2018, the USA admitted 19 refugees from Jordan out of the 5,106 total who were resettled worldwide from the country. In Lebanon in 2016, 19,502 refugees were resettled worldwide, of whom the USA resettled 1,072 – 5 percent of all refugees from Lebanon. In 2017, the USA resettled only 400 refugees from Lebanon, out of 12,617 resettled worldwide – only 37 percent of its commitment in 2016. In calendar year 2018, the USA resettled merely 27 refugees out of 9,805 refugees resettled from Lebanon worldwide.[69]

The numbers in this instance tell a shocking story – of the shuttering of USA resettlement from Jordan and Lebanon. The top two nationalities resettled from both countries to the USA are Syrian and Iraqi.[70] According to UNHCR, in calendar year 2016, 11,204 Syrian refugees were resettled to the USA from Lebanon and Jordan; by the end of April 2019, 219 were resettled. In calendar year 2016, 1,164 Iraqis were resettled to the USA from Lebanon and Jordan; as of the end of April, only 32 were resettled. The drastic drop-off continues for other nationalities: 25 Sudanese were resettled from Lebanon and Jordan through April 2019, compared to 228 in 2016; zero Somalis have been resettled to the USA from Lebanon and Jordan in calendar year 2019, while 40 were in 2016.[71]

64 In Lebanon, only one percent of refugees are non-Syrian; in Jordan, 13 percent are non-Syrian. Other refugee populations include Iraqis, Sudanese, Somalis, Yemenis, and other nationalities. The Lebanese government estimates there are 1.5 million Syrian refugees, including 976,002 registered with UNHCR, and some 20,000 refugees of Iraq, Sudanese, Ethiopian, and other nationality. UNHCR, *Lebanon Operations*. As of March 2019, 762,420 refugees lived in Jordan: 671,579 were Syrian; 67,600 Iraqi; and some 23,241 refugees of Yemeni, Sudanese, Somali, and other nationalities. UNHCR, *Jordan Fact Sheet*.

65 UNHCR, *Jordan Operations*.

66 UNHCR, *Jordan Operations*.

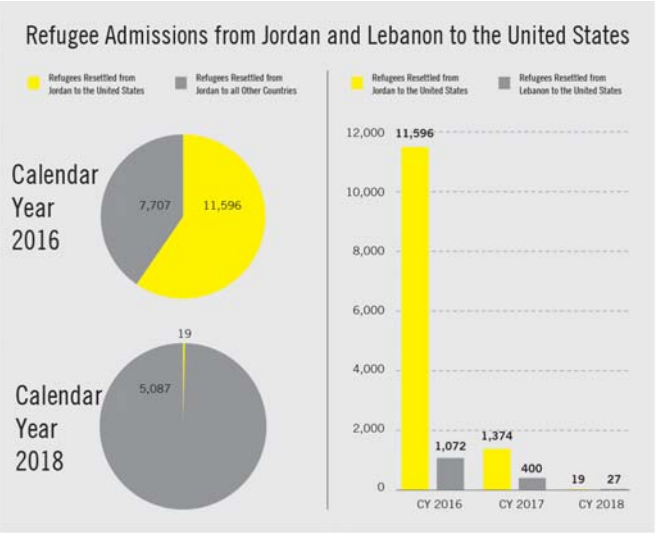
67 UNHCR, *Resettlement Data* (last accessed 14 June 2019).

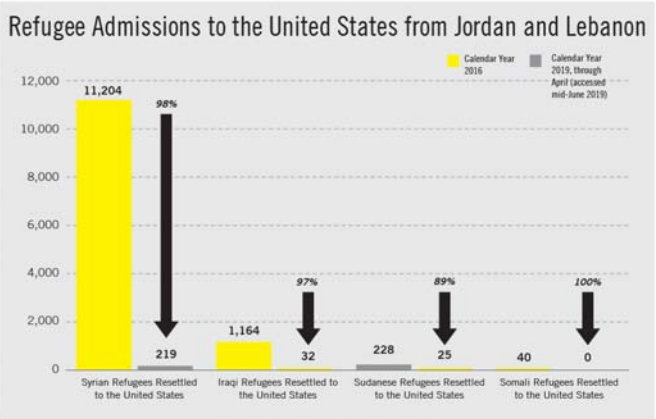
68 UNHCR, *Jordan Operations*; UNHCR, *Resettlement Data* (last accessed 14 June 2019).

69 UNHCR, *Resettlement Data* (last accessed 14 June 2019).
In calendar year 2017, 4,996 refugees were resettled worldwide out of Jordan, while 12,617 refugees were resettled worldwide out of Lebanon.

70 UNHCR, *Resettlement Data* (last accessed 14 June 2019).

71 UNHCR, *Resettlement Data* (last accessed 14 June 2019).


Refugee Admissions from Jordan and Lebanon to the United States
Refugees Resettled from Jordan to the United States
Refugees Resettled from Jordan to all Other Countries
Refugees Resettled from Jordan to the United States
Refugees Resettled from Lebanon to the United States
Calendar Year 2016
7,707
11,596
Calendar Year 2018
19
5,087
12,000
10,000
8,000
6,000
4,000
2,000
0
11,596
1,072
1,374
400
19
27
CY 2016
CY 2017
CY 2018


Refugee Admissions to the United States from Jordan and Lebanon
Calendar Year 2016
Calendar Year 2019, through April (accessed mid-June 2019)
12,000
10,000
8,000
6,000
4,000
2,000
0
11,204
219
98%
1,164
32
97%
228
25
89%
40
0
100%
Syrian Refugees Resettled to the United States
Iraqi Refugees Resettled to the United States
Sudanese Refugees Resettled to the United States
Somali Refugees Resettled to the United States

RESHAPING THE RESETTLEMENT LANDSCAPE

The current US administration's refugee policies have not only affected admissions to the USA, they have also dramatically reshaped the resettlement landscape in Jordan and Lebanon and disproportionately affected the most vulnerable refugees. The USA resettlement program accepts a wide cross-section of case profiles, while other countries tend to prefer refugees of certain nationalities, those with smaller families, those with higher levels of education, and/or those with limited medical needs. Now that the USA is no longer the top resettlement-receiving country for refugees submitted from Lebanon and Jordan, these refugee profiles are doubly impacted and far less likely to be resettled. More than ever, UNHCR must consider not only the "vulnerability" criteria but also the likelihood of acceptance to a particular country. With so few resettlement spaces and such lengthy processing times, the stakes are high and no one wants to risk the USA or any country rejecting a case for resettlement consideration.[72]

These cuts to resettlement are causing immeasurable stress and changing the course of lives of refugees. Refugee protection professionals in Jordan and Lebanon described to Amnesty International how refugees are searching for any piece of information to understand why they are still waiting for an answer on their case after years. When refugees inquire about cases, they say, "just give us hope."[73]

Refugees have been forced to put their lives on hold. Refugee protection professionals and service providers in Jordan and Lebanon told Amnesty International that refugees are holding off having children or getting married for fear of further delaying the processing of their resettlement case after years of waiting. The fear is not unfounded. The birth of a newborn, for example, requires new paperwork during which time medical and security clearances can lapse, pushing a refugee's case further back in an already long pipeline.[74]

FEAR OF ANTI-MUSLIM AND ANTI-REFUGEE SENTIMENTS IN THE USA

Another subtle change is how the USA is perceived: refugees in Jordan and Lebanon awaiting resettlement to the USA still want to come, but they are aware of anti-refugee, anti-Muslim sentiment in US government policies and are apprehensive about how they will be affected. During stakeholder roundtables between resettlement professionals and refugees and cultural orientation classes, multi-day trainings to prepare refugees for their new life in the United States, refugees are asking more often about how they will be received: "Will we be discriminated against in the USA?" "Is there a ban against Muslims or against Arabs?" "Can we be deported from the USA?" "Can I wear a hijab?"[75]

72 Amnesty International interview with anonymous refugee protection professionals in November and April 2018.

73 Amnesty International interview with anonymous refugee protection professionals in November 2018.

74 Amnesty International interview with anonymous refugee protection professionals in November 2018.

75 Amnesty International interview with anonymous refugee protection professionals in November 2018.

"[In the United States], there are a lot of opportunities . . . more than here. You can move freely and there are many things that you can do for a living. One can dream bigger. There are a lot of people who have started businesses in America. Over here, it's not like refugees are happy with receiving aid and staying at home. It's quite the opposite; if they find an opportunity, they will work and be productive. I've been unemployed for three months now. If I find any job, I'll take it. Yesterday, I was looking for a job. There are no jobs."

– Yasir, Syrian refugee in Jordan

The longer refugees wait, the greater the human toll and the greater their vulnerability in host countries. As thousands fewer refugees depart each year, aid agencies and national governments require additional assistance; without it, they need to spread similar levels of funding over larger populations, leading to assistance being cut after a period of time.[76] Because of resource constraints, in part generated by protracted refugee situations and also funding remain constant or declining, the UN has had to make painful decisions on who receives assistance in the first instance or continues to receive aid.[77] Refugees reported to Amnesty International that UNHCR stopped their assistance to help other refugees who had not yet received aid, or they had received assistance for a few months only, despite living in Jordan or Lebanon for years.[78] This has led to refugees, with increasingly desperate needs, receiving limited or no assistance.

As described below, refugees in Lebanon and Jordan face deteriorating situations.

LEBANON

For refugees in Lebanon who cannot return home or be resettled, the situation is tenuous, with dire living conditions and restrictive government policies in an increasingly hostile environment.[79] On 31 October 2014, Lebanon effectively closed its borders to refugees from Syria. Six months later, UNCHR stopped registration of Syrian refugees at the request of the Lebanese government. Syrian refugees continued to arrive, but were unable to register with UNHCR. The government estimates there are 1.5 million Syrian refugees in Lebanon, including 976,002 registered with UNHCR. There are also some 20,000 refugees of Iraqi, Sudanese, Ethiopian, and other nationalities.[80]

The Lebanese government has stated that refugees cannot become permanent residents – that is, one of the three durable solutions open to refugees – local integration – is not available.[81] Because refugees in Lebanon cannot integrate, they need to maintain residency permits. However, refugees encounter steep financial and administrative difficulties in obtaining or renewing residency permits from the Lebanese government, exposing them to a constant risk of arbitrary arrest, detention, and forcible return to their home countries as well as restricting their access to work, education, and health care.[82]

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76 Amnesty International interview with anonymous refugee protection professionals and service providers in November and April 2018.

77 Amnesty International interview with anonymous refugee protection professionals and service providers in November and April 2018.

78 Amnesty International interview with anonymous refugees in November 2018.

79 Amnesty International, Q&A - why are returns of refugees from Lebanon to Syria premature? (Index Number MDE 18/0481/2019), 12 June 2019 (hereinafter: Amnesty International, Q&A - why are returns of refugees from Lebanon to Syria premature?), available at: www.amnesty.org/download/Documents/MDE1804812019ENGLISH.pdf

80 UNHCR, *Lebanon Operations*.

81 See, e.g., United Nations and the Government of Lebanon, *Lebanon Crisis Response Plan 2017–2020*, available at: www.un.org.lb/library/assets/67780-035714.pdf

82 *Amnesty International Report 2017/18*.

ESCALATING DANGER: CONSTRUCTIVE *REFOULEMENT* OF REFUGEES TO SYRIA

In the past two years, prominent Lebanese political figures from a variety of political parties have publicly called for the immediate return of all refugees to Syria, blaming the refugee population for the deterioration of the security and economic situation. In July 2018, the Lebanese government announced that they will facilitate the return of refugees to Syria under an agreement with the Syrian government. In March 2019, Lebanese General Security announced that 172,046 refugees returned to Syria since December 2017 due to easing administrative restrictions and facilitating and organizing returns. For the return of refugees to their country of origin to be truly voluntary, it must be based on their free and informed consent. International law prohibits "constructive" refoulement, which occurs when states use indirect means to coerce individuals to return to a place where they would be at real risk of serious human rights violations. Amnesty International believes that, in many cases, the Lebanese government's unfair policies represent a fundamental factor in the decision to leave the country. In these cases, the refugee's consent to repatriation cannot be considered free. Lebanon would therefore be in breach of its obligation not to return refugees to a place where they would be at risk of persecution or other serious human rights violations.[83]

Due to Lebanese policy, there are no refugee camps administered by UNHCR in Lebanon.[84] Rather, refugees live in cities, villages, or informal tented settlements throughout the country. Some Syrian refugees who are not Palestinian have moved into Palestinian refugee camps in Lebanon, which has increased overcrowding and worsened conditions.

According to UNHCR, 69 percent of Syrian refugee households lived below the poverty line and more than half lived in substandard conditions in overcrowded buildings and densely populated neighborhoods. Syrian refugees "have limited possibilities to become self-reliant and are still largely dependent on humanitarian assistance to meet their basic needs and stay resilient against exploitation, evictions and other risks."[85]

Nadima*, a Sudanese refugee in Beirut, was accepted for resettlement to the United States in 2015. While walking to work on 14 October 2018, she was caught in a raid by Lebanese authorities on Syrian refugees. She was detained for 26 days and only released after an intervention by a local NGO serving refugees, because she was a UNHCR-registered refugee awaiting resettlement to the USA.

Refugees face restrictions to finding official work and are subjected to curfews and other restrictions on their movement in a number of municipalities. Several municipalities have served refugees with eviction notices, forcing them to seek alternative places to live in an increasingly hostile and xenophobic environment.[86]

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83 Amnesty International, Q&A - why are returns of refugees from Lebanon to Syria premature?

84 "[A]n estimated 73 percent of all refugees rent in residential buildings in cities or rural settlements. The housing units are often in poor condition – lacking kitchen, toilet, doors, windows, electricity and/or running water. Approximately a third of refugee households share basic lodgings with other families in overcrowded conditions. An estimated 18 percent live in fragile makeshift tents in spontaneously set-up settlements. The remaining nine percent live in non-residential structures including garages, shops, worksites, and farm buildings." UNHCR, *Lebanon: Shelter*, available at: www.unhcr.org/lb/shelter

85 UNHCR, *Lebanon Operations*; UNHCR, *VASyR 2018 Vulnerability Assessment of Syrian Refugees in Lebanon*, December 2018, available at: https://data2.unhcr.org/en/documents/download/67380

86 *Amnesty International Report 2017/18.*

While Lebanon is not a signatory to the 1951 Refugee Convention or its 1967 Protocol, it remains bound by customary international law, including the international principle of non-refoulement and by other international human rights instruments that apply to refugees and non-refugees alike.

JORDAN

Similarly, refugees in Jordan face an increasingly difficult situation. Jordanian authorities began tightening border controls with Syria in 2012 and closed its borders to Syria's refugees in 2014, with some limited exceptions.[87] Jordan hosts 762,420 refugees: 671,579 are Syrian, while 67,600 are Iraqi; and some 23,241 are Yemeni, Sudanese, Somali, and other nationalities.

Refugees in Jordan face significant challenges in supporting themselves and accessing services. UNHCR reports refugees "have entered a cycle of asset depletion, with savings exhausted and levels of debt increasing." In 2018, the Jordanian government raised the cost of public health care services for Syrian refugees, putting basic care beyond the reach of most, as over 85 percent of Syrian refugees live below the poverty line. Eight-four percent of all refugees in Jordan live in urban areas, while approximately 16 percent of Syrian refugees live in one of three UNHCR camps.[88]

Like Lebanon, Jordan has not signed the 1951 Refugee Convention or its 1967 Protocol, but remains bound by customary international law and by other international human rights instruments that apply to refugees and non-refugees alike. However, there is a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) between UNHCR and the Jordanian government on refugee protection operations.[89]

87 UNHCR, *Tackling the global refugee crisis.*

88 UNHCR, *Jordan Fact Sheet.* UNHCR camps in Jordan house only Syrian refugees.

89 UNHCR, *Jordan Operations.*

REFUGEE CAMPS

Amnesty International visited the Zaatari and Azraq camps, which house only Syrian refugees.[90] In coordination with UNHCR and the Jordanian government, multiple NGOs provide a range of services and programs for refugees, such as schooling, health care, skills development, arts programming, and sports. In Zaatari, there is a crowded unpaved main street filled with stalls selling household goods, clothes, appliances, and food. In Azraq, there is a square of such stalls selling similar goods and food. Yet, refugees living in the camps reported to Amnesty International a sense of confinement and limited opportunity.[91] Their lives are on hold.

Located near the city of Mafraq, Zaatari is a walled-off dusty compound holding some 80,000 refugees with heavy security to enter and leave. It has the feel of a bustling small town, albeit one ringed by walls and patrolled by security and intelligence authorities from the national government. The Azraq refugee camp, home to approximately 40,000 refugees, looks and feels like a military compound, with quadrants of shelters set up in a grid system. There is nothing for miles around the camp except barren landscape. On the approach to Azraq, a city of white tents appear on the horizon, looking like an outpost for a military installation.

For refugees in these camps, this is the extent of their world. Once they enter, they cannot leave – unless they choose to return home, even if the reason for their persecution and flight still exists, or they are resettled. Freedom of movement is highly restricted. Refugees need permission to leave a camp, and refugees who are found outside a camp without the correct papers are returned to the camp and in some cases deported.

These camps are not residential spaces. They feel like prisons, surrounded by walls with concertina wire at the top.

Even as refugees try to make a "home" in an impossible situation, they cannot escape the literal and figurative barriers keeping them there. These camps are not places for homes; they are a place of containment.

A generation of children is growing up there.

"I don't have a life here. It is reduced to watching TV. I am dying here."

– Manar, Syrian refugee in Azraq Camp

"We feel restricted in every way. We are restricted when we go out, we are restricted when we come back."

– Hibah, Syrian refugee in Zaatari Camp

90 For information on the Zaatari camp, https://data2.unhcr.org/en/documents/download/68566; on the Azraq camp, https://data2.unhcr.org/en/documents/download/67369.

91 Amnesty International interview with anonymous refugees in November 2018.

CASE STUDIES: REFUGEE VOICES FROM JORDAN AND LEBANON

"Refugee" is only a temporary term; it does not reflect the whole identity of a woman, man, and child who has left their home in search of safety. A person's legal status as refugee cannot express their full identity and personality.

In multiple interviews, people shared with Amnesty International stories of their lives before they were forced to flee their homes, their hopes for their children and their own future, and how now their lives were on hold – they cannot return home, they cannot plan for an unknown future, and for those awaiting resettlement, the promise of safety in the USA remains illusory. Of the parents with whom Amnesty International spoke, their biggest hope is for their children to be educated. Adults want to work to be able to support themselves and their families, but jobs are scarce even as UNHCR aid is cut.

> ***"The mountain is in front of us and the sea is behind us."***
>
> ***– Fatima, Syrian refugee in Jordan***

Syrian refugees interviewed by Amnesty International wonder why the USA has stopped resettling them. Like any person, they miss their home but many feel they can never go back because they would be at risk of harm by Syrian authorities. Others would like to return one day but cannot see returning for the foreseeable future because of the continuing armed conflict and other human rights threats, like forced conscription and enforced disappearances.[92]

Following are some of their stories. Their accounts show the harm of US policies on refugee protection in host countries, the shared concerns of people everywhere for safety, education, employment to support themselves and be productive, and people seeking lives with dignity and hope no matter their circumstances.

92 Amnesty International interview with anonymous refugees in November 2018.

'WE WANT TO LIVE; WE WANT TO LIVE IN PEACE'

Beirut, Lebanon

Fearing for their lives on account of their Christian faith, Malik, 65, fled Baghdad, Iraq, to Beirut, Lebanon, with his wife and two sons in 2013. Three years later they were accepted for resettlement to the United States. As proof of his place in the resettlement process, Malik proudly showed Amnesty International his cultural orientation certificate, which indicated that he and his family had participated in a multi-day training to prepare them for their new life in the United States.

Malik and his family were awaiting the final step of the resettlement process after cultural orientation – being told to pack their bags for a flight to their new home – when the Muslim ban was signed in January 2017. Malik does not know when, if ever, his case will be resolved. He is told only that his case is on hold for "security checks," a confusing explanation as his case was once approved.

This perpetual sense of limbo in which he and his family have been placed by the US government is taking a psychological toll. Malik told Amnesty International:

> *We are suffering. We are suffering a lot. Quite frankly, we used to have a problem every day in the house, especially my wife. The kids would say, 'What can we do, mother?' It's out of our control. It's something that's out of our control . . . I used to comfort her too . . . But every day she would say, 'Why us? What did we do? We are good people. We love people. We don't hurt anyone. We've never, in our lives, hurt any person.'*

Like most refugees in Lebanon, Malik and his family do not have residency permits, putting them at risk for arrest, detention, and even deportation, even though they are registered with UNHCR and are awaiting resettlement to the USA.

Malik had greeted Amnesty International with, "I welcome you, but I wish I would've met with an organization like yours two years ago or with [other] people who defend our rights. We don't know who to go to, that's why I want to thank you, because I've already completed my paperwork and I'm only waiting for a visa."

When asked what he would say if he could speak with President Trump, Malik said, "We are refugees. We're human refugees. We're refugees because there are difficult situations that made us flee . . . Please, so that we're able to live. We want to live; we want to live in peace."

'IT IS OUR ONLY HOPE'

Beirut, Lebanon

In late December 2016, Amina* and Ahmed* were told to buy luggage and prepare to move to the United States. They had been approved for resettlement to the United States and informed their new home would be in Richmond, Virginia. They gave away the belongings they could not bring and their excitement grew. They had fled Aleppo, Syria, in 2013, and now they finally were going to be resettled. Ahmed told Amnesty International, "We felt at the time this was our new home."

When President Trump signed the Muslim ban in January 2017, Ahmed and his family were shocked. He was told to wait until the ban was over and then his case would proceed. Since that time, his family's case has been stuck in processing. He has no sense of when his family will be able to travel to the USA.

Two-and-a-half years after expecting to begin a new life in Richmond, Virginia, Amina and Ahmed and their four children are still waiting, in an increasingly desperate situation. Ahmed will soon lose his residency status, exposing him and his family to the risk of arbitrary arrest, detention, and forcible return to Syria. The carpet store where he works is closing in a few months. He is looking for a job but without a residency permit, he is not sure how he will find a new one and support his family. UNHCR had provided them limited financial support, but he was told by UNHCR that it was discontinued due to budgetary shortfalls.

"It is really hard, really difficult [living in limbo in Lebanon]," Amina and Ahmed told Amnesty International. They cannot return to Syria because of the war. Ahmed is fearful of forcible conscription by the Syrian military, and believes that returning would endanger his family's life due to the ongoing armed conflict, which forced them to flee originally.

Just as they cannot return home, they cannot move forward in their resettlement to the USA. When Ahmed calls about the status of their case, he is told that it is in security checks. Ahmed told Amnesty International, "Every time the phone rings, we think it will be positive news. It is our only hope."

Ahmed and Amina were excited to go to the USA because there, people have rights and "children can go to school." Their eldest daughter, Hasna*, wants to be a designer when she grows up, and their second daughter, Mayiran*, a surgeon. Their third daughter, Raja*, wants to be an orthopedist. Their son, Amir*, wants to be a doctor.

With tears in his eyes, Ahmed told Amnesty International that if he could speak to President Trump, he would tell him that that they come in peace. They are the victims and are looking for security and safety. They are asking for his help.

'WE ARE HOPING THAT THE COUNTRIES WOULD SUPPORT US THROUGH RESETTLEMENT'

Azraq Refugee Camp, Jordan

In Dara'a, Syria, Fatima* was an English teacher, and her husband worked at an electricity company. In 2013, a plane destroyed their home. Her husband left for Jordan first, and shortly after, she followed with their son. Today they live in Azraq refugee camp.

Until October 2018, Fatima facilitated operations for teachers at an international NGO in the camp. Due to funding cuts to the NGO, she lost her job. Now, she teaches her son and her neighbor's daughters during the day. Her son likes math and wants to become an engineer. Fatima would like to run a small school for students with learning challenges, or work within a larger school to help address the special needs of children there.

Fatima says that UNHCR funding cuts have impacted people living in Azraq camp. Before, she says, people used to be able to buy clothing and afford medicine. That's no longer true. The food vouchers, equivalent to 20 JOD per month, per person, are not enough.

Fatima knows she cannot return to Syria, where her home was destroyed and there is no peace. All of the people who go back, she says, are arrested or killed. Fatima hopes to be resettled to the USA one day and does not understand why the USA stopped helping:

> *I mean, this is our voice through you, the voice of all Syrian refugees in Jordan. We are asking for your help. We are hoping that the countries would support us through resettlement. We have qualified professionals, qualified educators, skilled people who are self-sufficient.*

'I JUST HOPE THEY SHOW COMPASSION TO ME AND MY CHILDREN'

Beirut, Lebanon

Before fleeing to Lebanon, Nadia* lived for 10 years in the port city of Latakia with her six children and their father. They left Syria after the war began in 2011 and registered with UNHCR shortly after. The children's father sold cigarettes and coffee to support them, but left the family some time ago.

Today, Nadia and her children live in the Ain Al-Hilweh camp in Lebanon, a Palestinian camp where many Syrians also live, because it is cheaper. She and her six children share a small structure with one room for the children, one room for her, a kitchen, and a bathroom. Her "zinco" roof has been leaking for two months, and the blankets and linens are always wet.

Arafat*, her son, was shot in the head in Lebanon in 2017 while he was on his way to buy kanafeh, a traditional Levantine dessert. He was caught in the cross-fire between rival armed factions. He now suffers from epilepsy , and Nadia says he is not always able to get the treatment he needs for the brain damage he suffered. "They're doing everything they can, but his condition is terrible. He has no life." At the camp, he is taunted by others who call him derogatory names because of his medical condition; people start fights with him, and push him into walls. The day before Nadia interviewed with Amnesty International, she was struck in the face when she interrupted a group of people who were hitting her son.

The thought of returning to Syria does not even cross her mind. It is impossible. She is afraid to return, and photos and news reports do not capture what she and her family have experienced. She wants to leave Lebanon for her children's benefit. Her six-year-old daughter recently told her, "I want to die."

Of herself she just says, "I'm tired." Nadia doesn't have child care assistance because she cannot afford it. When she speaks to people in Lebanon, they insult her, and tell her that Syrians should get out of their country. At one point during the interview, Arafat told his mother not to cry and hugged her, beginning to cry himself. After spending a few moments hugging him, she pushed Arafat away, assuring him, "I'm not crying."

Nadia says she would like to go to any country, anywhere else: "I just hope they show compassion to me and my children."

'I WANT [MY CHILDREN] TO BE LIKE OTHER PEOPLE, LIKE THE OTHER YOUTH'

Zaatari Refugee Camp, Jordan

Sania*, a Syrian refugee, lives at Zaatari refugee camp with her three children, Ali*, Fauzia*, and Sameer*. The family fled Dara'a in 2012 because of the war. Sania's husband left the family, remarried, and moved back to Syria. Sania is grateful for her life at Zaatari, where "no one hits or shoots me and my kids." She cannot envision returning to Syria.

She receives vouchers from UNHCR worth 80 JOD per month. Because it's not enough to support the family, she sometimes uses them to buy goods, which she then re-sells for a higher price. Without the 80 JOD per month, she and her children would not be able to live. Even if she were authorized to work, she would be unable to because two of her children have disabilities and no school will accept them. She must stay home to take care of them. She's been told they need to go to a "special school" where their needs will be met. Sania herself requires medical care for back pain that is becoming debilitating.

"I want my kids to receive treatment and I want them cured from their conditions. I want them to be like other people, like the other youth. I ask God to give me strength to be able to provide for them. That's my wish. I ask the Lord of worlds to give me strength for them. And I pray to God and ask him to heal them."

Sameer says he likes school because he gets meals there. He likes bananas, apples, and sandwiches best. He wants to be a teacher one day. Ali wants to grow up to be a man and take care of his mother, and Fauzia wants to grow up to be a lady and to play with other girls.

'THEY HAVE DREAMS'

Beirut, Lebanon

Zainab* and her three children, Farah*, Basma*, and Hamza*, are originally from As-Suwayda in Syria. Zainab farmed in Suwayda, and her children attended school. In early winter 2012, as they fled by car to escape shelling, their vehicle was hit by shrapnel. It erupted in flames, and they escaped only thanks to onlookers who pried them out of their car. The family was very badly burned, and they thought they would die while waiting hours for care at a hospital.

For six years, they moved around Syria in search of safety and medical care, but in 2018 fled for Lebanon. In November, they started receiving assistance for rent and food from UNHCR.

When they first came to Lebanon, life was hard. Sometimes they only had one meal a day because they couldn't afford food. Other times, people would share their food with them to help. They want to work, but when people see their burned hands, they won't hire them. Zainab says, "We can work with our hands but people think otherwise."

Her children do not go to school and spend their days at home because of their injuries. Zainab is afraid that they will be mistreated because of their burn scars, and that this will have hurt them psychologically. Her children do not let their injuries deter them. "They have dreams," she says. Farah would like to be a school teacher or lawyer, and Basma a drawing teacher. Hamza, the youngest, likes computers.

CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

The USA's retrenchment in refugee protection has had profound global effects. For the first time since the US refugee program began in 1980, the USA is no longer the global leader in refugee resettlement.

This has been a deliberate choice by the current US administration, executed through a series of discriminatory policies disproportionately affecting refugees from Muslim-majority countries and other policy decisions slashing refugee admissions and adding extreme vetting processes. Other countries have not filled the gap created by the precipitous drop in refugee resettlement, in part emboldened by the USA's discriminatory and restrictive policies. Global resettlement dropped 84 percent from calendar year 2016 through April 2019. Behind every number is a face, a name, a person who has experienced deep loss and who hopes for a better future.

During its two-week mission to Jordan and Lebanon, Amnesty International documented firsthand these profound impacts – from the refugees themselves living out the consequences of the US' discriminatory and restrictive policies. In multiple interviews in Jordan and Lebanon, men, women, and children spoke of lives in limbo. Universally, all said they could not go home for fear for their security and lives. Refugees, above all, expressed the same desire any person in their situation would have: the desire to live with dignity, provide for their families, and have a sense of purpose and clarity about their situation and future. Palestinian refugees universally told Amnesty International how UNRWA's assistance was the critical difference between a subsistence life and having nothing.

The catastrophic reach of the Muslim ban continues. Consistently, refugees expressed disbelief that the USA could not resettle them as promised, and bewilderment and even pain at the USA's abrupt change toward supporting and welcoming refugees. Amnesty International met with refugees who, two-and-half years later, are still in the resettlement pipeline to the USA. They continue to await an answer on their cases, and for those on the cusp of being resettled in early 2017, are still waiting for the USA to make good on its promise to resettle them to their new homes. They carry with them forever the knowledge, in their words, they were "banned."

People working directly with refugees described how the current US administration's policies have distorted a once well-functioning refugee protection program, rendering it a shadow of itself. US policies have shifted the resettlement landscape, doubly impacting some of the most vulnerable refugees and creating other harm in untold ways. These abrupt policy shifts have produced incredible stress for people working to support and assist refugees, let alone refugee men, women, and children already in difficult situations.

Amnesty International urges the USA to reverse its discriminatory and restrictive policies on refugee protection and uphold its commitments to share responsibility for refugee protection. The USA should ensure it admits the number of refugees set for resettlement in the Presidential Determination for FY 2019, and commit to resettling at least 95,000 refugees in the next Presidential Determination. US authorities should revise policies that hinder resettlement of refugees to ensure processing is timely and all refugees are considered fairly and fully for resettlement to the USA, without discrimination. The USA should further provide robust, sustained funding for humanitarian aid to protect displaced populations around the world, including for Palestinian refugees, and provide robust funding and support for the US refugee program.

93 UNHCR, *Resettlement Data* (last accessed 14 June 2019).

TO THE US PRESIDENT AND RELEVANT FEDERAL AGENCIES

- Admit 30,000 refugees as set in the Presidential Determination on Refugee Admissions for Fiscal Year 2019
- Ensure that each regional allocation as set in the Presidential Determination for Fiscal Year 2019 is met, including the regional allocation of 9,000 refugee admissions for the "Near East/South Asia" region. If the regional allocation is unable to be met, a clear justification should be provided to the US Congress on what steps were taken to meet the regional allocation, and what steps have been taken to ensure the overall refugee admissions goal is met
- Consult with the US Congress, as required by US law, in setting the Presidential Determination
- Set the Presidential Determination for Fiscal Year 2020 to admit at least 95,000 refugees
- Reverse policies and procedures limiting refugee resettlement, including those that disproportionately impact refugees from Muslim-majority countries and unnecessarily prolong and delay resettlement processing
- Apply the provisions of the 1951 Refugee Convention and the 1967 Protocol to refugees without discrimination
- Enact policies, in consultation with the US Congress, that ensure refugees can be safely resettled to the USA at a pace that ensures the US government meets the annual refugee admissions ceiling set in the Presidential Determination
- Provide answers to those who have been waiting for years for a final decision on their resettlement cases
- Request funding to support a robust US Refugee Admissions Program
- Restore in full critically needed funding for UNRWA at levels consistent with the US's historical contributions

TO THE US CONGRESS

- Hold the US Presidential Administration and relevant federal agencies accountable to admitting 30,000 refugees set in the Fiscal Year 2019 Presidential Determination, including ensuring each regional allocation is met
- Call on the US Presidential Administration and relevant federal agencies to set the Fiscal Year 2020 Presidential Determination to admit at least 95,000 refugees, and conduct vigorous oversight to ensure the US administration works to achieve the goal it set
- Appropriate robust funding for the US Department of Health and Human Services' Refugee and Entrant Assistance account; the US Department of State's Migration and Refugee Assistance account and Emergency Refugee and Migration Assistance account; and the US Agency for International Development's (USAID) International Disaster Assistance account to provide life-saving and life-preserving international assistance for refugee and displaced populations around the world
- Appropriate robust funding to ensure the US Refugee Admissions Program is provided the resources needed to resettle the amount of refugees expected each Fiscal Year
- Ensure the US federal agencies responsible for the security vetting of refugee populations are provided the resources they need to reach the refugee admissions ceiling as set in the annual Presidential Determination
- Further strengthen and make explicit policies of non-discrimination protections in both US refugee and asylum systems
- Co-sponsor and pass the National Origin-Based Antidiscrimination for Nonimmigrants Act, otherwise known as the NO BAN Act (H.R. 2214/S. 1123), which would amend the Immigration and Nationality Act to explicitly prohibit discrimination based on religion
- Co-sponsor and pass the Guaranteed Refugee Admission Ceiling Enhancement Act, otherwise known as the GRACE Act (H.R. 2146/S. 1088)
- Appropriate funding to restore humanitarian assistance to UNRWA at levels consistent with the US' historical contributions

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RELEVANT EXCERPTS FROM THE SAN DIEGO UNION-TRIBUNE EMPLOYEE HANDBOOK

THE SAN DIEGO UNION-TRIBUNE, LLC EMPLOYEE HANDBOOK

APRIL, 2015

Table of Contents

	Page
Introduction	1
SDUT – Inclusion And Diversity Commitment	1
About This Handbook	2
At-Will Employment Relationship	3
Equal Opportunity	3
Employee Classifications	3
Exempt/Non-Exempt Status	4
Employment of Relatives / Non Fraternization	4
Meal and Rest Periods	5
Attendance/Time Off/Leaves of Absence	7
Unexpected Absence	7
Personal Time	7
Leaves of Absence	7
Family and Medical Leave	8
Military Leave	11
Bereavement Leave	11
Jury Duty Leave	12
Parental Leave	12
Time off for Voting	12
Benefits	13
Medical & Dental Coverage	13
Other Insurance Benefits	13
Employee Assistance Program	14
Sick Leave	14
Paid Time Off	**Error! Bookmark not defined.**
Eligibility and Availability	14
Accrual and Payment of Vacation	15
Holidays	15

Paycheck/Direct Deposit 16
Time Cards 16
Mileage and Other Expenses 16
Final Paycheck 16
Records/Employment 17
Information/Reference Requests 17
Communications 17
Open Door Policy 17
Mutual Arbitration of Claims 17
Standards of Conduct 20
Impermissible Conduct 20
Social Media ..... **Error! Bookmark not defined.**
Personal Appearance 22
Telephone 22
Voice Mail 22
Computer Systems 22
Inspection of Company Property 23
Conflict of Interest and Protection of Confidential Information 23
Gifts and Tipping 24
Anti-Harassment/Discrimination. 24
Specifically Prohibited Conduct. 24
Complaint Procedure 25
Retaliation Prohibited. 25
Health/Safety 25
Illness or Injury on the Job 25
Wellness Programs 26
Injury and Illness Prevention Plan 26

Introduction

Welcome to THE SAN DIEGO UNION-TRIBUNE, LLC (the "Company" or the "San Diego Union-Tribune"). You have joined an important team dedicated to being the leader in providing news, information and marketing services indispensable to customers in our diverse region. You will find employees working to achieve this mission virtually 24 hours a day and 365 days a year.

This handbook has been prepared to answer questions about your job, benefits, and the general operation of the Company and to familiarize you with the Company's philosophy and guidelines. It also summarizes the Company's policies and benefits.

Information regarding the Company's benefits programs is provided for information purposes only. The official plan documents control in the event of any discrepancy. Please do not hesitate to ask questions. We welcome your interest and will do our best to give you a prompt response.

SDUT – Inclusion And Diversity Commitment

The Company values diversity at all levels and strives towards an inclusive, culturally-sensitive and respectful environment where the contributions of people of different backgrounds, experiences and perspectives can be recognized and valued. Our employees are comprised of men and women from different nations, cultures, ethnic groups, sexual orientation, generations, backgrounds, skills, and abilities.

We commit ourselves to continuously promote a better understanding and appreciation of each other, and that of the community we serve. Our commitment towards inclusion not only makes our company stronger, but enables us to support and achieve our Mission as a media company– to improve lives and build a stronger community through information, insight and ideas.

In this spirit, every Company employee is expected to embrace and actively support diversity and cultural competence and the richness and advantages they provide.

At-Will Employment Relationship

At The San Diego Union-Tribune, we want to provide opportunities for all employees to grow with us, both personally and professionally. Employment with the Company is at-will, unless otherwise specified in a written employment agreement. This means employment with the Company is not for any specified period and may be terminated by you or the Company at any time, with or without cause or advance notice. In connection with this policy, the Company reserves the right to modify or alter your position, in its sole discretion, with or without cause or advance notice, through actions other than termination, including demotion, promotion, transfer, change in reporting relationships, reclassification or reassignment.

In addition, the Company reserves the right to exercise its managerial discretion in imposing any form of discipline it deems appropriate. No person other than the CEO/President/Publisher has the authority to enter into an agreement contrary to this statement. To be valid, such agreement must be specific, in writing and signed by the CEO/President/Publisher and you.

Equal Opportunity

The Company is committed to providing equal employment opportunity to all persons on the basis of merit, qualifications and competency, without regard to race, color, religion, sex (including actual or perceived pregnancy, childbirth or related medical conditions), sexual orientation, gender identity, gender, national origin, ancestry, age, physical or mental disability, legally protected medical condition, veteran status, marital status or on any other basis protected by state or federal laws. When necessary, the Company makes reasonable accommodations for disabled employees and for pregnant employees who request an accommodation upon the advice of their health care provider.

Employee Classifications

All employees are assigned to an employee status category based upon the needs of the Company. You will be advised of your status at the time of hire and at the time of any change in status. These classifications do not guarantee employment for any specified period of time. Regardless of your status, you are employed at will and your employment relationship can be terminated by you or the Company at any time, with or without cause.

> REGULAR FULL-TIME employees are those who are not in a temporary status and who are regularly scheduled to work the applicable full-time work week. Generally, they are eligible for the Company's benefit package subject to the terms, conditions and limitations of each benefit program.

Records/Employment

It is important that your personnel records be current and up to date. It is your responsibility to notify your supervisor and the Human Resources Department of any change in your name, address or telephone number, emergency contact or vehicle license plate numbers.

Information/Reference Requests

The Company will keep your personnel file confidential, and generally will not disclose the contents of the file without your written permission. However, there are certain times when information may be given to persons outside the Company. These include, by way of example only, in response to a subpoena, court order, or order of an administrative agency; in a legal action in which the Company and you are parties; to administer employee benefit plans; and/or to a prospective employer requesting a verification of your employment (in the latter case, the Company will provide only the dates of your employment, your last or present job title, and confirmation of the fact that you were/are employed by the Company). With your written approval, the Company will release salary information for credit purposes.

Communications

We think that good communication is important to help you do your job, understand the Company and be informed about Company operations, plans and objectives. To that end, we use a variety of employee publications and programs.

Open Door Policy

The Company is committed to maintaining a positive and pleasant environment in which to work. If you encounter work-related problems, you are encouraged to discuss the problems with your immediate supervisor or department manager as soon as possible. If the problems are not solved to your satisfaction at the department level, you should discuss the matter with your department Director, a Human Resources representative and/or the President/CEO. The Company encourages employees, without regard to their positon in the Company, to exercise their privilege of requesting a meeting with any management representative.

Mutual Arbitration of Claims

Although the San Diego Union Tribune believes that most work-related issues can be resolved informally, the Company recognizes that in some instances, it may be necessary to resolve disputes through the legal system. In order to resolve fairly and quickly any and all disputes that may arise, the Company has a mutual

arbitration policy. The following Mutual Arbitration Agreement between you and the Company (and its subsidiaries and affiliates) provides detailed information about the arbitration process.

A. Final and binding arbitration before a single, neutral arbitrator shall be the exclusive remedy for any "Covered Claim" (as that term is hereinafter defined). A "*Covered Claim*" is any claim (except a claim that by law is non-arbitrable) that arises between you and the Company, its past, present, and future: parent(s), subsidiaries, affiliates, and/or their respective past, present, and future: officers, directors and/or employees, including but not limited to claims arising and/or relating in any way to your hiring, your employment with, and/or the severance of your employment with, the Company. This agreement applies to successor entities without the need for a formal assignment by the Company. This agreement includes any Covered Claim brought against a third-party, including but not limited to any client(s) and/or vendor(s) of the Company, and this provision can be enforced by any such third-party through a motion to compel arbitration, to the extent necessary. Covered Claims include, but are not limited to, any claim for breach of contract, for any provision of state labor code or a Wage Order, for unpaid fees, expenses, wages, or overtime, for unpaid compensation or penalties for missed meal or rest breaks, for wrongful termination, for unfair competition, for discrimination, harassment, or unlawful retaliation, for violation of the Fair Labor Standards Act, and for violation of the California Labor Code Private Attorneys General Act of 2004 (the "*PAGA*") or any applicable similar laws, to the full extent permitted by applicable law. Covered Claims do not include claims for workers' compensation, unemployment compensation benefits, disputes covered by a collective bargaining agreement, claims for unfair labor practices covered by the National Labor Relations Act, claims for employee benefits covered by the Employee Retirement Income Securities Act ("*ERISA Plan*"), or claims that are not arbitrable as a matter of law. Covered Claims also do not include any claims that are currently pending in litigation prior to the signing of this agreement. For purposes of this agreement only, "currently pending in litigation" means that a lawsuit has been filed against and served upon the Company. As to any Covered Claim, each party waives to the maximum extent permitted by law the right to jury trial and to bench trial, and the right to bring, maintain, or participate in any class, collective, or representative proceeding, including but not limited to under the PAGA or any other applicable similar laws, whether in arbitration or otherwise, to the full extent permitted by applicable law. Further, Covered Claims must be brought in the individual capacity of the party asserting the claim, and cannot be maintained on a class, collective, or representative basis, to the full extent permitted by applicable law. The arbitrator does not have the authority to consider, certify, or hear an arbitration as a class action, collective action, or any other type of representative action.

B. Arbitration will occur in the county in the United States in which you reside at the time the claim is filed by any of the parties to this agreement. Arbitration will be conducted pursuant to the AAA Employment Arbitration Rules and Mediation Procedures (the "*AAA Rules*"), except as expressly set forth herein or where such rules are not in compliance with applicable state or federal law. A copy of the AAA

Gifts and Tipping

Every customer is entitled to efficient and courteous service. Therefore, employees are not allowed to accept tips or gifts of more than nominal value from customers, visitors or news sources.

Anti-Harassment/Discrimination.

The San Diego Union-Tribune is committed to providing a work environment free of sexual or any other form of unlawful harassment or discrimination. In furtherance of this commitment, the Company provides harassment and discrimination training to its employees.

Harassment or unlawful discrimination against individuals on the basis of age, race, national origin, religion, sex, sexual orientation, gender, gender identity, actual or perceived pregnancy, disability or any other classification protected by local, state, or federal laws is illegal and prohibited by San Diego Union-Tribune policy. Such conduct by or towards any employee, contract worker, customer, vendor or anyone else who does business with the Company will not be tolerated. Any employee or contract worker who violates this policy will be subject to disciplinary action, up to and including termination of his/her employment or engagement. To the extent a customer, vendor or other person with whom the Company does business engages in unlawful harassment or discrimination, the Company will take appropriate corrective action.

Specifically Prohibited Conduct.

Sexual or other unlawful harassment or discrimination includes any verbal, physical or visual conduct based on age, race, national origin, religion, sex, sexual orientation, gender, gender identity, actual or perceived pregnancy, disability or any other classification protected by local, state, or federal laws where:

(i) submission to such conduct is made either explicitly or implicitly a term or condition of an individual's employment or engagement;

(ii) submission to or rejection of such conduct by an individual is used as a basis for decisions concerning that individual's employment or engagement; or

(iii) it creates a hostile or offensive work environment.

Sexual harassment includes unwelcome sexual advances, requests for sexual favors and lewd, vulgar or obscene remarks, jokes, posters or cartoons, and any unwelcome touching, pinching or other physical contact. Other forms of unlawful harassment or discrimination may include racial epithets, slurs and derogatory remarks, stereotypes, jokes, posters or cartoons based on race, national origin, age, disability, marital status or other legally protected categories. Harassing behavior will not be tolerated at the Company.

Complaint Procedure.

Employees or contract workers who feel that they have been harassed or discriminated against, or who witness any harassment or discrimination by an employee, contract worker, customer, vendor or anyone else who does business with the Company, should immediately report such conduct to their supervisor, any other member of management or the Human Resources Department.

Do not allow an inappropriate situation to continue by not reporting it, regardless of who is creating the situation. No employee, contract worker, customer, vendor or other person who does business with this organization is exempt from the prohibitions in this policy. In response to every complaint, the San Diego Union-Tribune will conduct an investigation and, if improper conduct is found to have occurred, appropriate corrective action will be taken.

To the extent that an employee or contract worker is not satisfied with the Company's handling of a harassment or discrimination complaint, he or she may also contact the appropriate state or federal enforcement agency for legal relief. In California, the Department of Fair Employment and Housing can be contacted by consulting the government agency listings in the telephone book. The Department of Fair Employment and Housing will, in appropriate cases, prepare and investigate complaints of harassment or discrimination; after a hearing, the Fair Employment and Housing Commission may award damages to individuals actually injured as a result of such conduct, as well as other remedies.

Retaliation Prohibited.

Employees and contract workers are also protected by law from retaliation for opposing or reporting unlawful harassment or discrimination or for otherwise participating in processes connected with an investigation, proceeding or hearing conducted by the Company or a government agency with respect to such complaints. The Company will take disciplinary action up to and including the immediate termination of any employee who retaliates against another employee or contract worker for engaging in any of these protected activities. Contract workers will be subject to termination of their engagement with the Company for engaging in retaliation.

Please contact a member of the Human Resources Department if you have any questions about this policy or require further information on the subject of sexual or other harassment or discrimination.

Health/Safety

Your safety and good health are important to the Company. There are a number of programs and procedures in place to help maintain a safe work environment and encourage healthy life styles.

Illness or Injury on the Job

AT-WILL EMPLOYMENT AGREEMENT AND ACKNOWLEDGMENT OF RECEIPT OF EMPLOYEE HANDBOOK

I acknowledge that I have received a copy of the San Diego Union-Tribune's Employee Handbook issued April, 2015, which contains important information on the Company's policies, procedures and benefits, including the policies on Anti-Harassment/Discrimination and Confidentiality. I understand that I am responsible for familiarizing myself with the policies in this handbook and agree to comply with all rules applicable to me.

I understand and agree that the policies described in the handbook are intended as a guide only and do not constitute a contract of employment. I specifically understand and agree that the employment relationship between the San Diego Union-Tribune and me is at-will and can be terminated by the Company or me at any time, with or without cause or notice. Furthermore, the Company has the right to modify or alter my position, or impose any form of discipline it deems appropriate at any time. Nothing in this handbook is intended to modify the Company's policy of at-will employment. The at-will employment relationship may not be modified except by a specific written agreement signed by me and the CEO/President/Publisher of the Company. This is the entire agreement between the San Diego Union-Tribune and me regarding this subject. All prior or contemporaneous inconsistent agreements are superseded.

I understand that the San Diego Union-Tribune reserves the right to make changes to its policies, procedures or benefits at any time at its discretion. However, the at-will employment agreement can be modified only in the manner specified above. I further understand that the Company reserves the right to interpret its policies or to vary its procedures as it deems necessary or appropriate.

I have received the San Diego Union-Tribune's Employee Handbook issued April, 2015. I have read (or will read) and agree to abide by the policies and procedures contained in the handbook.

Dated:_____ _____

(signature)

_____

(printed name)

SDI-600236658v1

NOMINATIONS

WEDNESDAY, JULY 17, 2019

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

The committee met, pursuant to notice, at 3:05 p.m. in Room SD–419, Dirksen Senate Office Building, Hon. Lindsey Graham, presiding.

Present: Senators Graham [presiding], Gardner, Young, Shaheen, Coons, and Kaine.

OPENING STATEMENT OF HON. LINDSEY GRAHAM, U.S. SENATOR FROM SOUTH CAROLINA

Senator GRAHAM. Thank you. Sorry we are late. We had to vote.

My opening remarks will be very quick. I have been working with Senator Coons and many others, and Senator Kaine has a lot of interest in this. From an American point of view, our policies in Africa, we need to up our game, and it is a wonderful opportunity for the United States to be a better partner for the continent of Africa, a lot of opportunities, a lot of challenges. This is where the war against radical Islam is going to go, as you make it harder for them to reside in the Mideast. And I just cannot tell you how much I enjoyed visiting the continent. And each of you in your own way will be our voice, and I just hope you will understand that from American point of view, the 21st century, the big prize is trying to have a better relationship with Africa before the Chinese take the place over.

Senator Kaine?

STATEMENT OF HON. TIM KAINE, U.S. SENATOR FROM VIRGINIA

Senator KAINE. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

And it is good to be with each of you. Congratulations on your nominations.

This is my first time in the Senate where I am serving on the Africa Subcommittee, and I am really looking forward to learning from my colleagues and learning from you.

To Ambassador Leonard, Mr. Bell, and Ms. Lapenn, you have all recently left leadership positions in Africa to come here. Your careers in representing our country all over the world are very long and very impressive, and I am very appreciative of the opportunity and the experience that each of you bring from your service on the continent.

Ambassador Leonard served as our representative to the African Union in Addis Ababa and previously as Ambassador to Mali, as well as service in South Africa, Togo, Namibia, Cameroon.

Mr. Bell was charge d'affaires in N'Djamena in Chad, also having served in Niger, Ethiopia, Madagascar, and then at AFRICOM.

Ms. Lapenn, charge d'affaires in Pretoria, having also served in Rwanda, and this in addition to many other positions. And I want to acknowledge, Ms. Lapenn, you are a former Pearson Fellow on Capitol Hill with this committee, and I have a Pearson Fellow, Mimi Estes, behind me, and today is her last day before she goes back to the State Department. And it is a wonderful, and the State Department folks who are loaned as Pearson Fellows to the Hill—we could not get our work done without them.

To Ms. Bekkering, you have been doing the job for which you have been nominated in an acting capacity and we thank you for your service both to this administration and also to the administration of President George W. Bush. I look forward to sharing your insider's perspective on USAID operation and funding.

And finally, Ms. Marks, we look forward to hearing about your unique background and experience and your thoughts on the important U.S. relationship with South Africa.

Many challenges. Senator Graham addressed a few. I have heard him talk in the past and share his concern about instability in the Sahel and how that could pose a threat to the relative stability, good governance, and economic revival in Côte d'Ivoire. The African Union is an important body managing significant crises, numerous crises and conflicts affecting its members, and we need to figure out the right way to strategize to work in partnership going forward.

I think this is going to be a good hearing. I, again, congratulate each of you on your nomination and look forward to hearing your opening statements and moving to questions.

Senator GRAHAM. Thank you. That was a good overview.

You do not have to get sworn in, but do not lie.

[Laughter.]

Senator GRAHAM. All right. Ms. Marks, go ahead.

STATEMENT OF LANA MARKS, OF FLORIDA, TO BE AMBASSADOR EXTRAORDINARY AND PLENIPOTENTIARY OF THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA TO THE REPUBLIC OF SOUTH AFRICA

Ms. MARKS. Mr. Chairman, Ranking Member, distinguished members of the committee, I am honored to appear before you today as President Trump's nominee to be the next U.S. Ambassador to the Republic of South Africa. I am thankful to the President and to Secretary Pompeo for the confidence and trust they have placed in me through my nomination to this very important role.

My family is here with today, and I would like to thank my husband, Dr. Neville Marks, who has stood by my side for 43 years of marriage; my son, Martin Marks, for his tireless support throughout this process; and my amazing daughter, Tiffany Marks; my son-in-law Simon; and my grandchildren, Asher, Skyla, and Mia.

I am blessed in my family. For many reasons, we represent the American dream, one that has been achieved through hard work, determination, and perseverance.

My father was a good and fair man. He escaped the anti-Semitism of Lithuania in the 1930s and emigrated to South Africa where he worked his way through university, earned a degree in engineering, and then went into real estate development. When the apartheid laws came into effect, he realized that the values of his adopted country did not match the values he held dear.

I married my husband when I was 22 years old, and we moved to Bermuda where he established himself as a psychiatrist. When my husband was offered a professorship in America, we decided to leave everything behind for our new home. We settled in Miami where I started a small artisanal handbag business from the kitchen table of our two-bedroom apartment. In the last 15 years, I visited 110 countries as I grew that business into a global brand. I am honored to have served as a member of Harvard University's Kennedy School of government's Women's Leadership Board, as a distinguished speaker for Georgetown University's Women's Leadership Initiative, and to have represented the United States in Helsinki, Finland for the Women Business Leaders Summit.

In 1994, I became an American citizen. By coincidence, this is also the year that Nelson Mandela became President of South Africa. In just 25 years, the country of my birth has undergone a miraculous transformation through its peaceful transition away from the brutal apartheid regime and now stands as a pillar of democracy. It fills me with great personal pride to witness the legacy of Nelson Mandela in this remarkable evolution of South Africa.

South Africa has joined the ranks of the G–20 group of the world's most important economies, and it currently sits on the United Nations Security Council as an elected member. It has not only become an engine of economic growth for Africa and beyond, but also leads by example in the region, including by contributing over 1,000 troops to peacekeeping operations in the Democratic Republic of the Congo.

If confirmed, my top priority would undoubtedly be the safety and security of all Americans in South Africa, a priority enunciated by Secretary Pompeo. I would also work to further cultivate the already robust relationship the United States enjoys with South Africa, deepening both our government dialogue and our important trade and investment ties. South Africa is our most developed trading partner in sub-Saharan Africa. American firms contribute about 10 percent of South Africa's GDP, and I will work tirelessly to expand markets in South Africa for American businesses.

The ongoing battle against HIV and AIDS, which affects more than 7 and a half million South Africans, is one that we can win. Since 2004, Congress has appropriated more than $6 billion in funding through the U.S. President's Emergency Plan for AIDS Relief, or PEPFAR, just in South Africa. We should use the momentum of this generous funding and continued bipartisan support to put an end to the scourge of HIV and AIDS and to reach epidemic control by 2020.

The issues of women's and youth empowerment, entrepreneurship, and economic opportunities are ones that I personally hold

dear. The future of South Africa can be seen in the faces of its young citizens, and I will work tirelessly, if confirmed, to ensure that the prospects every person deserves should not be out of reach for any South African.

I have witnessed both the struggles and the triumphs of the land that Archbishop Desmond Tutu called "the rainbow nation." After centuries of hardship and colonialism, South Africa has embraced democratic ideals and serves as a beacon of hope for the rest of Africa. It is further heartening to see the recent election of President Ramaphosa. In this renewed era of democracy, we must reinforce that we are true partners on the road ahead.

There are deep, longstanding, and genuine ties of affection that bind Americans and South Africans. If confirmed, I would be deeply honored to use my knowledge and skills to strengthen these ties.

Thank you for the honor and privilege of allowing me to appear before the committee today. I welcome your questions.

[The prepared statement of Ms. Marks follows:]

PREPARED STATEMENT OF LANA J. MARKS

Mr Chairman, Ranking Member, distinguished members of the committee: I am honored to appear before you today as President Trump's nominee to be the next U.S. Ambassador to the Republic of South Africa. I am thankful to the President and to Secretary Pompeo for the confidence and trust they have placed in me through my nomination to this very important role.

My family is here with me today, and I would like to thank my husband, Dr. Neville Marks, who has stood by my side for 43 years of marriage; my son, Martin Marks, for his tireless support throughout this process; my amazing daughter, Tiffany Isaacs; my son-in-law, Simon; and my grandchildren, Asher, Skyla, and Mia.

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In 1994, I became an American citizen. By coincidence, this was also the year that Nelson Mandela became president of South Africa. In just 25 years, the country of my birth has undergone a miraculous transformation through its peaceful transition away from the brutal apartheid regime, and now stands as a pillar of democracy. It fills me with great personal pride to witness the legacy of Nelson Mandela in this remarkable evolution of South Africa.

South Africa has joined the ranks of the G-20 group of the world's most important economies, and it currently sits on the United Nations Security Council as an elected member. It has not only become an engine of economic growth for Africa and beyond, but also leads by example in the region, including by contributing over 1,000 troops to peacekeeping operations in the Democratic Republic of the Congo.

If confirmed, I will work to encourage the government of South Africa to continue its leadership in the region, including by promoting respect for human rights and good governance.

If confirmed, my top priority would undoubtedly be the safety and security of all Americans in South Africa, a priority well-enunciated by Secretary Pompeo. I would also work to further cultivate the already robust relationship the United States en-

joys with South Africa, deepening both our government dialogue and our important trade and investment ties. South Africa is our most developed trading partner in sub-Saharan Africa; deepening those ties would directly support one of the Administration's key objectives in the Africa Strategy. Considering that American firms already contribute about 10 percent of South Africa's GDP and employ about 200,000 South Africans in direct and indirect positions, I will work tirelessly to expand markets in South Africa for American exporters and ensure our businesses and products are treated fairly.

The ongoing battle against HIV and AIDS, which affects more than seven and a half million South Africans, is one that we can win. Since 2004, Congress has appropriated more than $6 billion in funding through the U.S. President's Emergency Plan for AIDS Relief, or PEPFAR, just in South Africa. We should use the momentum of this generous funding and continued bipartisan support to put an end to the scourge of HIV and AIDS once and for all. If confirmed, I will work intensively with our PEPFAR team and our South African partners and the government to ensure our funding is applied in the most efficient and effective ways possible to reach epidemic control by 2020.

The issues of women's and youth empowerment, entrepreneurship, and economic opportunities are ones that I personally hold dear. The future of South Africa can be seen in the faces of its young citizens, and I will work tirelessly, if confirmed, to ensure that the prospects every person deserves should not be out of reach for any South African.

I have witnessed both the struggles and the triumphs of the land that Archbishop Desmond Tutu called "the rainbow nation." After centuries of hardship and colonialism, South Africa has embraced democratic ideals, and serves as a beacon of hope for the rest of Africa. It is further heartening to see the recent election of President Ramaphosa. In this renewed era of democracy, we must reinforce our message to the South African people that we are true partners on the road ahead.

There are deep, long-standing, and genuine ties of affection that bind Americans and South Africans. If confirmed, I would be deeply honored to use my knowledge and skills to strengthen these ties.

Thank you for the honor and privilege of allowing me to appear before the committee today. I welcome your questions.

STATEMENT OF JESSICA E. LAPENN, OF NEW YORK, A CAREER MEMBER OF THE SENIOR FOREIGN SERVICE, CLASS OF MINISTER–COUNSELOR, TO BE REPRESENTATIVE OF THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA TO THE AFRICAN UNION, WITH THE RANK AND STATUS OF AMBASSADOR EXTRAORDINARY AND PLENIPOTENTIARY

Ms. LAPENN. Mr. Chairman, Ranking Member Kaine, distinguished members of the Senate Foreign Relations Committee, thank you for this opportunity to appear before you today. I am honored to be the President's nominee for the position of U.S. Ambassador to the African Union and Representative to the United Nations Economic Commission for Africa. I am grateful for the trust and confidence the President and Secretary Pompeo have placed in me. If confirmed, I pledge to work with you to advance our nation's interests at these institutions.

My parents, Joyce and Jim Lapenn, are with me today, as they have been every step of my almost 25 years in the Foreign Service. In country after country, they have visited me, often volunteering in local organizations, helping me more fully reflect American values of service, of generosity, and partnership.

I am not joined today by my 10-year-old son Jasper, though he has fully shared in my Foreign Service life. He was born in Jerusalem and has spent almost half his life on the African continent. He is not here because he is reconnecting to American life at summer camp in New Hampshire.

I entered the Foreign Service for both the "foreign" and the "service." I was attracted by the prospects of foreign experiences and by the opportunities for meaningful service, and I have found both in equal measure. Across my posts, I have had the privilege to represent, to advance vital American security, political, and economic interests. From Jerusalem to Johannesburg, I have strived to do so in a way that communicated shared American values and in service to the American people. If confirmed by this body, my tenure in Addis would be defined and shaped by those experiences.

The African Union is a unique and influential forum. It brings together 55 member states to discuss and take action on the continent's foremost issues and to formulate and establish standards by which all members can hold each other accountable. It is a forum where our voice needs to be heard.

If confirmed, I would focus on three key priorities: expanding trade and investment; advancing peace and security; and supporting democracy, human rights, and good governance across the continent.

Africa is, in part, defined by its youthful population. Economic transformation is essential to ensure that this is an asset, not a vulnerability. The private sector can generate the jobs that young Africans need and want. By helping American business and investment succeed in Africa, we can foster prosperity on the continent, as well as here at home. From the passage by this body the BUILD Act to the recent rollout of Prosper Africa, the United States has expanded its toolkit for economic engagement. We have done so in stark contrast to the more predatory and debt diplomacy of others.

The recent establishment of the African Continental Free Trade Area, or AfCFTA, represents an exciting opportunity for African governments to reduce trade barriers and increase trade and investment. The AU will be at the center of its implementation. If confirmed, I will focus on creating opportunities for U.S. business and expanding U.S.-Africa trade and investment.

My second priority, if confirmed, will be advancing peace and security. Fragility, ongoing conflicts threaten global and national security. The African Union has made significant strides to prevent, respond to, and resolve armed conflict and counter transnational threats. Over the past decade plus, the AU, sub-regional organizations, and member states have played a key role as first responders to regional conflicts, and we have been with them throughout. If confirmed, I will continue building and integrating the AU's counterterrorism and conflict prevention capabilities.

Finally, if confirmed, I will work with the AU to encourage democracy and good governance practices, which are so critical for peace, security, and sustained economic growth. Our shared commitment to democratic principles, including open and accountable governance, credible elections, peaceful transitions of power and respect for human rights and the rule of law—these are the very foundation of the U.S.-AU relationship.

The outstanding USAU team has been dedicated to partnering with the African Union and its member states to ensure a secure and prosperous future and to deepening U.S.-African ties. If confirmed, I look forward to leading their efforts.

Mr. Chairman, Ranking Member Kaine, members of the committee, thank you again for this opportunity. I look forward to your questions.

[The prepared statement of Ms. Lapenn follows:]

PREPARED STATEMENT OF JESSICA LAPENN

Mr. Chairman, Ranking Member, distinguished members of the Foreign Relations Committee, thank you for the opportunity to appear before you today. I am honored to be the President's nominee for the position of the U.S. Ambassador to the African Union and Representative to the United Nations Economic Commission for Africa. I am grateful for the trust and confidence the President and Secretary Pompeo have placed in me. If confirmed, I pledge to work with you to advance our nation's interests at these institutions.

My parents, Joyce and Jim Lapenn, are with me today—as they have been every step of my career for the last almost twenty-five years. In country after country, they have visited me and often volunteered in local organizations, helping me to more fully reflect American values of service, generosity, and partnership.

I'm not joined today by my ten-year-old son Jasper, who has fully shared in my Foreign Service life. Indeed, he has lived more than half his life on the African continent. Unfortunately for me, Jasper isn't here because he's at summer camp, reconnecting to American life.

Today is significant for me. I entered the Foreign Service for both the "Foreign" and the "Service." I was attracted by the prospects of foreign experiences and by the opportunities for meaningful service, and I have found both in equal measure over nearly a quarter of a century in posts in the Middle East, the United Nations, Washington, DC, and Africa. Across my posts, I have had the privilege to represent and advance vital American security, economic, and political interests. From Jerusalem to Johannesburg, I have strived to do so in a way that communicated shared American values and in service to the American people. If confirmed by this body, my service in Addis Ababa would be defined and shaped by these experiences.

The African Union (AU) is a unique and influential forum that brings together all 55 member states to discuss and take action on the continent's foremost issues, and to formulate and establish standards by which all members can hold each other accountable. It is a forum where our voice needs to be heard.

If confirmed, I would focus on three key priorities: expanding trade and investment opportunities; advancing peace and security; and supporting democracy, human rights, and good governance across the continent.

One of Africa's greatest assets is its youth. An estimated 70 percent of sub-Saharan Africa's population is under the age of 30. Economic transformation is essential to ensure that Africa's youth is an asset, not a vulnerability.

Only the private sector can generate the jobs that young Africans need and want. By helping American business and investment succeed in Africa, we can foster prosperity on the continent and here at home. From the passage by this body of the BUILD Act to the recent rollout of Prosper Africa, the United States has expanded its tool-kit for economic engagement with Africa, and we have done so in stark contrast to the more predatory debt diplomacy of other countries.

The recent establishment of the African Continental Free Trade Area (AfCFTA) represents an exciting opportunity for African governments to reduce trade barriers and increase trade and investment, and the AU will be at the center of its implementation. If confirmed, my leadership of the U.S. Mission to the African Union will focus on building bridges between the U.S. and African private sectors, reducing barriers to American investment, and fostering entrepreneurship to deepen and expand U.S.-Africa trade and investment.

If confirmed, I will also prioritize advancing peace and security. Fragility and ongoing conflicts in Africa threaten global and U.S. national security. They stifle economic growth, enable the spread of radical extremism and pandemic disease, and trigger destabilizing migration flows. The African Union has made significant strides to prevent, respond to, and resolve armed conflict and to counter transnational threats. Over the past decade plus, the AU, sub-regional organizations, and AU member states have played a key role as first responders to regional conflicts, and we have been with them throughout. We have provided capacity building in peacekeeping and counterterrorism and supported almost all current and past AU-sanctioned operations. Because of U.S. support, Africans now comprise more than 60 percent of peacekeepers on the continent, up from 40 percent just ten years ago. If confirmed, I intend to continue building and integrating the AU's counterterrorism and conflict prevention capabilities.

Finally, if confirmed, I will work with the AU to encourage democracy and good governance practices, which are critical for peace, security, and sustained economic growth. Our shared commitment to democratic principles—including open and accountable governance; credible elections and peaceful transitions of power; respect for human rights and the rule of law; and expanding access to justice—are the foundation of the United States and African Union's excellent relationship. If confirmed, I will work to facilitate frank dialogue around these goals—which will necessarily entail communicating clearly to AU members the need for inclusive and transparent democratic processes that include civil society and youth participation.

The outstanding USAU team in Addis is dedicated to partnering with the African Union and its member states to ensure a secure and prosperous future for the continent's 1.3 billion people and to deepening U.S.-African ties. If confirmed, I will look forward to leading their efforts.

Mr. Chairman, Ranking Member, and members of the committee, thank you again for the opportunity to appear before you today. I look forward to answering your questions.

STATEMENT OF RICHARD K. BELL, OF PENNSYLVANIA, A CAREER MEMBER OF THE SENIOR FOREIGN SERVICE, CLASS OF COUNSELOR, TO BE AMBASSADOR EXTRAORDINARY AND PLENIPOTENTIARY OF THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA TO THE REPUBLIC OF COTE D'IVOIRE

Mr. BELL. Mr. Chairman, Ranking Member, distinguished members of the committee, I am honored and humbled to appear before you today and I am grateful to the President and Secretary Pompeo for the confidence they have placed in me as their nominee to be the next U.S. Ambassador to the Republic of Côte d'Ivoire. If confirmed, I will dedicate myself to furthering this important bilateral relationship and advancing America's interests in Côte d'Ivoire.

I would like to thank my parents, Bill and Cathy Bell, who gave my brothers and me an enriching upbringing on three continents, an unwavering example of integrity, humility, and grace, and a love for our country that our international experiences only served to strengthen. My brothers, Mark and Paul, have been inspiring me for decades.

I am the proud father of Annis and Will and so grateful to their mother Vicky, without whom I probably never would have joined the Foreign Service.

I would like to say a special thanks to Ambassador Don Yamamoto, currently our Ambassador in Somalia. When he was running the Africa Bureau, he really went above and beyond advocating for an ambassadorship for me.

I would also like to note the presence of Ms. Hannah Ingleton, the desk officer for Côte d'Ivoire, who has done such a fine job preparing me for this hearing.

In my 28 years as a Foreign Service officer, I have had the privilege of serving on or near four continents, including three full tours in Africa: Madagascar, Ethiopia, and Niger where I was charge d'affaires for a year. Since September, I have been serving as the charge d'affaires in Chad.

Côte d'Ivoire has seen immense success since 2011 after emerging from civil conflict and is once again an engine of growth in West Africa. The country went from negative growth and stagnation during a decade-long conflict to real GDP growth of 7 to 9 percent annually since 2012. Côte d'Ivoire is the world's largest exporter of cocoa beans and raw cashews and one of the best performing economies in the world. The U.S. government is supporting

the Ivoirians in this growth. In 2017, a $525 million Millennium Challenge Corporation Compact was signed to support the country's education and transportation sectors. In addition, in December 2018, Secretary of Commerce Wilbur Ross and the foreign minister of Côte d'Ivoire signed a memorandum of understanding which aims to help U.S. companies increase investment in Côte d'Ivoire. And Côte d'Ivoire will host the 2019 African Growth and Opportunity Act Annual Forum in Abidjan next month.

Côte d'Ivoire is the United States' largest Francophone Africa trading partner, and the United States imports 15 percent of Côte d'Ivoire's cocoa. Almost every M&M and Snickers bar that Mars sells here in the United States contains Ivoirian cocoa. I am aware of concerns about child labor in the cocoa sector and know that the embassy is working closely with the Ivoirian government, NGOs, and the chocolate industry to address these concerns. Much of our engagement with Côte d'Ivoire addresses factors that can contribute to child labor. We are thus active in supporting women's economic empowerment, improving access to education, and improving health services. Our efforts to increase law enforcement capacity will help Côte d'Ivoire deal with those who use child labor and exploit children in forced labor.

Côte d'Ivoire aims to become an emerging economy by 2020, but to meet this goal, the country must sustain its impressive economic growth, distribute benefits more broadly, improve government services, strengthen democratic institutions, improve security sector governance, and conduct free and credible elections in 2020.

A strong democracy, political inclusiveness, and reconciliation will be necessary to solidify Côte d'Ivoire's economic success and ensure the country does not fall back into civil conflict. If confirmed, I will work with the government of Côte d'Ivoire to strengthen governance, enhance transparency, and become increasingly responsive to citizen needs. I will also support democratic institutions and advocate for 2020 presidential elections that are free, fair, and thus credibly reflect the will of the Ivoirian people.

Thank you, Mr. Chairman, Ranking Member, and distinguished members of the committee, for this opportunity to appear before you. The Ivoirian people from the president and his government to the humblest cocoa farmers are friends of America. If confirmed, I will strive to keep it that way, to reinforce our interests in a stable, prosperous, and peaceful Côte d'Ivoire. I warmly welcome any questions.

[The prepared statement of Mr. Bell follows:]

PREPARED STATEMENT OF RICHARD BELL

Mr. Chairman, Ranking Member, and distinguished members of the committee, I am humbled to have been selected to appear before you today and am grateful to the President and Secretary Pompeo for the confidence they have placed in me as their nominee to be the next U.S. Ambassador to the Republic of Côte d'Ivoire. If confirmed, I will dedicate myself to furthering this important bilateral relationship, and advancing America's interests in Côte d'Ivoire.

I would like to thank my parents, Bill and Cathy Bell, who gave my brothers and me an enriching upbringing on three continents, an unwavering example of integrity, humility and grace, and a love for our country that our international experiences only served to strengthen. My brothers Mark and Paul have been inspiring me for decades. I am the proud father of Annis and Will, and so grateful to their mother Vicky, without whom I probably never would have joined the Foreign Serv-

ice. I would also like to thank Ambassador Don Yamamoto, now our ambassador to Somalia: when he was running the Africa Bureau of the State Department, he went above and beyond in advocating for an ambassadorship for me.

In my twenty-eight years as a Foreign Service Officer, I've had the privilege of serving on or near four continents, including three full tours in Africa: Madagascar, Ethiopia, and Niger—where I was Chargé d'Affaires for a year. Since September 2018, I've been serving as the Chargé d'Affaires in Chad. Not coincidentally, three of those African postings were in Francophone countries, where I was able to put my French fluency to good use. I look forward to getting to know personally the "jewel of West Africa," Côte d'Ivoire.

Côte d'Ivoire has seen immense success since 2011, after emerging from civil conflict, and is once again an engine of growth in West Africa. The country went from negative growth and stagnation during a decade-long conflict, to real GDP growth of seven to nine percent annually since 2012. Côte d'Ivoire is the world's largest exporter of cocoa beans and raw cashews, and one of the best-performing economies in the world. The U.S. government is supporting the Ivoirians in this growth. In 2017, a 525 million dollar Millennium Challenge Corporation Compact was signed to support the country's education and transportation sectors. In addition, in December 2018, Secretary of Commerce Wilbur Ross and the Foreign Minister of Côte d'Ivoire signed a memorandum of understanding which aims to help U.S. companies increase investment in Côte d'Ivoire. Côte d'Ivoire will host the 2019 African Growth and Opportunity Act Annual Forum in Abidjan this August.

Côte d'Ivoire is the United States' largest Francophone Africa trading partner, and the United States imports 15 percent of Côte d'Ivoire's cocoa. Almost every M&M and Snickers bar that Mars sells here in the United States contains Ivoirian cocoa. I am aware of concerns about child labor in the cocoa sector and know that the Embassy is working closely with the Ivoirian government, NGOs and the chocolate industry to address these concerns. Much of our engagement with Côte d'Ivoire addresses factors that can contribute to child labor. We are thus active in supporting women's economic empowerment, improving access to education, and improving health services. Our efforts to increase law-enforcement capacity will help Côte d'Ivoire deal with those who use child labor and exploit children in forced labor.

Energy and economic growth are key areas of engagement for the U.S.-Ivoirian relationship. USAID supports the expansion of the Power Africa initiative to Côte d'Ivoire, with a focus on helping the Ivoirian government's program to increase connectivity to the national power grid, especially in rural areas. In 2019, the U.S. Trade and Development Agency approved three feasibility-study projects in biomass, hydro, and smart grid. USAID is implementing a Trade Africa program that includes promoting regional trade in key value chains under the Ivoirian national export strategy.

If confirmed, I will support Côte d'Ivoire's economic efforts to achieve inclusive growth through a diversified, modern economy. I would encourage Côte d'Ivoire to create an environment that is even more conducive to private-sector-led growth and that creates employment opportunities for its people, including women and youth.

Côte d'Ivoire aims to become an emerging economy by 2020, but to meet this goal the country must sustain its impressive economic growth, distribute benefits more broadly, improve government services, strengthen democratic institutions, improve security sector governance, and conduct free and credible elections in 2020.

Our Embassy is actively promoting good governance and respect for human rights in Côte d'Ivoire. USAID, for example, supports an increasingly capable, professional, and organized civil society and media active across the political landscape. USAID focuses on strengthening the electoral process and encouraging greater voter participation, particularly among youth and women, urgent needs in the lead-up to the 2020 presidential election.

A strong democracy, political inclusiveness, and reconciliation will be necessary to solidify Côte d'Ivoire's economic success and ensure the country does not fall back into civil conflict. If confirmed, I will work with the government of Côte d'Ivoire to strengthen governance, enhance transparency, and become increasingly responsive to citizen needs. I will also support democratic institutions and advocate for 2020 presidential elections that are free, fair, and thus credibly reflect the will of the Ivoirian people.

I would also continue U.S. support for the Ivoirian people through our significant investments in Health. U.S. global health assistance is by far the largest area of U.S. development assistance in Côte d'Ivoire, programmed through multiple U.S. agencies, including CDC, USAID and DoD. The U.S. government, through the President's Emergency Plan for AIDS Relief (PEPFAR), supports the majority of Côte d'Ivoire's national HIV response, nearly $1.6 billion since 2004 in assistance pro-

vided by the United States to help Côte d'Ivoire achieve control and eventual elimination of its HIV/AIDS epidemic.

Côte d'Ivoire is entering a critical phase in its post-conflict recovery process. The country will need strong support and smart bilateral cooperation from the United States and other international partners to consolidate the democratic and economic gains it has made since the end, in 2011, of more than a decade of conflict. With the right support, Côte d'Ivoire will serve as an engine for economic growth and a model for private-sector-led development in West Africa. We are expanding our security cooperation with Côte d'Ivoire—a troop-contributing country to the U.N. peacekeeping mission in neighboring Mali—to strengthen its capacity to play a crucial stabilizing role in a region that is increasingly at risk due to terrorism and other transnational threats.

Thank you, Mr. Chairman, Ranking Member, and distinguished members of the committee for this opportunity to appear before you. The Ivoirian people—from the president and his government to the humblest cocoa farmers—are friends of America. If confirmed, I will strive to keep it that way, to reinforce our interests in a stable, prosperous and peaceful Côte d'Ivoire. I warmly welcome any questions.

STATEMENT OF HON. MARY BETH LEONARD, OF MASSACHUSETTS, A CAREER MEMBER OF THE SENIOR FOREIGN SERVICE, CLASS OF MINISTER–COUNSELOR, TO BE AMBASSADOR EXTRAORDINARY AND PLENIPOTENTIARY OF THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA TO THE FEDERAL REPUBLIC OF NIGERIA

Ambassador LEONARD. Mr. Chairman, Ranking Member, distinguished members of the committee, I am so deeply honored to appear before you today as the nominee to be the next U.S. Ambassador to the Republic of Nigeria.

I would like to thank my family, who are with me through the miracle of live-streaming, and I would also like to thank some Foreign Service family who are here today, including among my most cherished mentors, Ambassador Johhny Young and Terry McCulley, who was a distinguished past Ambassador in both Nigeria and Côte d'Ivoire.

I am grateful to President Trump and Secretary Pompeo for the trust and confidence they have shown in nominating me for this position. If confirmed, I will strive to marshal the experiences from over 2 decades of African postings in a 31-year Foreign Service career, including two tours as chief of mission. As U.S. Ambassador in Mali, I addressed converging issues of governance and security. In my current assignment as Ambassador to the African Union, I have regularly witnessed Nigeria's diplomatic heft and agility, as well as regional coordination to address its security challenges. If confirmed, I look forward to working closely with members of the committee and your staffs to promote and protect U.S. interests with Nigeria.

Nigeria is a country of many paradoxes. Its vast oil revenues help fuel a huge economy. Yet corruption and failures of governance have blocked meaningful health services, educational opportunities, and prosperity for too many of its citizens. Serious security challenges stand in counterpoint to vibrant entrepreneurs and cultural achievements. The challenge for the U.S. relationship with this strategically important partner is how Nigeria can successfully validate its inestimable promise for peace and prosperity for its citizens and the broader region. President Buhari shares our priorities of expanding economic growth, increasing security, and countering corruption. If confirmed, I will be committed to harnessing

U.S. diplomacy, foreign assistance, and the ingenuity and appeal of the U.S. private sector to partner with Nigeria toward these goals.

Nigeria is our second largest trading partner on the continent with over $8 billion in two-way trading. In President Trump's April 2018 meeting with President Buhari at the White House, the first African head of state to be welcomed there, he emphasized the potential for expanded U.S.-Nigerian trade. That is why the U.S. government welcomes Nigeria's recent decision to sign on to the African Continental Free Trade Area. As I have stated often in my role as Ambassador to the AU, by opening African markets and lowering barriers to trade and investment, this agreement can pave the way for increased U.S.-Africa trade. If confirmed, I would look to harness U.S. tools ranging from the African Growth and Opportunity Act to the coming Development Finance Corporation's increased budget for insurance, loans and loan guarantees, and equity investments to promote our mutual prosperity.

Nigerians in nearly all of the country's 36 states are plagued by insecurity, from terrorism in the northeast to militant attacks and maritime piracy in the south, to inter-communal violence, kidnapping and crime across the country. Vice President Pence and Nigerian Vice President Osinbajo discussed these security challenges as well as ways to better protect citizens during their June 26 White House meeting. If confirmed, I will keep firmly in mind our long-term goal of a more operationally capable and professional military and police services that respect human rights, protect civilians, and hold those responsible for abuses and violations to account, as only such forces can truly deliver security to the people of Nigeria.

Escalating inter-communal conflict is frequently based in resource competition, but inflamed by conflation of ethnic and religious overlays. If confirmed, I will work to ensure the U.S. government helps Nigeria address these conflicts' root causes, enhance the security and justice sector response, and support Nigerian inter-faith efforts.

Nigeria needs to build trust between the government and its people to succeed in fulfilling its great promise and to strengthen its democracy. A large share of our roughly $500 million annual bilateral assistance portfolio targets Nigerian human capital to create a more productive and stable African partner. Nigeria's 2015 elections contributed to positive democratic trends in much of West Africa, and despite some flaws, the 2019 elections demonstrated Nigeria's commitment to improving its democracy. If confirmed, as Nigeria passes the 20-year mark of a return to democratic rule, I will ensure the United States continues to be a stalwart partner of the Nigerian people as they work to solidify their country's place a democratic leader in Africa.

Mr. Chairman, Ranking Member, members of the committee, I would be honored to be confirmed to the privilege of directing the U.S. relationship with Nigeria. I thank you for this opportunity to appear before you, and I look forward to your questions.

[The prepared statement of Ambassador Leonard follows:]

PREPARED STATEMENT OF MARY BETH LEONARD

Mr. Chairman, Ranking Member, and distinguished members of the committee, I am so deeply honored to appear before you today as the nominee to serve as the U.S. Ambassador to the Federal Republic of Nigeria. I would like to thank my family, of both the actual and Foreign Service trees, who are with me in spirit and virtually through the magic of live streaming.

Indeed, the list of prior U.S. ambassadors to Nigeria includes many of my most valued mentors and professional idols in the Foreign Service, and I am grateful to President Trump and Secretary Pompeo for the trust and confidence they have shown in nominating me for this position. Having completed seven tours in Africa and two domestic Africa-related assignments in the course of my 31-year Foreign Service career, if confirmed I will strive to marshal these experiences to follow successfully in their storied footsteps. As U.S. Ambassador in Mali, I addressed converging issues of governance and security; in my current assignment as Ambassador to the African Union, I have regularly witnessed Nigeria's diplomatic heft and agility, as well as regional coordination to address its security challenges. If confirmed, I look forward to working closely with members of the committee and your staffs to promote and protect U.S. interests with Nigeria.

With the continent's largest population, democracy, and economy, Nigeria fully merits the sobriquet of "Africa's giant," and our relationship with Nigeria is arguably the most important one in sub-Saharan Africa. It is no understatement to say that overarching U.S. policy priorities for Africa in trade, counter-terrorism, good governance, human rights, and responsible use of U.S. government resources can only be met if we meet them in Nigeria.

As I began my preparations for the confirmation process, I was struck by the depth of passion evinced by those who follow Nigeria's many paradoxes. Its vast oil revenues help fuel a huge economy, yet corruption and failures of governance have blocked meaningful health services, educational opportunities, prosperity, and access to justice for too many of its citizens. Security challenges including communal violence and terrorism stand in counterpoint to wellsprings of vibrant entrepreneurs and cultural achievements in film, literature, and academia more broadly. The challenge for this strategically important partner—and the U.S. relationship with it—is how Nigeria can successfully validate its inestimable promise for peace and prosperity for its own citizens and the broader region. President Buhari, recently elected to a second term, shares our priorities of expanding economic growth, increasing security, and countering corruption. If confirmed, I will be committed to harnessing U.S. diplomacy, foreign assistance, and the ingenuity and appeal of the U.S. private sector to partner with Nigeria toward these goals.

Nigeria is our second-largest trading partner in Africa with over $8 billion in total trade in goods in 2018; hundreds of U.S. companies do business in Nigeria. President Trump in his meeting with President Buhari at the White House in April 2018—the first African head of state he welcomed there—emphasized the potential for expanded U.S.-Nigerian trade. By adopting more market-oriented economic policies, improving infrastructure and the investment climate, and tackling corruption, the government of Nigeria can present great opportunities for both of our countries. That is why the U.S. government welcomes Nigeria's recent decision to sign on to the African Continental Free Trade Area. As I've stated often in my role as Ambassador to the African Union, by opening African markets and lowering barriers to trade and investment, this agreement can pave the way for increased U.S.-Africa trade. If confirmed, I would look to harness U.S. tools—from existing ones like the African Growth and Opportunity Act and our hard-working Foreign Commercial and Agriculture Service Officers—to newer ones like Prosper Africa and the Development Finance Cooperation's increased budget for insurance, loans and loan guarantees, and equity investments to promote our mutual prosperity.

Nigerians in nearly all of the country's 36 states are plagued by insecurity: terrorism in the Northeast, banditry and inter-communal conflict in the Northwest and Middle Belt, militant attacks in the Niger Delta, maritime crime and piracy in the Gulf of Guinea, and kidnapping and criminal gangs throughout the country. Vice President Pence and Nigerian Vice President Osinbajo discussed these security challenges as well as ways to better protect civilians during their June 26 White House meeting. Nigeria is working with its neighbors to improve the stability of the Lake Chad Basin, counter Boko Haram, and put down the attempted rise of ISIS- West Africa. If confirmed, I will keep firmly in mind our long-term goal of a more operationally capable and professional Nigerian military and police services that respect human rights, protect civilians, and hold those responsible for abuses and violations to account, as only these kinds of security forces can truly deliver security to the people of Nigeria. The Nigerian government must continue to work to ensure that

the almost eight million people still reliant on humanitarian assistance can safely return to their communities and restart their livelihoods. Separately, I have also been alarmed by reports of escalating farmer-herder and inter-communal conflict frequently based in resource competition, but enflamed by conflation of ethnic and religious overlays. If confirmed, I will work to ensure the U.S. government is using its full range of tools to help Nigerians address these conflicts' root causes, enhance security and justice sector response, and support Nigerian inter-faith and inter-communal efforts.

Nigeria's ability to succeed in fulfilling its inestimable promise depends heavily on building trust between the government and its people, as well as strengthening its democracy and respect for human rights. A large share of our almost $520 million FY 2018 bilateral assistance portfolio helps Nigeria build human capital, fight poverty and promote health, and it creates a more productive and stable African partner. Youth employment and education for women and girls are also key elements of these efforts. Nigeria's 2015 elections contributed to a positive West African trend toward increasingly democratic elections and peaceful transfers of power.

Despite some flaws, the 2019 elections demonstrated Nigeria's commitment to improving its democracy. As it passes the 20-year mark of a return to democratic rule, I, if confirmed, will ensure the United States continues to be a stalwart partner of the Nigerian people as they work to solidify their country's place as a democratic leader in Africa.

Nigeria's regional and global impact is enormous, and its dynamic people are the greatest asset of a nation whose resources are equal in scale to its considerable challenges. Like Americans, Nigerians are hard-working, inventive, and entrepreneurial. Nigeria's youth are fueling exceptional endeavors in areas from Information Technology to agriculture, offering the promise of the opportunities the country will need to meet the challenge of its youthful demographics. If confirmed to the privilege of directing the U.S. relationship with Africa's giant, I look forward to channeling our own nation's dynamism with the full range of our diplomatic, assistance, and commercial tools to support Nigeria toward the prosperity and security on which our and the continent's shared futures depend.

Mr. Chairman, Ranking Member, members of the committee, I thank you for this opportunity to appear before you, and I look forward to your questions.

STATEMENT OF MICHELLE A. BEKKERING, OF THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA, TO BE AN ASSISTANT ADMINISTRATOR OF THE UNITED STATES AGENCY FOR INTERNATIONAL DEVELOPMENT, ECONOMIC POLICY, ECONOMIC GROWTH, EDUCATION, AND ENVIRONMENT

Ms. BEKKERING. Senator Graham, Ranking Member Kaine, distinguished members of the committee, I am honored to appear before you today as the President's nominee for Assistant Administrator for Economic Growth, Education and Environment at the U.S. Agency for International Development.

I would like to start by thanking President Trump and Administrator Mark Green for their support and confidence in my ability to serve in this role.

I would also like to thank E3's Acting Assistant Administrator Carrie Thompson and the entire E3 management team for their outstanding leadership.

I am pleased to be joined here today by my friends and colleagues who took the time to come and cheer me on. I want to especially note Eddy Acevedo, Casey Redmon, Curtrice Dorsey, Elizabeth Montgomery, and Ranta Russell, who have shepherded me throughout this nomination process.

I also want to recognize my parents, family, and friends back home in Iowa who are here with me in spirit and watching this via video stream.

And most importantly, I would like to thank my husband Mark and our 4-year-old daughter Hadley who are here with me today.

This moment was made possible because of your love, encouragement and support, and for that I thank you.

My career path has uniquely prepared me for this position. I have had the pleasure of serving at USAID for the past 2 years, and I share Administrator Green's mission and vision for international development and the values this agency holds dear. Prior to joining USAID, I spent 12 years at the International Republican Institute, or IRI, which is an international democracy development organization dedicated to promoting democracy and freedom across the world. I carried out assignments in both Washington, as well as in the field, which provided me with a greater appreciation and understanding of how to work with our partners to foster locally led development and achieve sustainable impact in our shared development goals.

If confirmed, I will also bring my previous U.S. government experience to this position. I spent several years working in the House of Representatives, and during the Bush administration, I worked in the European and Eurasian Affairs Directorate of the National Security Council. If confirmed, I look forward to working closely with Congress to advance our shared priorities in a bipartisan manner.

This professional experience will serve me well if I am confirmed as Assistant Administrator for E3. The E3 Bureau is a complex portfolio of offices that cut across all aspects of our development work to tackle the key challenges that inhibit a country's ability to meet its development goals. We do this by providing technical leadership, research, and field support to our regional missions across the world.

If confirmed, I will focus on the following priority areas.

Economic growth and trade. We will continue to help our partner countries catalyze and sustain growth while building their capacity to mobilize and manage domestic resources in an effective, transparent, and accountable manner that benefits all citizens. We will continue to work with our partner governments to ensure that their trade and regulatory regimes are efficient and transparent in order to level the playing field and promote the access of U.S. business interests to markets overseas. We will continue to support energy programs that help our partner countries transition to a more secure, reliable, affordable, and sustainable sector. Finally, we are committed to working hand in hand with the private sector to design and deliver our development and humanitarian programs in all areas.

Education. We will continue working towards the goals outlined in the U.S. government Strategy on International Basic Education, as mandated by the READ Act of 2017. The goal of the strategy and our new education policy is to achieve a world in which educational institutions enable all individuals to acquire the education and skills necessary to be productive members of society, with a particular focus on the marginalized and vulnerable populations.

Environment and natural resources. We will continue to invest in the conservation of our natural resources while simultaneously tackling environmental crimes, including wildlife trafficking, illegal fishing, and illegal logging. We will also continue our quest to reduce ocean plastics pollution by working with our local partners to

stop waste from entering the oceans while improving recycling and the proper collection of waste. Finally, we recognize that changes in climate pose new challenges for development, and we will continue to assist our partner countries' capacity to anticipate and withstand weather extremes which can reduce the need for costly humanitarian response.

And finally and maybe most importantly, we recognize that promoting the equality and empowerment of women and girls is not simply a part of development, but the core of all of our development work. To that end, we will continue our commitment to supporting women and girls by integrating gender equality and women's empowerment across every sector of our work.

As you are aware, through the USAID transformation, the E3 Bureau will change structurally, but the new successor bureau, the Bureau for Development, Democracy, and Innovation, will continue E3's focus on technical leadership. If confirmed, I look forward to implementing Administrator Green's vision for a transformed USAID.

Senator Graham, Ranking Member Kaine, distinguished members of the committee, as you can see, the leadership of the E3 bureau is critical to our development goals at USAID. It is, therefore, my honor to be here today as the administration's nominee for the position of Assistant Administrator of E3. If confirmed, I will work tirelessly on behalf of the American people to carry out USAID's mission to promote and demonstrate our democratic values abroad, while advancing a free, prosperous, and peaceful world.

Thank you and I look forward to answering your questions.

[The prepared statement of Ms. Bekkering follows:]

PREPARED STATEMENT OF MICHELLE A. BEKKERING

Senator Graham, Senator Kaine, and distinguished members of the committee, I am honored to appear before you today as the President's nominee for Assistant Administrator for Economic Growth, Education and Environment (E3) at the United States Agency for International Development (USAID). I thank President Trump and Administrator Green for their support and confidence in my ability to serve in this role.

I would like to start by thanking Acting Assistant Administrator Carrie Thompson and the entire E3 management team for their outstanding leadership. E3 consists of more than 200 of the most experienced and passionate development officials with whom I have had the pleasure of working, and I look forward to re-joining this incredible team if confirmed.

I am pleased to be joined here today by my friends and colleagues who took the time to come and cheer me on. I also want to recognize my parents, family and friends back home in Iowa who are here with me in spirit and watching this via videostream. And most importantly, I would like to thank my husband, Mark, and our four-year-old daughter, Hadley, who are here with me today. This moment was made possible because of your love, encouragement and support, and for that I thank you.

I have had the pleasure of serving at USAID for the past two years, and I share Administrator Green's mission and vision for international development, and the values this Agency holds dear: excellence, integrity, respect, empowerment, inclusion, human dignity, and a commitment to learning.

My career path has uniquely prepared me for this position. I spent twelve years at the International Republican Institute (IRI), an international democracy-development organization dedicated to promoting freedom and democracy worldwide. During my career at IRI, I managed a variety of programs, including cross-sectoral global ones, with a focus on citizen-responsive, democratic governance; civil-society and parliamentary strengthening; leadership development; and people-to-people exchanges. I carried out assignments in both Washington, as well as in the field, which provided me with valuable experience across the entire cycle of program de-

sign, implementation and management. In my role as Residential Country Director for Indonesia, I developed a greater appreciation and understanding of how to work with our partners to foster locally-led development and achieve sustainable impact in our shared development goals.

Importantly, I also was charged with increasing the political inclusion of women and youth; causes about which I am passionate. I have had the great privilege of working with women all around the world who are striving to make a positive difference in their communities and countries, often in the face of great adversity. Their endurance, passion, and commitment inspire me to this day. If confirmed, I look forward to continuing to champion USAID's programming to promote gender equality and female empowerment.

If confirmed, I will also bring my previous U.S. government experience to this position. I spent several years working in the House of Representatives, and during the Bush Administration, I worked in the European and Eurasian Affairs Directorate of the National Security Council. Having served in both the legislative and executive branches of the U.S. government, I have a deep understanding of the relationship between the branches of our government, as well as profound respect for the responsibilities endowed upon each. If confirmed, I look forward to working closely with Congress to advance our shared priorities in a bipartisan manner.

This professional experience will serve me well if I am confirmed as Assistant Administrator of the Bureau for Economic Growth, Education and Environment (E3). The E3 Bureau is a complex portfolio of offices that cut across all aspects of development and aim to tackle the key challenges that inhibit a country's ability to meet its development goals by providing technical leadership, research, and field support to our geographical bureaus and regional missions across the world. In many ways, the breadth and depth of the technical leadership embedded in E3 is the engine that drives USAID forward in advancing the Journey to Self-Reliance and ending the need for foreign assistance.

I would like to briefly highlight a few of the issues I will prioritize if confirmed as Assistant Administrator for E3.

Economic Growth and Trade: Broad-based economic growth is critical for creating high-quality livelihoods, fostering stability, and helping countries become increasingly self-reliant. As an economy grows, so does a country's ability to provide for the needs of its people—such as basic education, clean drinking water, and high quality health care. We need to continue to help our partner countries catalyze and sustain growth, while building their capacity to mobilize and manage domestic resources in an effective, transparent, and accountable manner that benefits all citizens.

As our partner countries' economies grow, so does their demand for U.S. exports, which multiplies opportunities for U.S. firms and creates more jobs for American workers. We will continue to work with our partner governments and the private sector to promote business- friendly markets, including fair and efficient regulatory and trade regimes that encourage competition, safeguard private property, and allow commercial enterprises to grow. These actions support U.S. business interests by leveling the playing field and promoting market access overseas.

Finally, we recognize the role of the private sector in meeting our vast array of development goals. Today, over 90 percent of resource flows to emerging and developing economies comes from the private sector. The private sector also creates nine out of every ten jobs in the developing world. These facts prove what our Administrator Mark Green has often said, that "Private enterprise is the single most-powerful force for lifting lives, strengthening communities, and accelerating self-reliance." Through USAID's new Private-Sector Engagement Policy, we are institutionalizing private-sector engagement as a core tenet of our operating model. We are committed to working hand-in-hand with the private sector to design and deliver our development and humanitarian programs in all areas. This policy signals an intentional shift towards enterprise-driven development as a more sustainable way to assist countries on their Journey to Self-Reliance.

Education: Education is a foundational driver of development, and transformational for individuals and societies, because it creates pathways to better health outcomes, economic opportunities, and peaceful, democratic societies. In 2018, E3 led the development of the U.S. government Strategy on International Basic Education mandated by the READ Act of 2017. The goal of the Strategy is to achieve a world in which educational institutions in partner countries enable all individuals to acquire the education and skills needed to be productive members of society, with particular focus on improving learning outcomes and expanding access to education for all, particularly the most marginalized and vulnerable populations. It also served as the foundation for USAID's new Education Policy, which sets prior-

ities and direction for our investment in this sphere. I want to thank this committee for its support of USAID's education programming and look forward to continuing USAID's strong partnership with Congress on education.

Environment and Natural Resources: Prosperity and peace depend on healthy ecosystems, and the conservation of biodiversity is critical to achieving equitable and sustainable development. We will continue to invest in this sector as fundamental to achieving our objectives in public health, food security and economic growth, while simultaneously tackling environmental crimes, including wildlife trafficking, illegal fishing, and illegal logging. We will also continue our quest to reduce ocean plastics pollution by working with our local partners to stop plastics and other mismanaged waste from entering the ocean while improving recycling and the proper collection and disposal of solid waste. We also recognize the importance of a water-secure world, in which people and nations have the water they need to be healthy, prosperous, and resilient. We will continue to lead the Agency's implementation of the Water for the World Act of 2014, by assisting governments, civil society, and the private sector in our partner countries to plan, finance, and deliver safe water and sanitation services for the neediest, while sustainably managing water resources. Finally, we also recognize that changes in climate pose new challenges for development, and we will continue to assist our partner countries' capacity to anticipate and withstand weather extremes, which can reduce the need for costly humanitarian response.

Energy and Infrastructure: Resilient infrastructure, including a sustainable energy sector, is the critical foundation for inclusive, sustainable growth and essential to a country's self-reliance. We will continue to help utilities in partner countries procure and produce sufficient power at affordable prices and institute the internal reforms necessary to improve their delivery of service, while supporting financially self-sustaining operations. We will also continue to support the establishment of strong legal and regulatory frameworks necessary to strengthen international energy systems and create economic opportunity for U.S. entities.

Gender Equality and Female Empowerment: Finally, at USAID, we recognize that promoting the equality and empowerment of women and girls is not simply a part of development, but the core of our development work. As the President's 2017 National Security Strategy notes, "Societies that empower women to participate fully in civic and economic life are more prosperous and peaceful." To that end, we will continue our commitment to supporting women and girls by integrating gender equality and female empowerment across every sector of USAID's work.

As you aware, through the USAID Transformation, USAID is re-orienting our structure and processes around the Administrator's vision for ending the need for foreign assistance. The E3 Bureau will change structurally, but the new successor bureau—the Bureau for Development, Democracy, and Innovation—will continue E3's focus on technical leadership, research, and field support across these sectors. If confirmed, I look forward to implementing Administrator Green's vision for a transformed USAID.

Senator Graham, Senator Kaine, and distinguished members of the committee, as you can see, the leadership of the E3 Bureau is critical to achieving our development goals at USAID. It is therefore my honor to be here today as the Administration's nominee for the position of Assistant Administrator for Economic Growth, Education and Environment. If confirmed, I will work tirelessly on behalf of the American people to carry out USAID's mission to promote and demonstrate our democratic values abroad, while advancing a free, peaceful, and prosperous world. I look forward to your questions.

Senator GRAHAM. Well, thank you all. Congratulations to you and your family members. This is a big day in your life, and I think you have earned this honor. A very impressive group of people.

So you have a job to do in Africa. Here is my question. If we reduce the developmental aid budget by 22 to 24 percent, Ms. Bekkering, does that help your job or does it hurt it?

Ms. BEKKERING. Well, thank you, Senator Graham, for your continued support of USAID funding, and I know as Administrator Green has told you before, there is probably never going to be enough resources to meet all the development challenges we are facing.

Senator GRAHAM. Is it a good time to cut funding?

Ms. BEKKERING. We will continue to program efficiently and effectively the dollars you are so generously providing to us.

Senator GRAHAM. I just think it is nuts to do that.

So, Ms. Leonard, 90 percent of the revenue for Nigeria is the oil economy. Right?

Ambassador LEONARD. Yes.

Senator GRAHAM. It is their country to run, but part of what she wants to do is try to diversify economies. Do you think it would be a good place to start is Nigeria?

Ambassador LEONARD. Absolutely, and I think the government of Nigeria is overwhelmingly dependent, as you mentioned, on oil revenues. But there is also—and the U.S. mission also supports efforts to diversify the economy, including through agriculture, which is the occupation of many Nigerians.

I think an interesting new wrinkle in this is, as I mentioned in my remarks, Nigeria's adherence to the African Continental Free Trade Area. Nigeria has often taken a rather protectionist view——

Senator GRAHAM. Can you do me a favor and report back to the committee in 6 months your efforts to help Nigeria diversify their economy?

Ambassador LEONARD. If I am confirmed, I would be delighted to get back to you in 6 months.

[Laughter.]

Senator GRAHAM. Good answer. Assuming you get the job. If not, do it anyway.

[Laughter.]

Senator GRAHAM. Mr. Bell, I just got back from Côte d'Ivoire with Senator Coons on a trip. A beautiful place. One of the things that we are talking about is there is a coastal road being envisioned in West Africa that could actually connect up to some of the countries of the Sahel. Are you familiar with this project?

Mr. BELL. Thank you, Senator.

I am aware of interest in a road across the coastal part of West Africa and of the MCC compact——

Senator GRAHAM. So here is what I want you to do. I want you to make this like a big priority because I want us to do this, not the Chinese. I think it will transform that part of western Africa, and there really is no port for the Sahel unless it is Côte d'Ivoire. So I think this committee is very interested in that project.

Ms. Lapenn, what is the Trump administration's policy toward Africa?

Ms. LAPENN. Thank you, Senator. The priorities that I laid out are fully consistent with the administration's agenda. It is a focus on opening up politically, on, as you just talked about, diversifying economy, and supporting market reforms, and also ensuring security.

Senator GRAHAM. Do you think it is smart to cut the developmental budget by 22 percent?

Ms. LAPENN. So for me in the field, my role is to use the money that you give us, taxpayer money, as well as I possibly can, and I will do that, if confirmed.

Senator GRAHAM. So the African Union is marching down the road of trying to create a more professional peacekeeping force. They are talking about trying to collect $400 million among the

member nations of the African Union. I am very excited about this. They want sort of a regular funding from assessed contributions to the U.N. I do not know if that is a good idea or not. Do you think this is a great step in the right direction?

Ms. LAPENN. Thanks, Senator. I do. I think the instinct to self-finance and have regular, predictable, sustainable financing is exactly right. It is one that we can be supportive of. And then how we get there, as you say, we will need to work out.

Senator GRAHAM. From a national security perspective, Africa is a place to keep our eye on. Do you agree with that?

Ms. LAPENN. Yes, I do, sir.

Senator GRAHAM. There is a lot of opportunity for terrorists to go there, and I want to get ahead of—get there before they do.

South Africa. Ms. Marks, you are the only non-career person here. How did you get the nomination and why should I vote for you?

Ms. MARKS. Thank you for the question, Senator.

The day after the election, I called the President to congratulate him and was told I would make an ideal candidate for an ambassador and would I be interested. And I said I was deeply honored, and yes, of course, I would be interested.

I have started a business from scratch throughout the United States and globally. I have set up all the supply chains for everything. I have done all the negotiations throughout the United States and globally. And I feel this would hold me in good stead in increasing business between the United States and South Africa, if confirmed.

I have also had a knowledge of South Africa, born and raised in South Africa. I speak three of the four most widely spoken of the 11 official languages. I have a knowledge of South Africa, and I feel this would hold me in good stead. I have also served on various boards internationally. I have interfaced socially and with media and communications, and all of these together, if confirmed, I would utilize to the best of my ability in that position. Thank you, Senator.

Senator GRAHAM. Senator Kaine?

Senator KAINE. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

And again, congratulations to the nominees.

Ms. Marks, I want to follow up with you on South Africa.

President Trump waded into a controversy about a year ago when he tweeted that he had instructed Secretary Pompeo to, quote, closely study the South Africa land and farm seizures and expropriations and the large-scale killing of farmers. That quote was widely condemned. The Anti-Defamation League said that it was deeply troubling and that it was a white supremacist talking point.

You mentioned positively the administration of President Ramaphosa. The land reform, as I understand it, is an effort to deal with the situation. Whereas, because of a 1913 Native Lands Act, Africans were prohibited from owning land. And so today in 2019, 80 percent of the population of the nation is black South Africans and they own 4 percent of the land.

Domestic politics are for the country, not the Ambassador to figure out. But from your understanding of South Africa, do you gen-

erally support the efforts to find some equity in land that President Ramaphosa's proposes and what might the U.S. do to be helpful in that regard so that if it is done, it is done the right way?

Ms. MARKS. Senator Kaine, you have raised two issues. One with the land. It is a historically fraught issue, a complicated issue in which there are legitimate grievances by the majority. And on the other hand, you have to consider security, economy, productivity not only for South Africans but American companies doing business there. That is on the one hand. It is being dealt with in a transparent manner, which the administration approves of, and I think it is important that we engage them with this going forward to the best of our ability. If confirmed, I will put all my efforts in that regard with our policy.

And then second of all, no farms have been confiscated at this time. But second of all, with murders and all of that, it is shocking—the murders in South Africa. It is unacceptable. Farm murders and other murders. And the new President Ramaphosa has said that it is a very, very consideration of his to get this under control.

We have the program, the facility Illia in Botswana and we have other facilities. I would encourage the police force there to get involved in this in a much more meaningful way. And if confirmed, I will engage and I would very much appreciate, Senator Kaine, if I could engage with you going forward on this issue.

Senator KAINE. Excellent.

I do not know the answer to those questions. Is it your understanding that murders of farmers are dramatically higher than they were decades ago, dramatically lower, about the same?

Ms. MARKS. Senator, any murders of farmers is shocking. Any murders in general are shocking.

Senator KAINE. Absolutely.

Ms. MARKS. The ratio goes up. It goes down. It is less than 1 percent of the total murders of the country, but they are all unacceptable.

Senator KAINE. But I am talking about trends. Is this a trend that you understand is getting worse, getting better, or about the same?

Ms. MARKS. The trend has gone down. However, it is not acceptable.

Senator KAINE. Thank you.

Let me ask, if I could, Ambassador Leonard a question about Nigeria. In 2015, the leaders of Boko Haram pledged that they were a unit of ISIS. Talk a little bit about the Boko Haram-ISIS connection. Is that just a claimed affiliation or is there something more to it than that? Boko Haram, obviously, is such a problem in Nigeria and surrounding nations as well.

Ambassador LEONARD. Thank you, Senator, for the question.

In terms of the security threats in the north of Nigeria, the two organizations of concern are, of course, Boko Haram and ISIS West Africa. And I think that the latter is perhaps the one with the more pernicious connections or potential connections. And if confirmed, I would continue to work very hard to help the government of Nigeria to address those security threats, making sure that they do so

in ways that respect human rights of citizens, that protect civilians, that hold people who committed abuses to account.

Senator KAINE. Can I just interrupt you there and ask you about that? I think that is a very good point because some allege that human rights abuses by the Nigerian Security Forces can be a driver of extremism. So what might the U.S. do in partnership with Nigeria to make sure that the appropriate focus on security includes respect for human rights?

Ambassador LEONARD. Absolutely. Yes, it can become a driver, which is a reason why it needs to be fixed.

The way that the mission has approached this to date is to keep our security assistance to date in a very defensive posture in the sense of defensive as in providing intelligence, air surveillance, anti-mining, and making sure that all of our security assistance contains a component of human rights compliance and training. You know, there is the obvious incentive for the government of Nigeria, who needs to make this problem smaller not bigger, to make sure that their security forces adhere to that and, by the way, that we structure our rather narrowly focused security assistance. We can help bring that along.

Senator KAINE. Great. Thank you.

Senator GRAHAM. Senator Coons?

Senator COONS. Thank you, Chairman Graham. Thank you, Ranking Member Kaine. Thank you to all of you for your willingness to serve our nation and for those of you who have dedicated decades of your lives to careers in foreign service across the continent.

As some of you know, I have traveled to 30 countries on the continent. I have visited several of you in posts overseas. I look forward to visiting several of you in posts overseas, and time spent in South Africa and in Kenya, Uganda, Tanzania as a young man really shaped my life and gave me deep insights into the promise, the potential, and the challenges that face Africa.

I am particularly concerned with working in a bipartisan and sustained way for us to promote the most positive aspects of the U.S.-Africa relationship both in public health, in prosperity, and security and in the promotion of democracy and human rights.

I am going to work from the right to the left, if I might, and try and stay within my time, but I may go a minute or 2 over, Mr. Chairman, if you will forgive me.

Ms. Bekkering, in USAID, one of the, I think, more significant bills of this Congress will be the work that Chairman Graham is leading, which I am supporting, on a bipartisan, bicameral bill called the Global Fragility Act. This would require a coordinated strategy between our Department of Defense, State Department, and USAID, and it would invest in stabilizing the most fragile countries that are most at risk of the destabilizing forces of terrorism, extremism, poverty, desertification, and poor governance.

Can I count on your support for this effort? Can you tell me how you would see this effort playing out and what, if any, questions or concerns you have about an effort that would seek to better coordinate the currently siloed efforts of DOD, State, and AID in this area?

Ms. BEKKERING. Well, first of all, thank you for your support on this issue and Senator Graham as well.

You know, it is a matter of fact that a majority of the countries right now where USAID has programming are conflict-affected. And so this is really not only restricting our development—or the success of our development goals, but in many cases, it is reversing it. So for us, it is necessary that we work with the interagency and civil society because there are roles for all of us to play here, increasingly since that nexus between development assistance, conflict and humanitarian assistance is becoming blurred.

For us, yes, we would support the bill. I think we would say that we just would want to continue to have the flexibility needed to adjust since the situations on the ground do change so rapidly.

Senator COONS. And how can we ensure that the new Development Finance Corporation that is the outcome of the BUILD Act actually gets stood up by October 1st and is as effective as it can possibly be? You will play a significant role because this is $60 billion worth of new potential private sector investment in doing development and infrastructure right.

Ms. BEKKERING. And again, we want to thank Congress, the Senate. This is another great example of bipartisan support for a bill.

So we are on track to stand up the new DFC by October 1st. There is still more work to be done. Since the passage of the bill, we have worked very closely with our colleagues in OPIC on the operational aspects of setting up the new DFC, as well as working in the interagency through a policy process which is being led by the NSC and OMB.

Our chief concern is that the DFC remain what it is in name, which is a development corporation. And so we are working very hard to ensure linkages to make sure that development remains the first goal.

It also dovetails really nicely: as you know, in December, we launched our new private sector engagement strategy at USAID. So these two things tied together are very significant for us as an agency as we carry out our work. It frankly recognizes that 90 percent of the resource flows around the world are now not from the public sector. And so we need to be better at working with the private sector in co-designing and co-financing our initiatives, and better asking them up front what their interests are and better understanding of where we as a government come in and what specific role we have to play.

Senator COONS. Thank you.

Ms. Marks, if I might, you are nominated for literally one of the best jobs in the world, which is U.S. Ambassador to South Africa. And I hope you appreciate, as I believe you do from your testimony, the long and deep and significant ties between the United States and South Africa and the ways in which we can and should grow together as we seek to address both the legacy of apartheid and the potential of a country with a remarkable constitution, a multi-lingual, multi-ethnic, multi-faith nation endowed with tremendous human resources and natural resources.

During the reauthorization of AGOA, I worked closely with my friend and colleague, Senator Isakson, to eliminate longstanding barriers to the export of U.S. poultry to the South African market.

Today poultry producers in my home State of Delaware, as well as many other States, are now benefiting from a quota of U.S. poultry into South Africa that are excluded from an antidumping tariff. And South Africa is now one of the top 10 export markets for U.S. poultry.

But there are some recent tensions, understandable discomfort or unhappiness on the part of South Africans with the steel and aluminum tariffs that were applied by the administration, as well as pressure from domestic partners in South Africa producers.

How will you work to sustain this critical market opportunity? I heard your passion for keeping markets open. How will you focus on this one in particular? And what would be your broader priorities for the U.S.-South Africa relationship economically?

Ms. MARKS. Senator Coons, thank you for this very important question.

I followed your trip recently when you went to the South African constitution, by the way.

Senator COONS. The Constitutional Court.

Ms. MARKS. The Constitutional Court, yes.

Senator COONS. A wonderful visit.

Ms. MARKS. Yes.

I have been following the poultry exports and your interests and Senator Isakson's, and if confirmed, I will ensure South Africa continues to fulfill this very important quota. And if there are any problems or any rumblings, I will immediately address those, if confirmed. And I would very much if I could engage with you going forward and Senator Isakson on this matter and possibly even come and visit in Delaware to have an even greater understanding of this, if confirmed.

In terms of the greater trade, I think we have to, if confirmed, look across Africa at all the different tools that we have within the mission, within South Africa, with the United States, and with South Africa and once—if I am confirmed—on the ground look at all of these tools and see where we can dramatically increase trade in all the different areas whether it is manufacturing, whether it is energy, whether it is services, whether it is a communication technology, all these areas that we in the United States are interested in in increasing our trade with South Africa. If confirmed, I would look at that very carefully.

Senator COONS. Thank you. I think there are huge opportunities for us to strengthen South Africa's economy, its potential both for historically disadvantaged populations and for those who have long experience in agriculture and in other sectors. And I think it is a tremendous export opportunity for the entire American economy. So I look forward to working with you on this.

Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Senator GRAHAM. Senator Shaheen?

Senator SHAHEEN. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

And thank you all very much for being here today and for your willingness to consider taking on these tremendous responsibilities at this challenging time.

Ms. Lapenn, you have considerable experience in Africa, and I am sure that you know the importance of the United States' role in mediating and being engaged in conflict negotiations. As you are

probably aware, in 2017, the President signed into law the Women, Peace, and Security Act. And the administration has now unveiled its strategy for implementing that law. And we know from data the importance of having women at the table when we are negotiating an end to conflict.

So as Ambassador, how would you work with the leadership of the African Union to ensure that women are involved in any conflict mediation, and where do you think those efforts could be most effective today as we look at the challenges on the African continent?

Ms. LAPENN. Thanks so much, Senator.

I am familiar with the legislation and the strategy and some of the history on UNSCR 1325.

I think the story in Addis right now has been a pretty good one. There has been work being done by the AU, including with U.S. support particularly around the Continental Results Framework, basically holding the regional economic communities and member states accountable for their commitments under WPS. The AU has also created a special envoy.

So I think there is interest, there is openings, and if confirmed, it is an area that I would certainly be focused on and looking towards the 2020 anniversary as well as hopefully a forcing function to continue the good work the team has already been doing.

Senator SHAHEEN. Are the particular conflict areas countries where you think it is particularly important to ensure that the strategy is implemented?

Ms. LAPENN. I think there is interest in encouraging the AU to engage more in Cameroon. There was discussion about the fragility risks, and we are watching that closely. And so I would seek to engage the AU at the commission and members of the PSC on that issue.

Senator SHAHEEN. Thank you. I think that is going to be particularly important as we look at the challenges ahead in Africa.

My next question is going to be for Ambassador Leonard because one thing that I had been very concerned about is the impact of the current administration's expanded global gag rule. The information that we have on Nigeria is that as the result of this expanded global gag rule, one of the organizations has lost millions of dollars for programs to deliver counseling and long-acting reversible contraceptives. They are forced to end a project that engaged close to 2,000 government health care providers to be able to provide competent, voluntary, balanced counseling, and that program has ended and the women who were participating have lost access to those services.

So if confirmed, will you work with USAID, with the Nigerian government, and civil society to try and lessen the harmful impacts of this policy? And can you tell me how you envision possibly doing that?

Ambassador LEONARD. Thank you for that question, Senator.

I will tell you I was not aware of a specific organization losing funding as you have described, although I am obviously familiar with——

Senator SHAHEEN. We are happy to share with you our information on that.

Ambassador LEONARD. Thank you.

The lion's share of U.S. government bilateral assistance in Nigeria is in the area of health. And clearly, I agree with you entirely that women's health and its various ramifications are an enormously important part of that. So I would be very happy to work hard to be able to address the needs of women in such circumstances. Thank you.

Senator SHAHEEN. Thank you.

I should ask each of you who are going to be serving as Ambassadors in Africa, if you are confirmed, if you will take a look at these policies as well because the information we have received—and this is something that I have had an opportunity to ask Administrator Green about in terms of USAID's information. But our information is that it is having a tremendous impact on access to health care in a variety of areas not just reproductive health, but because of the impact of this new expanded gag rule, it is having impacts in other areas as well.

So, Ms. Marks, would you take a look at what the impact of that policy is?

And I guess I would ask, Mr. Chairman, if since they are going to be reporting back to you in 6 months, maybe they could report back to the entire committee on this issue so that we would all have that information.

Ms. MARKS. Senator Shaheen, if confirmed, I do undertake to look into this and report back within 6 months. And thank you for that question.

Senator SHAHEEN. And Mr. Bell?

Mr. BELL. Yes, Senator, absolutely. Thank you.

Senator SHAHEEN. And Ms. Leonard, I would assume that based on your previous response, you would agree with that. Thank you very much.

Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Senator GRAHAM. Thank you.

I think we have a few more questions. Senator Gardner is on the way.

Ms. Bekkering, I really appreciate what you an Ivanka Trump have been doing, trying to look at laws in Africa but really throughout the world, but particularly in Africa because this is what the hearing is about, about laws that deny women the ability to inherit property, to do certain kind of jobs. You know, it is a big impediment to economic growth of that country and certainly a big impediment to women having a stronger voice.

Where do you see that going if you get this job?

Ms. BEKKERING. Well, thank you for your support of the Women's Economic Empowerment Initiative, which I know is shared by Senator Shaheen and the other members.

So the initiative you are referring to, the Women's Global Development and Prosperity Initiative is something we are very excited about. It was launched in February. It is a whole-of-government approach to women's economic empowerment.

We have lofty goals. We aim to economically enable 50 million women in the developing world by 2025. And we feel good about our prospects of doing this. This is in line with the work at USAID that we have long focused on, which is recognizing that investing

in women and girls, frankly, has a multiplier effect, and it does have a return on our investment no matter in what sector we are looking at.

So we are going to focus on three things.

The first is workforce development. We need to make sure women have the skills and the opportunities necessary to enter the formal labor market.

Number two, we need to recognize there is a huge credit gap for women entrepreneurs. Estimates vary, but it is around $300 billion. So we need to connect them to support, to finance, to networks.

And third, in an area that I am really passionate about with my background in democracy, rights and governance is, as you said, the regulatory, and legal environments that are restricting women. We also recognize that there is a huge role to play here working with our partners in civil society as we are working on cultural and social issues as well that may prevent women from realizing their goals.

Senator GRAHAM. Ms. Lapenn, if confirmed, which I am sure you will be, you will be the Ambassador to the African Union. What I want to know from you is if you can kind of give us some idea of how prevalent these laws are and take it up with the member nations of the African Union. It is not our job to run other people's countries, but if I have a limited amount of dollars to invest in, I do not want to invest in an environment where half the population really cannot succeed. So we can let them know that this subcommittee and the appropriators, which most of us are on the Appropriations Committee, will be looking long and hard at laws and practices that stifle business opportunities and economic opportunity in general for women. So if you could deliver that message, I would appreciate it.

And with that, I am done.

Senator Kaine?

Senator KAINE. Just quickly, Ms. Bekkering, you are involved in a current restructuring effort, as I understand, that the Economic Growth, Education, and Environment Bureau that you are nominated to lead is being consolidated in with some other entities to create a new Bureau for Democracy, Development and Innovation. Could you just report to the committee on the status of that restructuring effort?

Ms. BEKKERING. Yes, that is correct, Senator.

So right now all congressional holds have been lifted and so we are working on what we are calling a standup package at USAID to put the new bureau into place. As you can imagine, there are a lot of aspects we are looking at, such as staffing, budgets, operational policies, et cetera. We are currently in the process of that, and I would be happy to follow back up with you and your staff in writing as we continue to progress with our benchmarks.

Senator KAINE. I think that is something that the entire committee would be interested in. We would appreciate that.

Mr. Bell, in your opening comments, you talked about some real positive economic and other advances in Côte d'Ivoire. Regional issues will intrude and there is instability in the region. Talk to us about Côte d'Ivoire's strategy for dealing with instability in the

Sahel and Mali and how are they prepared and what can we do to help them?

Mr. BELL. Thank you very much, Senator.

Until last August, I was the foreign policy advisor at AFRICOM, and so I have some familiarity with this issue.

Just next month, Côte d'Ivoire is going to something like triple its contribution to the U.N. peacekeeping mission in Mali, from a company to a battalion. And tragically, MINUSMA has become the deadliest U.N. peacekeeping mission in the world. So that is a significant contribution.

I firmly believe that the more the U.S. military is able to work with these African partner militaries, the better it is for the entire country because of the professionalism that our people bring to that. In every training we do, we always emphasize the importance of protecting the civilian population, respecting human rights. These are insurgencies, and rule number one of counter-insurgency is it has to be you and the population against the enemy.

So I hope that addresses your question, sir.

Senator KAINE. I think some of the best investments that we make in my other committee, the Armed Services Committee, is the work that we do in tandem with partners around the world, that we are still such a partner of choice for nations in Africa and elsewhere on training, including human rights training. It is something as a portion of the Pentagon's budget is just a fraction of a fingernail, but it actually produces real value. And your experience in AFRICOM I think will be very valuable in that.

Ms. Lapenn, in the African Union, my understanding is that the current chair or incoming chair is President el-Sisi of Egypt, and there are a number of issues that the African Union are dealing with on Egypt's borders, Libya and Sudan. And in some of those issues, Egypt's position and the U.S. position is not quite aligned.

Could you share with us what you would predict or project about President el-Sisi's leadership, chairmanship of the African Union?

Ms. LAPENN. Thanks, Senator.

Yes, he is the current chair of the African Union.

If confirmed, my approach would be, I would say, similar at the AU effectively to a bilateral mission, trying to move our agenda where and how we can through relationships, through getting a sense of who is who, who are our partners, where can we move the needle. So, if confirmed, I would look seriously at those particular policy issues and see how we can move African Union members along with us, as well as others at the commission.

Senator KAINE. Thank you.

Thank you, Mr. Chair.

Senator GRAHAM. Senator Coons?

Senator COONS. Thank you, Chairman Graham.

Let me ask just a follow-up question for each, if I might.

Ms. Lapenn, thank you again for your excellent to my visit to South Africa and your service as charge in Pretoria. And I am encouraged that you are going on to what I think is, as I think Ambassador Leonard will tell you, a wonderful and a challenging post. I would be interested in hearing from both Ambassador Leonard, as you depart the AU, and you as you head there. I think, as Chairman Graham mentioned, that the AU and the U.N. should

deepen our collaboration. I think our engagement in supporting and funding and assisting AU-led peacekeeping efforts is a great way to facilitate African-led solutions to African security challenges.

How would you plan to use your role, if confirmed as our Ambassador to the African Union, to support peacekeeping operations? And to you and to Ambassador Leonard, do you think the United States should provide increased financial support for the AU peace support operations through the U.N. budget, and do you think we have made enough progress in providing accountability around a number of very troubling incidents of misbehavior by peacekeepers, criminal and abusive and inappropriate behavior by peacekeepers, of a variety of nations, both Western, African, and otherwise?

Ms. Lapenn, if I might, first.

Ms. LAPENN. Thank you, Senator.

On the peacekeeping support, I think we are doing a lot of good work particularly around training, around the capacity building that a number have spoke to already, and particularly with a focus on human rights, which is a U.S. value. It is something that we bring. I think we have done a lot of good work on that, and the results are positive.

We are seeing three things, I would say, in the peacekeeping space from the African Union. We are seeing the AMISOM mission in Somalia, political support for non-AU, non-UN missions in the Sahel, and then also an identification of standards, of norms, of institutions that are required. And we are a crucial partner in all those efforts.

On your question about accountability, I think we need to hold firm. We need to be very, very strong on this issue. And that is additionally a reflection of our values, but it is also what peacekeepers need to do to keep populations safe. And so that I think will also have to be considered as our conversations around the funding, conversations that necessarily will come back here requiring congressional consent.

Senator COONS. Thank you.

Ambassador Leonard, if you would.

Ambassador LEONARD. Thank you for that question. It is providing me the opportunity to feel, I do not know, valedictory or something.

[Laughter.]

Ambassador LEONARD. But I think that part of the story line of my time in the last 3 years at the AU was their successful efforts to build a much closer working relationship with the U.N. I think the Secretary-General and the chairperson at the commission worked very well together, and that is a very positive trend for thinking about the way that the world addresses the challenges that face us.

The issue of accountability is huge. During the various sort of U.N. operation renewals that have come up, we have worked very hard, for example, like in a unibid, to have a lot of granularity in the discussion about what it is that we mean by the performance indicators to find things that are achievable.

I think that the AU, in terms of the current conversation going on about how we might change or what other approaches might be

taken to providing money for AU-led peace support operations, has been working hard to come up with the answers to the question, how have they further institutionalized those performance standards. I think there is an interesting debate to be had about what is the most productive way in which to fund. Is it through our bilateral efforts or is there a case to be made through the U.N.?

And in any of those circumstances, and particularly for the U.N. there is also the question of financial accountability of how those funds are used. That is a question that is posed by us and other U.N. members. It is also the question being posed by AU member states as they are being asked to contribute more. So I think it is a conversation that is going in a positive direction, and it is sort of a watch this space to see how it ends, but probably in the near term.

Senator COONS. Well, thank you, Ambassador. You have represented us well in Addis, and I think the AU is a particularly important mission and relationship. And if confirmed, you go to Abuja, which is in some ways an equally, if not more, challenging and important post, a very complex nation, Nigeria, with huge potential.

If confirmed, how will you ensure that Nigeria continues on the path towards democracy and use the tools that you will have available to you to ensure that we confront together what I think is the serious security challenge of ISIS West Africa and promote transparency and human rights compliance by the Nigerian Security Forces?

Ambassador LEONARD. Thank you for those very seminal questions.

I think on the question of promoting democracy, I think the best thing that we have going for us in our relationship with Nigeria on the issue of democracy is the overwhelming support of Nigerians towards that. You know, in sort of Afro-barometer polling, there is a great attachment to the idea of elections matter, results should be respected. This is something that Nigerian citizens want.

Before I went to Mali, I was the Director for West African Affairs, and I think the 2000 elections were the first time that, although not anywhere near as good as the 2015—it was the first time that things like parallel vote counts—this is when Ambassador McCulley was there—were being used and having measures to sort of track how that was going. I think people were all very satisfied with what happened in 2015.

And in 2019, the issues of delay and some logistics problems and some intimidation factors disappointed a lot of people. I sometimes wonder if that disappointment is—you know, it is not as if nothing better happened between 2015 and 2019. There were a lot of process issues that were improved, automaticity in registering new voters. And I sometimes wonder if the disappointment was absolute or just that one had gotten used to seeing a much increased trajectory across the elections, and maybe we did not quite go there.

But as people in this room know, elections every 4 years happen very quickly. So there is an awful lot of work to be done to help that as we look towards 2023.

And the other part of your question was on peace and security, yes. And as I mentioned before previously, I think there is an

incentivizing factor in the idea of focusing quite narrowly now on the capabilities that we can provide that encourage the Nigerian military and security services towards a better approach to their duties and making sure that we are not giving any assistance that can aid and abet some of the more pernicious behaviors as a way to move it forward in a positive direction. And so I think that, obviously, one does need to continue to engage with them because the security challenges such as ISIS West Africa are significant, not going to go away, and cannot be ignored. But I think that we have come on a good construct for moving forward with them both in terms of addressing that challenge and in terms of reforming the way they do business.

Senator COONS. Thank you.

I think the Global Fragility Act approach that Chairman Graham and I are working on will help significantly with stabilizing northern Côte d'Ivoire, northern Nigeria, and some of the regional issues.

Mr. Bell, I will talk to you afterwards, if I can, about the cocoa industry and child labor. I know I am well over my time and am delaying my colleagues. But I am quite concerned about the ways in which the industry has missed a number of key deadlines, and I think there continue to be concerns about how we work together to assure that children are not mistreated in labor in the cocoa industry. We had a wonderful meeting with the First Lady of Côte d'Ivoire about this issue, and I am optimistic it is possible, but we need engagement.

And I think South Africa is a country of enormous potential. I am encouraged, Ms. Marks, to hear you recognize it correctly as a model that many other countries can learn from of reconciliation after periods of great tension and difficulty. And I look forward to meeting with you before we get to a vote.

Thank you very much, Mr. Chairman.

Senator GRAHAM. Senator Shaheen?

Senator SHAHEEN. Thank you.

Ms. Bekkering, a year or so ago, along with another of other women Senators, I had a chance to meet with two young women who had been kidnapped by Boko Haram. They were both from Nigeria. And they had tragic stories to tell about seeing family members murdered in front of them, being raped, being taken away, being kidnapped and held in captivity for several years.

And I asked them at the end of their story what they would like us to tell the people of this country and the government about what we should do to respond to that kind of situation and to help young women in their situation. And they were both very clear. They said education is the most important thing you can do to help us.

So I know that that is part of your portfolio in your new position, if you are confirmed. So can you talk about how important education is for girls and young women in empowering them and ensuring economic opportunities for them?

Ms. BEKKERING. Well, thank you, Senator Shaheen, for meeting with and being a voice for those young women.

This is an area of critical importance. 132 million girls around the world are out of school. When we look at areas of conflict and crisis, they are 90 percent more likely to be out of school than boys.

So it is a pervasive issue for us. We know education is foundational to all of our development goals.

And so when we are looking at these staggering statistics, the first thing we are doing is asking ourselves what are the barriers that are keeping girls from going to school? We need to first assess what those barriers are, and those barriers are many, as I am sure you know, as is the whole field of women's empowerment. We are looking at, first of all, can girls go to school safely? Is there gender-based violence? Do they have adequate water, sanitation, hygiene (WASH) facilities that allow them to go to school? And then thirdly and very importantly, we are looking at the cultural aspects, which might say, "a girl is not as important as a boy to go to school or our family does not have the money to send both of them." So in all of our programming, we do these analyses to look at what are the various factors that are keeping girls from being able to go to school and then working with our partners to design the correct interventions to address those barriers.

If confirmed, this is an area I confirm to you right now that I will give utmost importance, and I look forward to working with you and your staff very closely on this issue.

Senator SHAHEEN. So one of the things that I was surprised at is looking at the World Economic Forum's Global Gender Gap report and seeing that Pakistan has come in second to last on that report, that USAID's own journey to self-reliance country road map shows Pakistan lagging behind the world on gender equality.

Can you speak to why it may be worse in Pakistan than some other countries and what specifically we can do there to support more education and closing that gap between girls and boys?

Ms. BEKKERING. So the Global Gender Gap Report is something that we also look at, and it looks at four areas, as you know. It is political participation and representation. It is health. It is education, and it is economic participation.

So for Pakistan, I will be honest. I am not quite familiar with why they rank so low. Is it on education specifically or is it an average of the four pillars?

Senator SHAHEEN. I do not know the answer to that. I cannot tell that from what I have in my briefing here. Roughly 50 percent of women and girls over the age of 10 have never attended school, and 96 percent drop out by grade 12.

Ms. BEKKERING. So let us talk about education, and that makes sense. One of the areas that we have been increasingly concerned about especially in Pakistan and other areas where we have seen prolonged conflict is, first of all, simply that there was such a huge destruction of schools. And in Pakistan, as you know, especially in the regions, there were not girls-only schools, and in a lot of areas, there were not schools that were safe or of easy access to girls. This was one of our big problems.

So we have invested significant funding in Pakistan. While I am not the lead on those issues, since our mission takes the lead on those issues, I do know that we have offered them support on how to, one, re-enroll girls in schools, especially in areas where they may have, for a time, been prohibited from going to schools. We are also looking, of course, at the economic opportunities since there is such a linkage there. But I would be happy to talk to my colleagues

in the Regional Mission and Geographic Bureau and come back to you with some more specifics.

Senator SHAHEEN. I think that would be helpful. Do we think that the growth of madrasas and having so many children in madrasas to go to school as opposed to in other schools is part of what is contributing to this since girls would not be included there?

Ms. BEKKERING. That could very well be a factor. I am not sure of the particulars, and I would rather be well informed with my answers. So let me commit to looking into that and coming back to you.

Senator SHAHEEN. Thank you.

Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Senator GRAHAM. Thank you all very much. You accorded yourselves well. Congratulations to you and your family.

We will keep the record open for questions until July the 18th.

The hearing is adjourned.

[Whereupon, at 4:40 p.m., the hearing was adjourned.]

Additional Material Submitted for the Record

RESPONSES TO ADDITIONAL QUESTIONS FOR THE RECORD
SUBMITTED TO LANA MARKS BY SENATOR ROBERT MENENDEZ

U.S.-South Africa Relations

Question. U.S.-South Africa bilateral relations are generally friendly, but there are periodic differences over foreign policy issues. In multilateral forums, South Africa often backs developing country and emerging country positions that are sometimes at odds with stated U.S. interests. What do you view as the Trump Administration's main bilateral priorities vis-à-vis South Africa? How would you seek to advance them if confirmed?

Answer. A top priority in South Africa is to strengthen and deepen our important trade and investment ties. Trade between our two countries grows every year, and the United States remains South Africa's third largest bilateral trading partner. We are major investors in South Africa, where over 600 American companies account for an estimated 10 percent of South Africa's gross domestic product. In Cape Town, for example, U.S. investments over the last 15 years are currently valued at U.S. $2.3 billion and have created nearly 8,000 jobs. For their part, South African investors, such as the energy and chemical company Sasol, have mounted major projects in the United States. Another South African firm, Nando's Peri-Peri Chicken, has brought South African cuisine to American consumers. This economic relationship creates opportunities for American companies, and jobs for American workers. If confirmed, I would seek to make the United States the number one trading partner for South Africa and the partner of choice for the growth of its vibrant economy.

Another top priority is the decades-long U.S. investment in the health of South Africans, specifically in fighting the HIV epidemic that continues to affect over seven million South Africans. If confirmed, I would uphold our vital effort in partnership with the South African government to achieve epidemic control by the end of 2020.

In addition, the Trump Administration seeks to cultivate the long-standing, deep, and genuine ties of affection that bind the American and South African people. If confirmed, I would promote cultural ties through youth-oriented programs like the Young African Leaders Initiative, and through programs that share American music, sports, and dance with local audiences. I would deepen our educational ties with South Africa, which proudly stands as the number one contributor of sub-Saharan African exchange students in our U.S. universities. I would strengthen university partnerships, scholarships, and exchange programs to ensure strong collaborative relationships between South African researchers and their American counterparts. I would give special attention to integrated projects, like the IBM Research

Lab in Johannesburg, that focus on innovation and opportunity for South Africa's youth.

Question. What is the status of and what has been accomplished under the bilateral Strategic Dialogue? Around what issues can the U.S.-South African relationship be strengthened? What issues will you recommend be part of the Dialogue if confirmed?

Answer. The United States and South Africa held ministerial-level Strategic Dialogue (SD) meetings in 2010, 2012, and 2015. As a sub-component of the SD, we have also held three Under Secretary-level Working Group on African and Global Issues (WGAGI) meetings, in 2012, 2013, and 2019. The Annual Bilateral Forum (ABF), another component of the SD process, involves South Africa-based staff from the U.S. Mission and South African government officials and has taken place in Pretoria every year since 2010. SD meetings have involved a wide range of interlocutors from a variety of U.S. and South African government agencies, and discussions have ranged from trade, investment, agriculture, and health, to transportation, law enforcement, and cyber security. Special sessions have focused on multilateral relations, human rights, and African peace and security.

If confirmed, I would seek to continue our important bilateral Strategic Dialogue and focus on key priority issues including trade and investment, multilateral affairs, peace and security, and information technology.

Question. What outcomes have resulted from the trilateral program, under which the United States supported South African aid to other African countries to address shared U.S.-South African concerns? Should this program be continued? If so, what should be the areas of focus? What will your role be if confirmed as Ambassador?

Answer. The Trilateral Assistance Program has supported South Africa as a leader in regional and continental contexts in a manner that is consistent with broader U.S. foreign policy objectives. For example, In FY 2017, USAID supported South Africa to expand solar resource mapping in Botswana and Namibia to help move the entire region toward exploitation of renewable sources of energy for the future. USAID also collaborated with South African universities and the South African Department of Science and Technology to partner with numerous African universities to expand knowledge on soil chemistry and microbiology for improved agricultural production. If confirmed, I would welcome a dialogue about programming in this area.

Question. President Donald J. Trump threatened to withhold U.S. aid from countries that voted in favor of a non-binding resolution rejecting the Administration's rejection of Jerusalem as the capital of Israel, or otherwise vote against U.S. positions in the United Nations. South Africa is currently on the United Nations Security Council. Should the U.S. cut off aid to South Africa if it votes against U.S. positions in the Security Council? If so, should that extend to assistance provided under the Emergency Plan for AIDS Relief?

Answer. I have taken note of South Africa's voting record at the United Nations. In 2018, 110 resolutions required a vote in the U.N. General Assembly, and voting coincidence between the United States and South Africa on those votes was 21 percent. It is important for South Africans to consider whether their government's voting record accurately reflects their values and commitment to human rights. If confirmed as Ambassador to the Republic of South Africa, I would build upon efforts already underway to improve multilateral cooperation with South Africa and seek to work closely with the South African government during its current tenure on the U.N. Security Council.

Question. Last August, President Trump tweeted, "I have asked Secretary of State @SecPompeo to closely study the South Africa land and farm seizures and expropriations and the large scale killing of farmers. South African government is now seizing land from white farmers." @TuckerCarlson @FoxNews. What was the reaction to this tweet in South Africa, to the best of your knowledge? To your knowledge, did Secretary Pompeo examine the issue? If so, what were the findings?

Answer. The President asked the Secretary to look closely at the current state of action in South Africa related to land reform. In a statement, the South African foreign ministry indicated it was "disappointed" with the President's message.

Yes, the State Department has continued to follow these issues closely. Deputy Secretary of State Sullivan visited South Africa in March, followed by a visit by Assistant Secretary for African Affairs Tibor Nagy in June. Both senior officials met with a wide range of stakeholders to discuss the issue of land reform in order to increase our understanding of this sensitive and important issue. I am aware that the U.S. Mission to South Africa also engages on a regular basis with South Afri-

cans on all sides of the debate in order to inform our position. There is no doubt that debates on land reform in post-apartheid South Africa are difficult and long-standing. South Africa is working through this difficult process, and we are encouraged that it is happening in an open manner, including through public hearings.

Question. ANC-led efforts to address the country's many challenges have had a mixed record of success, and citizen expectations for rapid, positive socio-economic transformation have broadly exceeded what the state has been able to provide. Despite large state investments in housing, services, and infrastructure, the quality of public goods and services has often been poor, often spurring protests. In recent years, university students protesting education fees also mounted large protests. Recurrent allegations of corruption and cronyism at various levels of government have also fueled public discontent. Opposition parties have successfully exploited growing voter discontent with the ANC, and won significant victories in local elections in 2016, suggesting challenges for the ANC ahead of 2019 elections.

How do you interpret the meaning and extent of "state capture" under former president Zuma? In what ways, if at all, does Zuma remain politically influential? In what ways, if any, do you expect that influence to affect policies developed by the President Cyril Ramaphosa's Administration?

Answer. I understand ″state capture″ to refer to systemic political corruption, in which private interests shape the rules of the game and influence decision-making processes to their own advantage. From 2010 to 2018, South Africa suffered from state capture under the administration of former President Jacob Zuma, resulting in a series of high-profile scandals, diminished economic opportunity, and a loss of confidence in government institutions. In February 2018, President Cyril Ramaphosa replaced Zuma and began taking steps to counter corruption, such as by appointing a widely respected (independent) National Director of Public Prosecutions and a new commissioner of the South African Revenue Service. In addition, several high-level judicial commissions of inquiry are underway. However, Zuma remains politically influential among some factions of the ruling African National Congress, as well as among some in his home province of KwaZulu-Natal. His continued political influence could stymie or prevent the full implementation of anti-corruption policies.

Question. What are the Ramaphosa Administration's main governance reform priorities? What role if any, should the United States play in assisting with reforms?

Answer. President Ramaphosa has pledged to undertake good governance, anti-corruption, and market-friendly reforms in order to rebuild trust in institutions and set the economy on a path toward growth. President Ramaphosa's efforts signal a promise to put in place sustainable anti-corruption structures, for the benefit of South Africa's voting public as well as investors who point to anti-corruption measures as key to economic growth.

If confirmed, I will build on the efforts already underway across the U.S. Mission in South Africa to report and engage on good governance and anti-corruption efforts. I will ensure top-level support for the Mission's good governance working group, an interagency mechanism that leverages expertise across agencies and sections. I will support ongoing programs that address corruption and governance, and I will advocate for additional resources in these areas.

Question. What is the status of efforts to amend the constitution to allow for expropriation of private land without compensation? What impact might such a change have on racial relations and private sector investment, including potential investment from the United States?

Answer. At this time efforts to amend the constitution have paused. The previous Parliament created the Ad Hoc Committee to Amend Section 25 of the Constitution and tasked it with drafting language for the proposed constitutional amendment. The new Parliament has yet to issue a mandate to reconvene the Ad Hoc Committee to continue the prior committee's work. We expect to see some movement when Parliament returns for its second term on August 20.

A multiplicity of land reform initiatives have been ongoing since the end of apartheid, and most South Africans support such efforts. However, the prospect of land expropriation without compensation specifically is contentious because it creates economic uncertainty around the country's protection of property rights. The South African government is aware of the formidable challenge of finding solutions to redress a century of wrongs to black South Africans without compromising property rights, and has moved forward through consultations with broad and diverse stakeholders. While a legal framework for land reform continues to be worked out through a legislative process, President Ramaphosa and other members of his administration have publicly discussed expropriation in the context of targeted cir-

cumstances, such as on abandoned buildings or underutilized land. President Ramaphosa has repeatedly stated his commitment to ensuring that land reform efforts do not undermine future investment, agricultural production, or food security.

Question. How would you approach USG work to counter the violent crime challenges in South Africa, and support the country's criminal justice capacity?

Answer. South Africa faces daunting, complex challenges of violent crime and an overburdened criminal justice system. If confirmed, I would support the U.S. government's multi-pronged engagement on these issues. For example, I would seek to increase South African participation in U.S. training programs, such as through judicial sector participation in U.S. public affairs exchange programs and security force participation in the International Law Enforcement Academy (ILEA) in Gaborone, Botswana. Moreover, I would search for strategic windows of opportunity to further support South Africa's National Prosecuting Authority, independent judiciary, and civil society organizations, each of which plays a critical role in promoting accountability and supporting victims of violent crime.

Question. What efforts is the U.S. government making to assist with anti-corruption and transparency efforts in South Africa? Are our actions commensurate with the challenge facing South Africa in these areas?

Answer. If confirmed, I will build on the efforts already underway across the U.S. Mission in South Africa to report and engage on good governance and anti-corruption efforts. I will ensure top-level support for the Mission's good governance working group, an interagency mechanism that leverages expertise across agencies and sections. I will support ongoing programs that address corruption and governance, and I will advocate for additional resources in these areas.

Question. In mid-2018, the State Department reported that South Africa's government does not meet minimum U.S. standards for the elimination of trafficking in persons (TIP), a longstanding problem in the country. The Department reports that the government is making significant efforts to address TIP activity, but has insufficiently funded anti-trafficking efforts for a second year in a row. It was thus downgraded to U.S. Tier 2 Watch List country under a system set out in the Trafficking Victims Protection Act, as amended.

How would you describe the scope of trafficking in persons (TIP) in South Africa?

Answer. As reported in the 2019 Trafficking in Persons Report for South Africa, human traffickers exploit domestic and foreign victims in South Africa, and traffickers exploit victims from South Africa abroad. Traffickers recruit victims from poor countries and poor and/or rural areas within South Africa to urban centers, such as Johannesburg, Cape Town, Durban, and Bloemfontein, where traffickers force victims into sex trafficking, domestic servitude, criminal activities, and agriculture. Syndicates-often dominated by Nigerians-facilitate trafficking in the commercial sex industry. Traffickers increasingly force women from Lesotho into sex trafficking in South Africa. To a lesser extent, syndicates recruit South African women to Europe and Asia, where traffickers force some into prostitution, domestic servitude, or drug smuggling.

Question. What specific actions will you recommend we undertake to support South Africa in improving its efforts to stop trafficking in persons if confirmed?

Answer. If confirmed, I will recommend a set of specific goals and objectives to further the government of South Africa's anti-trafficking efforts. Key lines of effort will include investigating and prosecuting officials suspected of complicity in trafficking crimes; increasing efforts and capacity to investigate, prosecute, and convict traffickers involved in organized crime syndicates that facilitate trafficking; and, improving implementation of a variety of South African TIP-related legislation. If necessary, I will advocate for U.S. government funding to help advance these goals.

Question. What support have we provided to train officials to investigate and prosecute those facilitating child sex trafficking or adult forced prostitution?

Answer. The State Department's Office to Monitor and Combat Trafficking in Persons currently has two projects, totaling U.S. $1,575,000 that support the training of officials to investigate and prosecute traffickers.

In 2019, the State Department's Office to Monitor and Combat Trafficking in Persons awarded U.S. $825,000 to the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC) for an anti-TIP program focused on southern Africa, including South Africa. The program will train criminal justice personnel, including judges, magistrates, prosecutors, and law enforcement at the national and regional level to increase the number of systematized, victim-centered human trafficking investigations and prosecutions.

UNODC was also awarded U.S. $750,000, in 2016, to build the capacity of the INTERPOL Regional Bureau for Southern Africa to support the Southern Africa Development Community member states in victim-centered investigations and prosecutions of trafficking in persons cases. This project seeks to develop skills and support intelligence driven bilateral and regional operations to combat TIP.

Question. What additional activities should we be undertaking to assist South Africa in these areas?

Answer. If confirmed, I will ensure that the U.S. Mission in South Africa provides policy and, if possible, program support to further the goals of the South African Department of Justice's National Policy Framework on Trafficking in Persons. We will commit to routine engagement with our South African counterparts to stress the importance of these actions and in support of a robust partnership between our governments for progress in addressing this crime.

Question. What U.S. assistance activities will be cut off should South Africa be sanctioned under the Trafficking Victims Protection Act for being on Tier Three?

Answer. The Trafficking Victims Protection Act (TVPA) restrictions apply to the obligation of non-trade, non-humanitarian U.S. assistance to the governments of Tier 3 countries. Trade-related and humanitarian assistance are excepted from the restrictions, as are specific types of security assistance related to counter narcotics, anti-terrorism, and nonproliferation. The applicability of the restrictions, or a waiver from the restrictions, is subject to a Presidential determination each year.

Question. What specific actions will you take to help address the scourge of trafficking if confirmed?

Answer. If confirmed, I will support the efforts of the State Department's Office to Monitor and Combat Trafficking in Persons to address the scourge of trafficking. This will include setting goals and objectives to further the government of South Africa's anti-trafficking efforts and, if necessary, advocating for U.S. government funding to help advance these goals.

While the South African economy is large and complex, annual real Gross Domestic Product (GDP) growth (i.e., growth as output as measured in constant Rand) has been far lower in recent years than it was in the mid-2000s, when growth in the 5% range was typical. Growth averaged 1.3% from 2014 through 2017 and is forecast at 0.8% in 2018. GDP as measured in dollars-a key factor in current account transactions, notably trade-also trended downward between 2011 and 2016 due to a weak Rand. Domestic factors include high public deficits and debt, an inadequately educated workforce, and rigid labor markets. In addition, in 2014 and 2015 electricity generation deficits led to rolling power blackouts, and such power shortages have recently resumed. The country has also faced significant droughts, including one that caused severe water shortages in Cape Town, a major global tourist destination.

Question. Why has South Africa's economy grown so slowly?

Answer. Although South Africa is the United States' most developed trade and investment partner on the continent, it continues to struggle with low economic growth and profound fiscal challenges. Forecasts for economic growth generally are in the 1.3%-1.5% range for 2019 and 1.5%-1.7% range for 2020, and for the budget deficit to be between 4.5%-4.9% in 2019. In the first quarter of 2019, the unemployment rate in the country rose to 27.6% (up half a percentage point from the previous quarter) and to 55.2% for youth (aged 15-24), who represent 17 percent of the population. The reasons for South Africa's economic challenges are many and complex, but international ratings agencies have often cited concern that the government's budget is increasingly unsustainable, driven in part by large contingent liabilities to the country's many large state-owned enterprises (SOEs). In addition, South Africa's education system struggles to produce the number of high school graduates needed for employment by key sectors of the economy. The country's former engines of growth and tax revenue—manufacturing and mining—still account for 70% of total exports, but have declined in recent years. Over the last 30 years, manufacturing has fallen from 30% of GDP to 12% today, mining has fallen from 13% of GDP to 7.5%, and services have grown from 51% to 65%.

Question. What are President Ramaphosa's economic reform and growth priorities? What are the most promising areas for greater bilateral trade, both regarding U.S. export opportunities and South Africa exports to the United States, including under AGOA?

Answer. President Ramaphosa has indicated his plans to implement structural economic reforms such as reducing the public sector wage bill and restructuring

state-owned enterprises (SOEs). These reforms could help put the economy on a sustainable path of growth, but are controversial.

As the largest export market for U.S. goods in sub-Saharan Africa, South Africa has the greatest potential for growth of U.S. exports and investment in our key sectors of economic strength, including information and communication technologies (ICT), advanced manufacturing, energy, and services.

South Africa is the greatest non-oil beneficiary and the most diversified exporter under the African Growth and Opportunity Act (AGOA). South African exports under AGOA totaled U.S. $1.5 billion in 2018. South Africa is the world's fourth biggest citrus exporter to the United States.

Question. What are the implications of the Trump Administration's tariff increases on U.S.-South Africa trade relations? How would potential new tariffs on U.S. imports of South African autos affect South Africa's economy?

Answer. The President's action under Section 232 is to protect U.S. national security given massive and persistent global excess capacity for, and resulting excessive imports of, steel and aluminum. Countries have discussed with us possible alternative means to address our concern. The President is considering the national security aspects of these alternatives on a case-by-case basis.

On May 17, the President issued a proclamation that concurs with the findings and conclusion of the Secretary of Commerce that the quantities and circumstances of imports of automobiles and certain automobile parts have weakened our internal economy and threaten to impair the national security. Pursuant to Section 232 the President has determined to pursue negotiation of agreements to address the threatened impairment to national security.

The President has directed the United States Trade Representative to lead the negotiation process and to update him within 180 days of the status of those negotiations. If no agreements are reached by that time, the President could decide then whether further action under section 232 is appropriate.

Question. Mark Green launched Prosper Africa in Maputo, Mozambique in June. Please explain how Prosper Africa is supposed to operate, and how you as Ambassador will take advantage of the initiative in South Africa if confirmed.

Answer. Prosper Africa will mobilize resources from across the U.S. government to unlock the United States' unmatched competitive advantages to vastly accelerate two-way investment and trade with Africa states.

Prosper Africa draws on a broad range of tools, including the new Development Finance Corporation, both to help African governments improve the business environment in their countries and to support U.S. companies interested in investing in Africa.

By expanding investment and trade with partner countries in Africa and establishing a more level playing field for American businesses, Prosper Africa aims to create jobs and strengthen African countries' progress towards self-reliance.

If confirmed as Ambassador to the Republic of South Africa, I will aggressively use Prosper Africa and other mechanisms to expand markets in South Africa for American exporters and ensure our businesses and products are treated fairly.

Question. Will you commit, if confirmed, to ensuring that you fully brief Members of Congress and/or their staff when you are in Washington for visits or consultations during your tenure as Ambassador to South Africa?

Answer. Yes, if confirmed, I would be pleased to appropriately brief Members of Congress and/or their staff during my tenure as Ambassador to South Africa when I am in Washington.

Question. What do you consider the status of South Africa's state of gender equality? What actions and programs will you promote to support the improvement of the status of women and girls if confirmed?

Answer. South Africa's constitution contains strong protections for human rights, including for gender equality. Women's rights are also protected and upheld in South Africa by the Minister of Women in the Presidency, the Commission for Gender Equality, the Commission for Employment Equity, and a number of other government bodies, numerous non-governmental organizations (NGOs), and labor unions. The U.S. government, through the President's Emergency Plan for AIDS Relief (PEPFAR), also invests in protecting adolescent girls and young women in South Africa through its DREAMS (Determined, Resilient, Empowered, AIDS-free, Mentored, and Safe) public-private partnership to address many of the factors that make girls and young women particularly vulnerable to HIV, including gender-based violence and exclusion from economic opportunities.

However, South Africa continues to struggle with gender-based violence against women: between 25 and 40 percent of South African women have experienced sexual and/or physical violence at the hands of an intimate partner, according to the South African government's Demographic and Health Survey.

Question. How will you ensure that existing and longstanding U.S. policy commitments to ending gender-based violence, advancing the rights of adolescent girls, and promoting women's leadership and participation will be respected and advanced in South Africa?

Answer. While sexual violence is a global issue, the rate of sexual violence in South Africa is among the highest in the world. If confirmed, I would seek to leverage all U.S. government programs, including development programs, exchange programs, security assistance, and our sizeable HIV/AIDS assistance to deepen the impact of U.S. support to help South Africa address many of the factors that impede women's advancement in South Africa. This includes addressing factors that make girls and young women particularly vulnerable to HIV, including gender-based violence and exclusion from economic opportunities, as well as promoting more broadly efforts to prevent gender-based violence against women and assist those women who seek counseling, medical, legal, or financial assistance. Additionally, I would use public statements, speeches, and the press to add my voice—and that of the United States of America—to this cause.

Question. What are the most important actions you have taken in your career to date to support democracy and human rights? What has been the impact of your actions?

Answer. My professional experience is based entirely in the private sector, where I started an artisanal handbag business in Miami, Florida and grew it into a global brand. My work involved global travel, cross-cultural negotiation, and hard-nosed advocacy for my own rights and intellectual property.

In business negotiations across the span of my career, I have always advanced the values of honesty, fairness, and a firm belief in the power of free markets. In certain countries where I did business, these values had not fully taken hold, and it is no coincidence that these countries tended to fall short on human rights and democracy. Although I was operating in the capacity of a business leader, not an activist or government official, I would like to think that my adherence to these values-honesty, fairness, and free markets-served to move the hearts and minds of my interlocutors in a direction more favorable to human rights and democracy.

In addition, in my career I have negotiated with foreign public and private sector leaders who were unaccustomed to the sight of women in power. I dealt with these individuals personally, and in doing so, I believe I influenced their views on the role of women in society. In this way I contributed to the promotion of global women's rights, a key component of human rights and democracy.

I have shared lessons learned through these experiences through my participation in Harvard University's Kennedy School of government's Women's Leadership Board, as a distinguished speaker for Georgetown University's Women's Leadership Initiative, and by representing the United States in Helsinki for the Women Business Leaders Summit.

Question. What issues are the most pressing challenges to democracy or democratic development in South Africa? These challenges might include obstacles to participatory and accountable governance and institutions, rule of law, authentic political competition, civil society, human rights and press freedom. Please be as specific as possible.

Answer. Although South Africa is a vibrant democracy with a free press and strong democratic institutions, it continues to face challenges including corruption, gender-based violence against women, attacks on lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, and intersex (LGBTI) persons, and trafficking in persons (TIP).

Question. What steps will you take—if confirmed—to support democracy in South Africa? What do you hope to accomplish through these actions? What are the potential impediments to addressing the specific obstacles you have identified?

Answer. If confirmed as Ambassador to the Republic of South Africa, I would make the promotion of human rights and good governance a key objective in order to strengthen South Africa's democracy. Corruption scandals related to the administration of former President Jacob Zuma are the subject of ongoing judicial proceedings, and the current administration of President Cyril Ramaphosa has taken important steps to fight corruption. If confirmed, I would support President Ramaphosa's efforts through Mission programs and support from Washington-based agencies. I would continue the U.S. Mission's ongoing efforts to report on human

rights abuses, gender-based and anti-LGBTI violence, and trafficking in persons (TIP), through reporting cables as well as public reports like the annual Country Report on Human Rights Practices and Trafficking in Persons Report.

South Africa continues to address these complex, multi-pronged challenges with the support of partners like the United States. My greatest challenge in this regard, if confirmed, would be to match existing U.S. resources, which are necessarily finite, with this wide range of urgent reform priorities.

Question. How will you utilize U.S. government assistance resources at your disposal, including the Democracy Commission Small Grants program and other sources of State Department and USAID funding, to support democracy and governance, and what will you prioritize in processes to administer such assistance?

Answer. If confirmed as Ambassador to the Republic of South Africa, I would direct Mission staff to use Public Diplomacy, Self-Help, Africa Regional Democracy Fund, and other sources of funding to support democracy and governance. We would seek to apply these resources to people and projects throughout South Africa, drawing voices from across the country to form our opinions and shape our policies.

Question. If confirmed, do you commit to meet with civil society members, human rights and other non-governmental organizations in the U.S. and with local human rights NGOs, and other members of civil society in South Africa? What steps will you take to pro-actively address efforts to restrict or penalize NGOs and civil society via legal or regulatory measures?

Answer. If confirmed, I will meet with human rights, civil society, and other non-governmental organizations (NGOs) in the United States and in South Africa. I will ensure the U.S. Mission monitors any attempt to restrict or penalize NGOs and civil society via legal or regulatory measures.

Question. If confirmed, do you commit to meet with democratically oriented political opposition figures and parties? What steps will you take to encourage genuine political competition? Will you advocate for access and inclusivity for women, minorities and youth within political parties?

Answer. If confirmed, I would meet with democratically oriented political opposition figures and parties. I would publicly encourage and support South Africa's vibrant democracy and genuine political competition, and I would advocate for access and inclusivity for women, minorities and youth within political parties.

Question. Will you and your embassy team actively engage with South Africa on freedom of the press and address any government efforts designed to control or undermine press freedom through legal, regulatory or other measures? Will you commit to meeting regularly with independent, local press in South Africa?

Answer. South Africa enjoys a robust and independent press in a sophisticated media landscape. That said, if confirmed I would ensure that the U.S. Mission is vigilant to spot and address any government efforts designed to control or undermine press freedom through legal, regulatory or other measures. I would engage regularly with South Africa's independent media.

Question. Will you and your embassy team actively engage with civil society and government counterparts on countering disinformation and propaganda disseminated by foreign state or non-state actors in the country?

Answer. Yes, if confirmed I would seek to counter disinformation and propaganda disseminated by foreign state or non-state actors in South Africa.

Question. Will you and your embassy teams actively engage with South Africa on the right of labor groups to organize, including for independent trade unions?

Answer. South Africa has long benefited from strong and independent trade unions. If confirmed, I would actively engage with South Africa's labor groups.

Question. Will you commit to using your position, if confirmed, to defend the human rights and dignity of all people in South Africa, no matter their sexual orientation or gender identity? What challenges do the lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender and queer (LGBTQ) people face in South Africa? What specifically will you commit to do to help the LGBTQ people in South Africa achieve equal rights?

Answer. South Africa continues to suffer attacks on lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, and intersex (LGBTI) persons. If confirmed as Ambassador to the Republic of South Africa, I would continue the U.S. Mission's ongoing programming and reporting efforts to address human rights abuses, including gender-based and anti-LGBTI violence, through reporting cables as well as public reports like the annual Country Report on Human Rights Practices and Trafficking in Persons Report.

I would also commit to continue to support addressing their HIV services through the PEPFAR program,

One of the greatest obstacles to advancing women's empowerment and gender equity is a lack of quality healthcare, including access to reproductive health services. The U.S. government has historically led global efforts to combat preventable maternal deaths through investments in maternal and child health, nutrition, family planning, and other critical health interventions. However, the Administration's actions in the area of global health, such as expanding the Global Gag Rule, have severely undermined these efforts.

Question. Has the expanded Global Gag rule affected program implementation in South Africa? If so, how specifically?

Answer. The United States remains deeply committed to the people of South Africa, including through our PEPFAR program, which represents the vast majority of U.S. assistance to South Africa. Since 2004, in partnership with South Africa, the United States has invested more than U.S. $6 billion to control the HIV/AIDS epidemic in South Africa. South Africa, with the support of the United States, has the largest HIV treatment program in the world.

Question. What specifically will you do support South African women and girls in gaining full access to the full range of health services they require?

Answer. If confirmed, I will work closely with the State Department's Office of the Global AIDS Coordinator, USAID, CDC, Peace Corps, and others to ensure that the PEPFAR program continues its successful efforts to help all South Africans—including women and girls—live longer, healthier, and more productive lives by working together with the South African government to prevent and treat HIV and AIDS. A key part of this support is the PEPFAR-led Determined, Resilient, Empowered, AIDS-free, Mentored and Safe (DREAMS) public-private partnership that addresses many of the factors that make girls and young women particularly vulnerable to HIV, including gender-based violence and exclusion from economic opportunities.

Question. How do you characterize the current state and trajectory of the HIV/AIDS epidemic in South Africa? What do you see as the primary barrier(s) to achieving epidemic control in South Africa?

Answer. South Africa has the largest HIV epidemic in the world with an estimated 7.5 million people living with HIV (PLHIV). In 2016, South Africa had 270,000 new HIV infections and 110,000 AIDS-related deaths. Currently, with U.S. government support, there are more than 4.4 million on life-saving antiretroviral therapy (ART) and 3.1 million PLHIV not on ART in South Africa. In FY 2018, the PEPFAR team worked together with the government of South Africa to identify 939,704 PLHIV and started 752,934 new patients on treatment, resulting in 4,484,288 PLHIV currently on treatment across all 52 districts.

While we celebrate these successes, we also note that progress has been insufficient to reach epidemic control and there are critical barriers to ensuring success. The program is struggling to ensure every person who starts on HIV treatment remains on it. If confirmed, I would make it a top priority to coordinate efforts of U.S. and South African stakeholders to achieve epidemic control by the end of 2020.

Violent crime is a significant problem across South Africa, as are criminal justice system capacity challenges. There are periodic reports of vigilante and mob violence, and police sometimes use heavy-handed, abusive tactics. Broader challenges to social cohesion are manifest in periodic xenophobic attacks on African immigrants and their businesses, criminal attacks on white farmers, and the de facto racial segregation of many residential areas.

Question. Is there a role for the United States in helping South Africa address violent crimes and improve security?

Answer. South Africa faces daunting, complex challenges of violent crime and an overburdened criminal justice system. If confirmed, I would seek to increase South African participation in U.S. training programs, such as through judicial sector participation in U.S. public affairs exchange programs and security force participation in the International Law Enforcement Academy (ILEA) in Gaborone, Botswana. Moreover, I would search for strategic windows of opportunity to further support South Africa's National Prosecuting Authority, independent judiciary, and civil society organizations, each of which plays a critical role in promoting accountability and supporting victims of violent crime.

Question. What programs will you prioritize aimed at increasing the capacity of an independent and effective judicial system?

Answer. If confirmed, I would strongly support ongoing U.S. Mission efforts to increase the capacity of South Africa's independent and effective judicial system. The Mission has undertaken extensive engagement with various elements of the South African court system in recent years with a goal of building judicial capacity. For example, the U.S. Mission to South Africa provided a U.S. $15,000 grant to the U.S. National Center for State Courts to provide training workshops to South African justices, and has facilitated numerous exchange visits and justice system collaborations.

Question. How would you describe the state of xenophobia in South Africa? If confirmed, as an appointee of President Trump, what actions could you credibly take to speak against xenophobia in light of President Trump's recent tweets telling four members of the House of Representatives-all U.S. citizens—"who originally came from countries whose governments are a complete and total catastrophe" to "go back and help fix the totally broken and crime infested places from which they came," which appear to rest on the presumption that people of color must not be U.S. citizens?

Answer. Xenophobic violence remains a problem in South Africa. According to the State Department's 2018 Country Report on Human Rights Practices for South Africa, an open-source system for information collection on xenophobia-related incidents reported that 27 persons were killed, 77 persons were assaulted, 588 shops were looted, and 1,143 persons were displaced due to xenophobic incidents during the 18 months between February and August 2017. Xenophobic violence in South Africa is largely directed against refugees from Somalia, Ethiopia, or the Democratic Republic of the Congo. In many cases the victims are owners or managers of small, informal grocery stores in poor residential areas.

If confirmed as Ambassador to the Republic of South Africa, I would continue the U.S. Mission's efforts to direct programs and reporting to address this ongoing problem.

Question. Do you agree that any targeting of or retaliation against career employees based on their perceived political beliefs, prior work on policy, or affiliation with a previous administration, is wholly inappropriate and has no place in the federal government?

Answer. Yes, I believe that any targeting of or retaliation against career employees based on their perceived political beliefs, prior work on policy, or affiliation with a previous administration, is wholly inappropriate and has no place in the federal government.

Question. If confirmed, what will you do to ensure that all employees under your leadership understand that any retaliation, blacklisting, or other prohibited personnel practices will not be tolerated?

Answer. If confirmed, I will remain vigilant in this regard and will instruct agency and section leadership across the U.S. Mission, including the Deputy Chief of Mission and the Human Resources Officer, to ensure that any retaliation, blacklisting, or other prohibited personnel practices will not be tolerated.

Question. Has anyone ever made a formal or informal complaint or allegation of sexual harassment, discrimination (e.g., racial, ethnic, religious, etc.), or inappropriate conduct against you, in a workplace or any other setting)?

Answer. No.

Question. Have you ever addressed concerns or allegations of sexual harassment, discrimination (e.g., racial, ethnic, religious, etc.), or inappropriate conduct made against any employee over whom you had supervisory authority?

Answer. No, I have not. I take any potential issue of sexual harassment, discrimination, and inappropriate conduct with the utmost seriousness. While I have addressed concerns about workplace policies related to compensation, I am not aware of any concerns regarding harassment, discrimination, or inappropriate conduct. In the event I do become aware of such concerns, I commit to addressing them quickly and appropriately.

RESPONSES TO ADDITIONAL QUESTIONS FOR THE RECORD
SUBMITTED TO LANA MARKS BY SENATOR BENJAMIN L. CARDIN

Question. What are your most meaningful achievements to date in your career to promote human rights and democracy? What has been the impact of your actions?

Answer. My professional experience is based entirely in the private sector, where I started an artisanal handbag business in Miami, Florida and grew it into a global brand. My work involved global travel, cross-cultural negotiation, and hard-nosed advocacy for my own rights and intellectual property.

In business negotiations across the span of my career, I have always advanced the values of honesty, fairness, and a firm belief in the power of free markets. In certain countries where I did business, these values had not fully taken hold, and it is no coincidence that these countries tended to fall short on human rights and democracy. Although I was operating in the capacity of a business leader, not an activist or government official, I would like to think that my adherence to these values-honesty, fairness, and free markets-served to move the hearts and minds of my interlocutors in a direction more favorable to human rights and democracy.

In addition, in my career I have negotiated with foreign public and private sector leaders who were unaccustomed to the sight of women in power. I dealt with these individuals personally, and in doing so I believe I influenced their views on the role of women in society. In this way I contributed to the promotion of global women's rights, a key component of human rights and democracy.

I have shared lessons learned through these experiences through my participation in Harvard University's Kennedy School of government's Women's Leadership Board, as a distinguished speaker for Georgetown University's Women's Leadership Initiative, and by representing the United States in Helsinki for the Women Business Leaders Summit.

Question. What are the most pressing human rights issues in South Africa? What are the most important steps you expect to take—if confirmed—to promote human rights and democracy in South Africa? What do you hope to accomplish through these actions?

Answer. Although South Africa is a vibrant democracy with a free press and strong democratic institutions, it continues to face challenges including corruption, gender-based violence against women, attacks on lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, and intersex (LGBTI) persons, and trafficking in persons (TIP).

If confirmed as Ambassador to the Republic of South Africa, I would make the promotion of human rights and good governance a key objective in order to strengthen South Africa's democracy. Corruption scandals related to the administration of former President Jacob Zuma are the subject of ongoing judicial proceedings, and the current administration of President Cyril Ramaphosa has taken important steps to fight corruption. If confirmed, I would support President Ramaphosa's efforts through Mission programs and support from Washington-based agencies. I would continue the U.S. Mission's ongoing efforts to report on human rights abuses, gender-based and anti-LGBTI violence, and TIP, through reporting cables as well as public reports like the annual Country Report on Human Rights Practices and Trafficking in Persons Report.

Specifically, I would seek to focus attention on the issue of gender-based violence against women—between 25 and 40 percent of South African women have experienced sexual or physical violence at the hands of an intimate partner. While sexual violence is a global issue, the rate of sexual violence in South Africa is among the highest in the world. I would seek to leverage all U.S. government programs, including development programs, exchange programs, security assistance, and our sizeable HIV/AIDS assistance to deepen our impact to help prevent gender-based violence against women and assist those women who seek counseling, medical, legal, or financial assistance. Additionally, I would use public statements, speeches, and the press to add my voice—and that of the United States of America—to this cause.

Question. If confirmed, what are the potential obstacles to addressing the specific human rights issues you have identified in your previous response? What challenges will you face in South Africa in advancing human rights, civil society and democracy in general?

Answer. South Africa's constitution is celebrated for its strong protections of human rights, and South African courts and institutions generally perform well. However, resource constraints prevent South African courts and institutions from fully living up to the constitution's ideals. As noted in the 2018 Country Report on Human Rights Practices for South Africa, the judiciary remains understaffed and underfunded, resulting in up to two-thirds of criminal cases never resulting in verdicts. In cases of gender-based violence against women, low conviction rates result from poor police training, insufficient forensic lab capacity, lack of trauma counseling for victims and witnesses, and overburdened courts.

South Africa continues to address these complex, multi-pronged challenges with the support of partners like the United States. My greatest challenge in this regard,

if confirmed, would be to match existing U.S. resources, which are necessarily finite, with this wide range of urgent reform priorities.

Question. Are you committed to meeting with human rights, civil society and other non-governmental organizations in the U.S. and with local human rights NGOs in South Africa? If confirmed, what steps will you take to pro-actively support the Leahy Law and similar efforts, and ensure that provisions of U.S. security assistance and security cooperation activities reinforce human rights?

Answer. If confirmed, I would meet with human rights, civil society, and other non-governmental organizations in the United States and in South Africa. I would uphold the Leahy Law and similar efforts by ensuring that the U.S. Embassy maintains robust vetting practices, and I would ensure that U.S. security assistance and security cooperation activities reinforce human rights.

Question. Will you and your embassy team actively engage with South Africa to address cases of key political prisoners or persons otherwise unjustly targeted by South Africa?

Answer. I am unaware of any such cases at the moment, but if confirmed I would actively address any such cases should they arise.

Question. Will you engage with South Africa on matters of human rights, civil rights and governance as part of your bilateral mission?

Answer. Yes. If I am confirmed as Ambassador to the Republic of South Africa, I would ensure that human rights, civil rights, and governance remain a central aspect of the U.S. Mission's engagement with South Africa.

Question. Do you commit to bring to the committee's attention (and the State Department Inspector General) any change in policy or U.S. actions that you suspect may be influenced by any of the President's business or financial interests, or the business or financial interests of any senior White House staff?

Answer. I commit to comply with all relevant federal ethics laws, regulations, and rules, and to raise concerns that I may have through appropriate channels.

Question. Do you commit to inform the committee if you have any reason to suspect that a foreign government, head of state, or foreign-controlled entity is taking any action in order to benefit any of the President's business or financial interests, or the interests of senior White House staff?

Answer. I commit to comply with all relevant federal ethics laws, regulations, and rules, and to raise concerns that I may have through appropriate channels.

Question. Do you or do any members of your immediate family have any financial interests in South Africa?

Answer. I am one of two trustees of a family trust, which holds commercial and mixed-use real estate in South Africa. I am currently in the process of transferring my trusteeship to a non-family member. If confirmed, I will comply with all stipulations as outlined in my ethics agreement and resign from this position.

Other than the above, neither I nor my immediate family members have any financial interests in South Africa.

Question. Research from private industry demonstrates that, when managed well, diversity makes business teams better both in terms of creativity and in terms of productivity. What will you do to promote, mentor and support your staff that come from diverse backgrounds and underrepresented groups in the Foreign Service?

Answer. I strongly believe that diversity makes business teams better. If confirmed, I would strongly encourage mentoring for staff members from diverse backgrounds and underrepresented groups, and I would ensure that agency and section leaders throughout the U.S. Mission engage in leadership practices that support diversity.

Question. What steps will you take to ensure each of the supervisors at the Embassy are fostering an environment that is diverse and inclusive?

Answer. A diverse and inclusive workforce is stronger, more effective, and more representative of the wide diversity of the United States. If confirmed, I would use the robust performance management tools at my disposal to hold agency and section heads across the U.S. Mission accountable to ensure they foster an environment that is diverse and inclusive. I would lead by example, modeling inclusive teambuilding and offering an open-door policy to any staff who would wish to share a concern with me. Finally, I would ensure that all staff are aware of their rights and responsibilities as federal employees.

Question. How do you believe political corruption impacts democratic governance and the rule of law generally, and in South Africa specifically?

Answer. Political corruption has exerted a negative effect on democratic governance and the rule of law in South Africa. Following nearly a decade of corrupt practices under the administration of former President Jacob Zuma, and the scandals that followed, many South African voters lost faith in the democratic rights that were so hard-won a generation ago. The fewest number of South Africans since the country's first democratic elections in 1994 voted in the country's most recent national election (66 percent of all registered voters), which analysts have attributed to a "perfect storm" of multiple corruption scandals, rampant unemployment, especially among youth, a stagnant economy, and recurrent power failures following mismanagement at the national energy utility. Political corruption also contributes to the enrichment of the few at the expense of the many, exacerbating economic inequality that is already the world's most severe, according to the World Bank.

Question. What is your assessment of corruption trends in South Africa and efforts to address and reduce it by that government?

Answer. From 2010 to 2018, South Africa saw a rise in corrupt practices under the administration of former President Jacob Zuma, resulting in scandals and a loss of confidence in government institutions. Since February 2018, when President Cyril Ramaphosa replaced Zuma and began taking steps to roll back corruption, the trend has been significantly more positive. A number of high-level judicial commissions, most notably a commission headed by Deputy Chief Justice Raymond Zondo, are examining the extent of Zuma's corruption. President Ramaphosa's anti-corruption efforts hold out promise for the benefit of South Africa's voting public as well as investors who point to successful anti-corruption measures as critical to sustainable economic growth.

Question. If confirmed, what steps will you take to strengthen good governance and anticorruption programming in South Africa?

Answer. If confirmed, I would build on the efforts already underway across the U.S. Mission in South Africa to report and engage on good governance and anti-corruption efforts. I would ensure top-level support for the Mission's good governance working group, an interagency mechanism that leverages expertise across agencies and sections. I would support ongoing programs that address corruption and governance, use public statements, speeches and the press to call attention to these issues, and advocate for additional resources in these areas.

RESPONSES TO ADDITIONAL QUESTIONS FOR THE RECORD
SUBMITTED TO LANA MARKS BY SENATOR JEANNE SHAHEEN

Question. Thank you for your commitment to look into the impact of the President's Protecting Life in Global Health Assistance (PLGHA) policy in South Africa. As you may know, South Africa has the largest HIV epidemic in the world, with 19% of the global number of people living with HIV, 15% of new infections and 11% of AIDS-related deaths. Several detailed and credible studies have demonstrated that the impact of the PLGHA extends beyond family planning services to other global health concerns, including HIV/AIDS. In interviews conducted by the International Women's Health Coalition, many NGOs described the clear and devastating impact of this policy. The Executive Director of one organization in South Africa said that "When the U.S. pulls out [organizations close] down services, it is not just the abortion services. It is the information to women, it is HIV services, it is pregnancy services, teenage pregnancy and related stuff. So what has happened is that women's lives have become much more vulnerable, they don't have access the way they did—and it is always the most poor marginalized who suffer the most."

- In addition to examining the impact of the PLGHA on health systems, will you commit to looking specifically at the impact of the policy on the President's Emergency Plan for AIDS Relief (PEPFAR) and malaria and Tuberculosis programs?

Answer. The United States remains deeply committed to the people of South Africa, including through our PEPFAR program, which represents the vast majority of U.S. assistance to South Africa. Since 2004, in partnership with South Africa, the United States has invested more than U.S. $6 billion to control the HIV/AIDS epidemic in South Africa. South Africa, with the support of the United States, has the largest HIV treatment program in the world.

If confirmed, I will work tirelessly to ensure that health programs, including those supported by PEPFAR and those focused on malaria and tuberculosis, are maxi-

mally effective to save lives, achieve epidemic control, and improve health outcomes in South Africa.

RESPONSES TO ADDITIONAL QUESTIONS FOR THE RECORD
SUBMITTED TO JESSICA E. LAPENN BY SENATOR ROBERT MENENDEZ

Question. What are the most notable successes and shortcomings in the African Union's efforts to resolve conflicts in Africa? What types of U.S. support could most effectively enhance such efforts?

Answer. The African Union (AU) provides an excellent forum for our African partners to proactively work through diplomatic and security challenges before they arise and to provide credible, African-led, multilateral responses to resolve ongoing conflicts and other security challenges. The AU has had its greatest successes in missions in which there is significant internal political support and, when necessary, international partner resourcing. Through the AU Mission in Somalia (AMISOM), the AU has provided the Somali government and people with an opportunity to begin to achieve political goals and take its first steps as a functioning state. The AU's greatest shortcomings are the lack of human, technical, and financial capacity to fully support all AU Commission-mandated activities. Continuing to assist the AU's ability to carry out its missions through the provision of U.S. advisory, technical, and limited operational assistance in coordination with like-minded partners is the most effective way to support the self-sufficiency of the AU.

Question. How effectively has U.S. support for AMISOM been coordinated with that of other donors? What are the key lessons learned from current or past AU peace operations?

Answer. U.S. support to AMISOM is coordinated at multiple levels to ensure efficient and effective use of U.S. resources and avoid duplication of effort. We have regular capital-level discussions on AMISOM with the European Union (EU), which funds AMISOM troop salaries, and AU counterparts. There is also extensive on-the-ground coordination in Mogadishu via the Comprehensive Approach to Security process, which brings together all the major security donors to AMISOM, including the EU, United States, United Kingdom and the U.N. to enable timely and comprehensive coordination of assistance. It is important for international partners, such as the United States and EU, to work at both the political and working levels to ensure there is sufficient political support; avoid duplicative support efforts; and recognize the comparative advantages of each donor.

Question. What role, if any, do you see for the United States in supporting the AU's stymied mediation effort in Burundi, or in bolstering regional peace efforts in South Sudan? What are the impediments to the establishment of the hybrid court for South Sudan, and how could the AU address them? What concrete actions will you take, if confirmed, to

Answer. The United States fully supports regional mediation efforts, including those by the AU, and regularly urges the government of Burundi to engage productively.

The United States will continue to press the AU, the Intergovernmental Authority on Development (IGAD), regional states, and the government of South Sudan to support implementation of the South Sudan peace agreement signed on September 12, 2018. We are also coordinating closely with our Troika partners (United Kingdom and Norway), the EU, and the U.N. We are committed to ensuring robust enforcement of the U.N. arms embargo, and to encouraging South Sudan's neighbors to play a positive role.

The United States supports accountability and is working with the AU to encourage the government of South Sudan to establish the Hybrid Court as articulated in the September 2018 Revitalized Agreement on the Resolution of the Conflict in the Republic of South Sudan. The United States is pressing the AU to step up efforts to operationalize the Hybrid Court, including hiring key personnel.

If confirmed, I will continue to advocate the AU do more to implement establishment of the Court.

Question. Please discuss the role of the AU Commission with regard to ensuring the success of AMISOM, the MNJTF, and the G5 Sahel joint force initiative. What actions, if any, could USAU pursue-as a complement to the substantial U.S. military assistance provided to these three forces-to support that end?

Answer. The AU Commission provides both direct (e.g. Somalia) and indirect (e.g. MNTF and G5 Sahel) oversight of missions mandated by the AU Peace and Security Council (PSC). The AU Commission supports AMISOM, the MNJTF, and the G5 Sahel Joint Force by mobilizing African and international partners' political backing and resources to provide material and technical support for these forces. In addition, it provides assistance and administrative support to the sub-regional organizations in support of their missions. If confirmed, I will work with the AU and like-minded international partners to ensure the missions work on comprehensive approaches toward addressing AU responses to insecurity.

Question. In December 2018, Ethiopia proposed a U.N. Security Council resolution proposing to use U.N. assessed contributions to fund AU peace support operations, and South Africa, which replaced Ethiopia on the Council in January, may offer a similar resolution while it holds the Council presidency in October. What concerns does the U.S. have about such a proposal and what is the current status of negotiations? If confirmed, what actions will you recommend the U.S. take to address the issues of reliable steady funding from international partners for African Union peace keeping missions?

Answer. The Administration values the African Union's (AU) essential contribution to maintaining peace and security on the African continent and supports its goal to have predictable and sustainable funding for AU-led peace support operations (PSOs). Any proposed U.N. Security Council resolution to use U.N. assessed contributions to support AU PSOs must have sufficient safeguards to ensure it does not cross U.S. red lines, including UNSC primacy, oversight, and accountability.

In large part because the resolution, as introduced in December, did not address U.S. concerns, and subsequent intensive discussions failed to address those concerns, the Security Council did not take action on this resolution. While the issue has not formally been taken up by the Security Council, it is likely one of the AU countries may introduce a similar resolution in October during the South African presidency in the U.N. Security Council. At this time, the South Africans have not introduced a draft for negotiation.

If confirmed, I will work with AU Member States to ensure U.S. concerns and priorities are addressed when considering proposals to use U.N. funding to support AU-led PSOs.

Question. What are the most important actions you have taken in your career to date to support democracy and human rights? What has been the impact of your actions?

Answer. As the Office Director for Human Rights and Humanitarian Affairs in the Bureau of International Organizations, I led our team to champion and support numerous human rights resolutions, including on LGBTI human rights and country specific situations. As the Chief of Staff for the Under Secretary of State for Civilian Security, Democracy, and Human Rights, I supported the Under Secretary to direct the bureaus which fell under her purview. In that role, I focused on cross-cutting issues with strong human rights equities, including work on the Atrocity Prevention Board, ensuring our efforts to counter violent extremism included non-security tools and approaches; and highlighted corruption concerns as a source of legitimate grievances and a risk to stability and security.

I have also advocated for these issues in my last several overseas leadership positions. As DCM in Rwanda, I led the Embassy's first ever work on the human rights of LGBTI individuals, navigated challenges to democratic consolidation, and supported civil society. I also managed the surrender at the U.S. Embassy of Bosco Ntaganda, who was subsequently convicted of war crimes and crimes against humanity. As Chargé d'Affaires in South Africa, I have supported efforts to strengthen South Africa's democratic institutions. I have led the Mission to use the full range of diplomatic tools, including exchange programs, public statements, private encouragement, and foreign assistance-funded programs.

Question. What issues are the most pressing challenges to consistent diplomatic support by the African Union for democracy or democratic development on the continent?

Answer. Democratic deficiencies contribute to transnational threats across the region; therefore we must help communities foster legitimate, inclusive political systems that respect human rights and the rule of law, reduce fragility, mitigate risks of violent conflict and instability, and create enabling environments for economic growth. The African continent has made important gains in democracy and institution building over the last few decades, but those gains are fragile and require support.

Repressive laws, often in the name of security, restrict freedom of expression and peaceful assembly and undercut efforts to support nascent civil society. These laws can provide legal cover for harassment of opposition politicians, journalists, and civil society. As a result, they curb internal dissent, stem legitimate criticism, and limit the development of viable political competition.

Although elections are widely accepted as the norm in the region, an increasing frequency of electoral events have contributed to democratic backsliding instead of consolidation. In many countries, corruption is endemic, and state institutions remain weak. In addition to corruption, fiscal indiscipline and unaccountable public financial management systems in Africa undermine economic growth and democratic governance. Strong, accountable, and democratic institutions, sustained by a deep commitment to the rule of law, are most successful at generating greater prosperity and stability, and mitigating conflict and ensuring security.

Question. What steps will you take—if confirmed—to support more robust African Union diplomatic support for greater respect for democracy and democratic principles by member states? What do you hope to accomplish through these actions? What are the potential impediments to addressing the specific obstacles you have identified?

Answer. If confirmed, I will work with the African Union (AU), as well as member states, to support democratic institutions, respect for human rights, accountability, access to justice, and good governance. This includes supporting and improving the effectiveness of the Department of Political Affairs, Office of Legal Counsel, and the Democracy and Electoral Assistance Unit (DEAU), all of which play a critical role to promote democratic values within the AU and the region.

In particular, I commit to working with the DEAU to improve its elections observation expertise, and press it, as well as like-minded member states, to be critical of flawed elections and political processes. I will utilize the U.S.-AU High Level Dialogue, and the Democracy and Governance technical working group, to advance support for free and fair elections, rule of law, transitional justice, protection of marginalized populations, and anti-corruption efforts. I will also work with the AU's Peace and Security Council to ensure civilian protection and respect for human rights are the cornerstones of its approach to peace and security in Africa.

There will be challenges. Capacity remains weak and resources scarce within AU institutions. The leadership of some member states do not share American values of democracy and respect for human rights, and thus, achieving consensus within the AU for these issues could be difficult. If confirmed, I commit to identifying influential decision-makers who embrace U.S. values who can help advocate for why these values are in the best interest of Africa and Africans.

Question. If confirmed, do you commit to meet with civil society members, human rights and other non-governmental organizations while ambassador to the African Union?

Answer. If confirmed as Ambassador to the AU, I commit to working with a broad spectrum of actors from civil society, human rights organizations, and other non-governmental organizations. A robust and diverse civil society able to do its work unhindered is imperative for a peaceful and prosperous Africa. I will strive to empower all Africans, with particular emphasis on women and youth, to constructively shape and participate in their social, political, and economic environments.

Question. Will you and your embassy team actively engage with African Union on consistent advocacy for freedom of the press in member states?

Answer. Yes, I commit to advocate actively and consistently for freedom of expression, including for members of the press in member states. As disinformation and manipulation work best in a monopolized information space, I will work with allies and partners to encourage and promote professional, balanced, and fact-based reporting while respecting the independence of the media, and expose and counter hostile disinformation campaigns.

Question. Will you commit to using your position, if confirmed, to encourage appropriate the African Union organs to defend the human rights and dignity of all people in member states, no matter their sexual orientation or gender identity? What challenges do the lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender and queer (LGBTQ) people face in the African Union? What specifically will you commit to do to help LGBTQ people in the African Union?

Answer. If confirmed, I commit to protecting the human rights and fundamental freedoms of all persons, particularly members of historically marginalized or persecuted populations. The safety and security of all marginalized groups, including LGBTI persons, is of the utmost importance; therefore, I will ensure our approach

within the AU, first and foremost, does no harm. I will work with the AU to develop strategies that prioritize regular discussions with local LGBTI communities and civil society partners. I will also raise the human rights of LGBTI persons and related issues in the context of broader human rights and democracy concerns wherever possible. And finally, I will support and encourage the development of African voices in support of the human rights of LGBTI persons.

Question. Will you commit, if confirmed, to ensuring that you fully brief Members of Congress and/or their staff each time you are in Washington for visits or consultations during your tenure as Ambassador to African Union?

Answer. I will always seek the opportunity to appropriately brief Members of Congress and their staffs while in Washington for official consultations.

Question. Do you agree that any targeting of or retaliation against career employees based on their perceived political beliefs, prior work on policy, or affiliation with a previous administration, is wholly inappropriate and has no place in the federal government?

Answer. Yes. I agree that any targeting of or retaliation against career employees based on their perceived political beliefs, prior work on policy, or affiliation with a previous administration, is wholly inappropriate and has no place in the federal government.

Question. If confirmed, what will you do to ensure that all employees under your leadership understand that any retaliation, blacklisting, or other prohibited personnel practices will not be tolerated?

Answer. I will set the tone from the top to model professional supervision studiously consistent with all Federal government requirements. I will articulate clearly my expectations of supervisors and of appropriate, professional workplace behaviors. In previous positions, I have communicated my expectations explicitly in different formats, including at Country Team meetings with senior staff, at all staff Mission Town Halls and through formal Management Notices and written communications. I will also work directly with supervisors, especially any first time supervisors, to ensure that they are communicating effectively and appropriately, encouraging feedback from their direct reports, and are sufficiently self-aware in their interactions with staff. I will promptly and decisively address any concerns raised around such practices.

Question. Has anyone ever made a formal or informal complaint or allegation of sexual harassment, discrimination (e.g., racial, ethnic, religious, etc.), or inappropriate conduct against you, in a workplace or any other setting)? If so, please describe the nature of the complaint or allegation, your response, and any resolution, including any settlements.

Answer. Not to my knowledge.

Question. Have you ever addressed concerns or allegations of sexual harassment, discrimination (e.g., racial, ethnic, religious, etc.), or inappropriate conduct made against any employee over whom you had supervisory authority? If so, please describe the outcome and actions taken.

Answer. I take the issues of sexual harassment, discrimination (e.g., racial, ethnic, religious, etc.), and inappropriate conduct with the utmost seriousness. Throughout my career, I have immediately addressed any issues raised to me in accordance with the Department of State's policies and practices in dealing with such conduct. While the actions taken and the outcomes have differed based on the specifics of each situation, I have always acted swiftly and decisively, seeking guidance from the Department as appropriate, and also made every effort to ensure the wellbeing of the claimant.

RESPONSES TO ADDITIONAL QUESTIONS FOR THE RECORD
SUBMITTED TO JESSICA E. LAPENN BY SENATOR BENJAMIN L. CARDIN

Question. What are the most important actions you have taken in your career to date to promote human rights and democracy? What has been the impact of your actions?

Answer. As the Office Director for Human Rights and Humanitarian Affairs in the Bureau of International Organizations, I led our team to champion and support numerous human rights resolutions, including on LGBTI human rights and country specific situations within the U.N. system. As the Chief of Staff for the Under Sec-

retary of State for Civilian Security, Democracy, and Human Rights, I supported the Under Secretary to direct the bureaus which fell under her purview. In that role, I focused on cross-cutting issues with strong human rights equities, including work on the Atrocity Prevention Board, ensuring our efforts to counter violent extremism included non-security tools and approaches; and highlighted corruption concerns as a source of legitimate grievances and a risk to stability and security.I have also advocated for these issues in my last several overseas leadership positions. As DCM in Rwanda, I led the Embassy's first ever work on the human rights of LGBTI individuals, navigated challenges to democratic consolidation, and supported civil society. I also managed the surrender at the U.S. Embassy of Bosco Ntaganda, who was subsequently convicted of war crimes and crimes against humanity. As Chargé d'Affaires in South Africa, I have supported efforts to strengthen South Africa's democratic institutions. I have led the Mission to use the full range of diplomatic tools, including exchange programs, public statements, private encouragement, and foreign assistance-funded programs.

Question. What will you do to promote, mentor and support your staff that come from diverse backgrounds and underrepresented groups?

Answer. As Chargé d'Affaires in South Africa, I have ensured the tone of an inclusive work place is set from the top. I have strived to develop and inculcate a corporate culture that emphasizes respect for others, transparency, teamwork, and collaboration through an ongoing, active effort. I spend a lot of time and energy encouraging and rewarding inclusion and collaboration. At USAU, I commit to promoting a culture of inclusion and leading by example. If confirmed, I will ensure that all staff feel they have a voice and know that diversity is indeed a core strength of our organization. I will work to get to know staff—who they are, where they are from, and what motivates them. I will address any EEO or related concerns brought to my attention rapidly and ensure that all staff are familiar with the processes available to them as Federal employees. I will communicate my expectations of work clearly, so people confidently understand what is expected of them. I will also emphasize my own availability to any staff member who wishes to bring a concern directly to me. I have done that with great effect in previous positions, enabling me to address concerns directly and decisively.

Question. What steps will you take to ensure each of the supervisors in the Foreign Service are fostering an environment that is diverse and inclusive?

Answer. If confirmed, I will set the tone from the top and model supervision rooted in my own values as well as those of the Federal government around diversity and inclusion. I will use the systems and tools available within government, including the Federal Women's Program. I will underscore my expectations of workplace and supervisory behaviors. In previous positions, I have communicated my expectations explicitly in different formats, including at Country Team meetings with senior staff, at all staff Mission Town Halls, and through formal Management Notices and written communications. I will also work directly with supervisors, especially first time supervisors, to ensure that they are communicating effectively and appropriately, encourage feedback from their direct reports, and are sufficiently self-aware in their interactions with staff.

Question. Do you commit to bring to the committee's attention (and the Inspector General of the State Department) any change in policy or U.S. actions that you suspect may be influenced by any of the President's business or financial interests, or the business or financial interests of any senior White House staff?

Answer. I commit to comply with all relevant federal ethics laws, regulations, and rules, and to raise concerns that I may have through appropriate channels.

Question. Do you commit to inform the committee if you have any reason to suspect that a foreign government, head of state, or foreign-controlled entity is taking any action in order to benefit any of the President's business or financial interests, or the interests of senior White House staff?

Answer. I commit to comply with all relevant federal ethics laws, regulations, and rules, and to raise concerns that I may have through appropriate channels.

Question. Do you or do any members of your immediate family have any financial interests in any country abroad?

Answer. My investment portfolio includes diversified mutual funds that may hold interests in companies with a presence abroad. The diversified mutual funds are exempt from the conflict of interest laws. I am committed to ensuring that my official

actions will not give rise to a conflict of interest, and I will remain vigilant with regard to my ethics obligations.

RESPONSES TO ADDITIONAL QUESTIONS FOR THE RECORD
SUBMITTED TO RICHARD BELL BY SENATOR ROBERT MENENDEZ

Question. Political competition in advance of Côte d'Ivoire's presidential election in 2020 could be destabilizing, especially if former President Laurent Gbagbo seeks re-election.

- Please share status of Côte d'Ivoire's preparations. What assistance is the U.S. providing to support credible elections, including conflict mitigation?

Answer. Let me stress that Côte d'Ivoire is an important partner with a pro-American president and government. We supported the international community's efforts to ensure the will of the Ivoirian people was respected during the 2010 post-electoral crisis, and I believe we must remain invested in the country's continued recovery and the consolidation of its democratic gains.

The biggest challenges to democracy in Côte d'Ivoire will come in relation to the high-stakes presidential election in 2020. The 2018 local elections raised concerns due to well-documented irregularities, vote tampering, violence, and intimidation of voters by those affiliated with political parties. Given Côte d'Ivoire's recent history of violence, elections not perceived as free and fair risk plunging the country into further violence.

If confirmed, I would first urge the government to ensure that governance reforms remain front and center on their agenda, as Côte d'Ivoire prepares for the presidential election in 2020. We are assisting this effort, including through a four-year USAID Political Transition and Inclusion (PTI) program being implemented by the National Democratic Institute, as well as a range of other assistance tools.

Second, I would also push for the government of Côte d'Ivoire to make good on promises of national reconciliation.

Third, I would push for reform of the electoral commission—something linked to reconciliation—and which would pave the way for a new generation to lead the country, ultimately improving the lives of the Ivoirian people.

In the context of this, I would ensure we wisely use U.S. government funds, through MCC, USAID, PEPFAR, and other assistance mechanisms provided to the country. We have provided approximately $140 million to Côte d'Ivoire in FY 2018 to promote good governance, economic growth, security reforms, and improved health systems.

Question. How should the United States respond if former President Gbagbo were to repatriate and seek re-election-and/or if Ouattara were to run again?

Answer. Laurent Gbagbo is on conditional release in Belgium pending the prosecutor's possible appeal of the acquittal. There are a number of hurdles that Laurent Gbagbo would need to overcome before an eventual return to Côte d'Ivoire, one of which is that there is currently an arrest warrant for him in Côte d'Ivoire.

In August 2018, in his National Day speech, President Ouattara himself called for the transition of the country's leadership to a new generation, and we commended that statement. President Ouattara himself pledged early in his presidency to hold power for only two terms, a position we support. We believe that regular, democratic transitions of power yield more accountability, stronger institutions, and less corruption.

The United States does not support any particular candidate for the 2020 Presidential election. We support a democratic process that is genuinely free, fair, and transparent, and a result that is viewed as legitimate by Ivoirian voters. Given Côte d'Ivoire's recent history of violence, elections not perceived as free and fair risk plunging the country into further violence.

Côte d'Ivoire faces international terrorism threats, as indicated by a 2016 attack near Abidjan by a regional Al Qaeda affiliate that killed 19. Broader domestic challenges arise from longstanding communal tensions over land and state resources. This is notably in the unstable western forest cocoa belt, where indigenous and migrant farming communities have often clashed, and where limited attacks by small rogue pro-Gbagbo armed elements have occurred.

Question. How would you assess the threat from violent Islamist extremism in Côte d'Ivoire? If confirmed, what steps do you plan to take to help the government address such threats?

Answer. Côte d'Ivoire remains relatively calm despite an increase in incidents of inter-communal violence stemming from years of crisis and conflict from which the country continues to recover. There is a risk that some politicians are seeking to exploit ethnic tensions as the country prepares for its 2020 presidential election. The threat of violent extremism from the Sahel is also approaching Côte d'Ivoire's northern border with an increase in attacks in Mali and Burkina Faso. The U.S. government, through USAID's Political Transition and Inclusion (PTI) program, is addressing governance and post-conflict grievances, including vulnerabilities to violent extremism in northern, western, central, and southern Côte d'Ivoire. PTI includes programming focused on increasing moderate voices in social media and community radio, providing economic opportunities to vulnerable youth and women, and encouraging intercommunal dialogue in marginalized areas. In addition, in April 2019 Côte d'Ivoire was approved to participate in the Global Peace Operation Initiative (GPOI). This will allow the country's new peacekeeping battalion scheduled for deployment in Mali to receive modest training, construction, and equipping support for future peacekeeping contingents. The government of Côte d'Ivoire has requested more security sector reform (SSR) support from the United States and we are examining how to strengthen and expand security cooperation.

Question. To what extent, if at all, do elements of the military continue to engage in human rights abuses, extra-legal taxation, or roadside extortion? To what extent is the military subservient to civilian authority?

Answer. Corruption remains a problem, with allegations that former rebel leaders who supported President Ouattara during the conflict period and now serve as military commanders extract rents from economic activities in some regions of the country. In January and May 2017, former rebels integrated into the military staged mutinies, blocking access to major cities and halting economic activity until the government caved to demands for overdue bonuses. These mutinies exposed the threat posed by soldiers and other former fighters, who sacrificed their youth to fight for the current government but have not seen their livelihoods improve since the crisis ended. Weapons are readily available and circulate freely throughout the country. There are numerous incidents of highway banditry and other attacks in the countryside. During the holiday season, there is typically an increase in violent and opportunistic crimes.

Question. In light of the multiple mutinies by state security force elements in recent years, please discuss the current status of security sector reform (SSR). What are Côte d'Ivoire's main unmet SSR needs? Is the government taking credible steps to address SSR? If confirmed, what steps will you take to encourage meaningful reforms?

Answer. Hailed as a post-conflict success story following a decade-long civil crisis that ended in 2011, Côte d'Ivoire's impressive gains remain at risk due to an incomplete security sector reform (SSR) process and inadequacies in the demobilization, disarmament, and reintegration (DDR) process. Mutinies by former rebels integrated into the armed forces and protests by demobilized former fighters in 2017 exposed the threat posed by former rebel fighters and other security personnel, who, like many of the country's youth, women and working class, have not seen their livelihoods improve since the crisis ended. To consolidate the country's post-conflict recovery, the U.S. government and other key security partners, particularly France and the European Union, must continue to provide support to Côte d'Ivoire's ongoing SSR efforts. The State Department is supporting the broader SSR mission through funding from the Bureau of International Narcotics and Law Enforcement Affairs (INL) for community policing projects. INL is examining how to expand these efforts, which may require the addition of staff in Abidjan for program management and oversight.

Question. Please assess the relative effectiveness of Ivoirian efforts to ensure accountability for human rights abuses and crimes against the state arising from the 2010-2011 crisis.

Answer. Reconciliation from the 2010-2011 post-electoral crisis is an ongoing issue as none of those who ultimately prevailed in the conflict has been held accountable for any crimes allegedly committed.

Question. How many of those convicted of such crimes remain imprisoned following the government's August 2018 amnesty of roughly 800 such persons?

Answer. In August 2018, President Ouattara announced an immediate amnesty for 800 prisoners held for their participation in the 2010-11 post-electoral crisis, including several ex-cabinet members, military officers, and Simone Gbagbo, the wife of former president Laurent Gbagbo. In December, President Ouattara granted a

presidential pardon to more than 2,500 criminals imprisoned for misdemeanors. It is unclear exactly how many political prisoners are in Côte d'Ivoire, but the 800 who received amnesty exclude those convicted of a "blood crime." The names of the 800 who received amnesty have also not been released. If confirmed, I will stress the need for justice for the victims of the post-electoral violence, and accountability for those responsible for serious crimes on all sides of the post-election conflict in Côte d'Ivoire.

Question. What contributions has the United States made to strengthen the justice system? How would you assess the impact of the Dialogue, Truth, and Reconciliation Commission (DTRC) and other reconciliation efforts?

Answer. U.S. and international assistance has provided crucial support to the region's recovery. In 2016, through USAID's Office of Transition Initiatives, or OTI, the U.S. government completed a 5-year program focused on reconciliation and social cohesion. In partnership with opinion leaders, traditional and religious networks, youth and women's groups, and local officials, OTI has worked primarily at the grassroots level to issue grants in various technical sectors, with the goal of consolidating political stability and promoting peace and reconciliation.

With the end of this program, engagement has not stopped, however, and the embassy continued to support and fund citizen round-tables, organized by the National Democratic Institute to encourage political party leaders' engagement on national reconciliation. Moving beyond recovery to rebuild confidence, stability, and economic opportunities in the region will require a commitment by the government to reconcile the political differences and social cleavages that persist from the country's tumultuous past, as well as a greater sense of engagement by communities. How to define and prove Ivoirian nationality will play a prominent role in this effort, as will better access to official documentation and other state services.

If confirmed, I will encourage the government of Côte d'Ivoire to make this a priority and encourage grassroots-led and government-led reconciliation efforts.

Upon assuming the presidency in 2011, President Alassane Ouattara established the Dialogue, Truth, and Reconciliation Commission (CDVR). Widely judged to have failed to fulfill its mandate to reconcile the country's conflict-ridden past, CDVR was succeeded in 2015 by a new body, the National Commission for the Reconciliation and Compensation of Victims (CONARIV), which was mandated to identify and compensate victims of the 1999-2011 conflict. In its final report before it closed in 2016, CONARIV reported, to Ouattara's acclaim, that just 36 percent of the more than 800,000 applications for compensation were valid, with the rest dismissed for fraud, duplication, lack of supporting evidence, or other reasons. With the end of CONARIV, the government passed the task of reconciliation to Minister of Solidarity Mariatou Koné, who, while committed to reconciliation and supporting victims, does not have genuine high-level political or financial support for her efforts.

The 2018 State Department Trafficking in Persons Report classifies The government of Côte d'Ivoire as Tier 2, not fully meeting the minimum standards for the elimination of trafficking but is making significant efforts to do so.

Question. What will you do if confirmed to continue increasing support for the government of Côte d'Ivoire to investigate, prosecute, and convict traffickers following due process; including complicit officials, and apply significant prison terms as prescribed by law to those convicted?

Answer. The government acknowledges the problem of human trafficking and has demonstrated political will to combat it, with several high-profile events featured in the government-run press. The Ivoirian government also adopted the Anti-Trafficking Law in 2016. The government partnered with First Lady Ouattara's NGO to build and operate a new shelter for child labor and child trafficking victims in Soubré. In addition, the Prime Minister convened the inter-ministerial Anti-Trafficking Committee in February 2019. If confirmed, I will work with the office of the First Lady, the Prime Minister, and other appropriate government institutions to explore capacity-building measures with industry and other partners. I will encourage ministries to take a more active role in the lead-up to the 2020 elections when Dominique Ouattara's tenure as first lady is set to expire.

Question. What actions can you take to help ensure law enforcement respects the security of NGOs providing services to victims and enforce trafficking victims' right to receive care free from violence and intimidation?

Answer. Our Embassy is intimately involved in promoting an end to trafficking. Five gendarmes and two military firefighters reportedly unlawfully abducted at gunpoint a 14-year-old rape and trafficking victim from an NGO shelter for trafficking victims. At the urging of Post, offices in Washington, and the U.N. Office on Drugs and Crime, the First Lady's Office intervened and the girl was located and deter-

mined to be safe. The gendarmes' leadership is investigating how the five gendarmes came to be involved, and the NGO filed an official complaint against the gendarmes with the Military Tribunal. The results of the judicial proceedings will demonstrate the extent of the Ivoirian government's ability to hold law enforcement officers who break the law accountable. This is the type of intervention and advocacy I would promote if confirmed.

Question. Authorities estimate there are more than 2,000 Ivoirian, Burkinabe, Malian, Nigerien, and Senegalese talibés (students in Quranic schools) in northern and central Côte d'Ivoire, and corrupt teachers force many of them to beg. NGOs and officials report drug traffickers use children-some of whom may be forced-to sell and traffic drugs in restaurants and nightclubs. How do you propose we effect our programs in Côte d'Ivoire to protect vulnerable children?

Answer. Child exploitation among talibé children, many of whom are brought to Côte d'Ivoire from Mali and Burkina Faso and are forced to beg in the streets, remains a major issue. Much of our engagement with Côte d'Ivoire addresses factors that can contribute to child trafficking labor. We are thus active in supporting women's economic empowerment, improving access to education, and improving health services. Our efforts to increase law enforcement capacity will help Côte d'Ivoire deal with those who use and traffic in child labor.

Question. What are the most important actions you have taken in your career to date to support democracy and human rights? What has been the impact of your actions?

Answer. Over my career, I have committed myself to forthright reporting on conditions in my countries of assignment. I have held fraught dialogue with host governments regarding steps to address difficult issues including Trafficking in Persons. At our Embassy in Chad, I initiated a public reminder of key principles that are integral to a free and fair electoral process. I have been an accredited international observer in multiple elections in several countries, including Haiti, Madagascar, and Iraq. I have held dialogue with a range of political parties, notably in Iraq, regarding characteristics of a responsible party system. This appeared to facilitate losing parties' acceptance of legitimate election outcomes and commitment to peaceful politics. In at least one country (Chad), the government took positive steps, shortly after my interventions, to establish a drafting committee for a countering trafficking in persons plan, and they proposed legislation for greater accountability regarding restrictions on the right of peaceful assembly.

Question. What issues are the most pressing challenges to democracy or democratic development in Côte d'Ivoire? These challenges might include obstacles to participatory and accountable governance and institutions, rule of law, authentic political competition, civil society, human rights and press freedom. Please be as specific as possible.

Answer. The biggest challenges to democracy in Côte d'Ivoire will come in relation to the high-stakes presidential election in 2020. The 2018 local elections raised concerns due to well-documented irregularities, vote tampering, violence and intimidation of voters by those affiliated with political parties. Given Côte d'Ivoire's recent history of violence, elections not perceived as free and fair risk plunging the country into further violence.

Question. What steps will you take—if confirmed—to support democracy in Côte d'Ivoire? What do you hope to accomplish through these actions? What are the potential impediments to addressing the specific obstacles you have identified?

Answer. If confirmed, I would first urge the government to ensure that governance reforms remain front and center of their agenda, as Côte d'Ivoire prepares for the presidential election in 2020. We are assisting this effort, including through a four-year USAID Political Transition and Inclusion (PTI) program being implemented by the National Democratic Institute, as well as a range of other assistance tools.

Second, I would also push for the government of Côte d'Ivoire to make good on promises of national reconciliation.

Third, I would push for reform of the electoral commission—something linked to reconciliation—and which would pave the way for a new generation to lead the country, ultimately improving the lives of the Ivoirian people.

Question. How will you utilize U.S. government assistance resources at your disposal, including the Democracy Commission Small Grants program and other sources of State Department and USAID funding, to support democracy and governance, and what will you prioritize in processes to administer such assistance?

Answer. In the context of this, I would ensure we wisely use U.S. government funds, through MCC, USAID, PEPFAR, and other assistance mechanisms provided to the country. We have provided approximately $140 million to Côte d'Ivoire in FY 2018 to promote good governance, economic growth, security reforms, and improved health systems.

Question. If confirmed, do you commit to meet with civil society members, human rights and other non-governmental organizations in the U.S. and with local human rights NGOs, and other members of civil society in Côte d'Ivoire? What steps will you take to pro-actively address efforts to restrict or penalize NGOs and civil society via legal or regulatory measures?

Answer. Meeting with human rights, civil society and other non-governmental organizations in the U.S. and with local human rights NGOs in Côte d'Ivoire will be a priority of mine if confirmed as U.S. Ambassador to the Republic of Côte d'Ivoire. This is a great privilege of those of us who serve overseas and is a key component to understanding the political and human rights situation in country.

Question. If confirmed, do you commit to meet with democratically oriented political opposition figures and parties? What steps will you take to encourage genuine political competition? Will you advocate for access and inclusivity for women, minorities and youth within political parties?

Answer. If confirmed, I commit to meeting with democratically oriented political opposition figures and parties and would consider it a great privilege.

A strong democracy, political inclusiveness, and reconciliation will be necessary to solidify Côte d'Ivoire's economic success and ensure the country does not fall back into civil conflict. If confirmed, I will work with the government of Côte d'Ivoire to strengthen governance, enhance transparency, and become increasingly responsive to citizen needs. I will also support democratic institutions and advocate for 2020 presidential elections that are free and fair, thus credibly reflect the will of the Ivoirian people.

Our Embassy is actively promoting good governance and respect for human rights in Côte d'Ivoire. USAID, for example, supports an increasingly capable, professional, and organized civil society and media active across the political landscape. USAID focuses on strengthening the electoral process and encouraging greater voter participation, particularly among youth and women, urgent needs in the lead-up to the 2020 presidential election.

If confirmed, I will encourage all citizens and political parties to participate in the electoral process and—just as importantly—to do so peacefully from now throughout the 2020 presidential elections.

Question. Will you and your embassy team actively engage with Côte d'Ivoire on freedom of the press and address any government efforts designed to control or undermine press freedom through legal, regulatory or other measures? Will you commit to meeting regularly with independent, local press in Côte d'Ivoire?

Answer. The independent media is active and expresses a wide variety of views. Newspapers aligned politically with the opposition are known to occasionally publish inflammatory editorials against the government or even fabricate stories to defame political opponents. There are numerous independent radio stations. The law prohibits transmission of political commentary by community radio stations, but the regulatory authority allows community radio stations to run political programs if they employ professional journalists.

If confirmed, I will actively engaged with Côte d'Ivoire on freedom of expression and advocate against any government efforts to control or undermine press freedom. I commit to meeting regularly with the independent local press in Côte d'Ivoire.

Question. Will you and your embassy team actively engage with civil society and government counterparts on countering disinformation and propaganda disseminated by foreign state or non-state actors in the country?

Answer. Yes, if confirmed, the Embassy team and I will actively engage with civil society and government to counter disinformation and malign propaganda disseminated by foreign state or non-state actors.

Question. Will you and your embassy teams actively engage with Côte d'Ivoire on the right of labor groups to organize, including for independent trade unions?

Answer. The law, including related regulations and statutory instruments, provides for the right of workers, except members of police and military services, to form or join unions of their choice, provides for the right to conduct legal strikes and bargain collectively, and prohibits antiunion discrimination by employers or others against union members or organizers. The law prohibits firing workers for

union activities and provides for the reinstatement of dismissed workers within eight days of receiving a wrongful dismissal claim. The law allows unions in the formal sector to conduct their activities without interference. Worker organizations were independent of the government and political parties. Nevertheless, according to the International Trade Union Confederation, the law does not have any objective criteria to establish recognition of representative trade unions, which could allow public and private employers to refuse to negotiate with unions on the grounds they were not representative. Foreigners are required to obtain residency status, which takes three years, before they may hold union office. If confirmed, I will continue to advocate for the right of workers to organize, including independent trade unions.

Question. Will you commit to using your position, if confirmed, to defend the human rights and dignity of all people in Côte d'Ivoire, no matter their sexual orientation or gender identity? What challenges do the lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender and queer (LGBTQ) people face in Côte d'Ivoire? What specifically will you commit to do to help LGBTQ people in Côte d'Ivoire?

Answer. Violence targeting lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, intersex persons remains a challenge in the country. If confirmed, I will call on the government of Côte d'Ivoire to respect the principle of non-discrimination, and investigate allegations of violence and serious levels of discrimination targeting LGBTQ persons.

Question. Will you commit, if confirmed, to ensuring that you fully brief Members of Congress and/or their staff each time you are in Washington for visits or consultations during your tenure as Ambassador to Côte d'Ivoire?

Answer. Yes, if confirmed, I would work with my Department of State colleagues to ensure Congress is appropriately briefed on issues related to Côte d'Ivoire, including my own briefings to members and staff when appropriate.

Question. Do you agree that any targeting of or retaliation against career employees based on their perceived political beliefs, prior work on policy, or affiliation with a previous administration, is wholly inappropriate and has no place in the federal government?

Answer. Yes, I agree that any targeting of or retaliation against career employees based on their perceived political beliefs, prior work on policy, or affiliation with a previous administration, is wholly inappropriate and has no place in the federal government.

Question. If confirmed, what will you do to ensure that all employees under your leadership understand that any retaliation, blacklisting, or other prohibited personnel practices will not be tolerated?

Answer. If confirmed, I would clearly state at my very first Country Team meeting with section heads and my first Town Hall with all Mission staff that any retaliation, blacklisting, or other prohibited personnel practices will not be tolerated, and I would continue to reinforce this message through word and deed throughout my tenure as Chief of Mission.

Question. Has anyone ever made a formal or informal complaint or allegation of sexual harassment, discrimination (e.g., racial, ethnic, religious, etc.), or inappropriate conduct against you, in a workplace or any other setting)? If so, please describe the nature of the complaint or allegation, your response, and any resolution, including any settlements.

Answer. No, to my knowledge I have never had anyone make a formal or informal complaint or allegation of sexual harassment, discrimination, or inappropriate conduct against me.

Question. Have you ever addressed concerns or allegations of sexual harassment, discrimination (e.g., racial, ethnic, religious, etc.), or inappropriate conduct made against any employee over whom you had supervisory authority? If so, please describe the outcome and actions taken.

Answer. I take all allegations of sexual harassment, discrimination, and in appropriate conduct seriously and am committed to addressing any such allegations promptly and appropriately. For example, when I learned of an employee possibly being verbally abusive to a subordinate, I immediately consulted the Department of State on proper process to address these concerns and counseled involved staff appropriately.

RESPONSES TO ADDITIONAL QUESTIONS FOR THE RECORD
SUBMITTED TO RICHARD BELL BY SENATOR BENJAMIN L. CARDIN

Question. What are your most meaningful achievements to date in your career to promote human rights and democracy? What has been the impact of your actions?

Answer. Over my career, I have committed myself to forthright reporting on conditions in my countries of assignment. I have held dialogue with host governments regarding steps to address difficult issues including Trafficking in Persons. At our Embassy in Chad, I initiated a public reminder of key principles that are integral to a free and fair electoral process. I have been an accredited international observer in multiple elections in several countries, including Haiti, Madagascar, and Iraq. I have held dialogue with a range of political parties, notably in Iraq, regarding characteristics of a responsible party system. This appeared to facilitate losing parties' acceptance of legitimate election outcomes and commitment to nonviolence in politics. In at least one country (Chad), the government took positive steps, shortly after my interventions, to establish a drafting committee for a trafficking in persons plan, and they proposed legislation for greater accountability regarding restrictions on freedom of peaceful assembly.

Question. What are the most pressing human rights issues in Côte d'Ivoire? What are the most important steps you expect to take—if confirmed—to promote human rights and democracy in Côte d'Ivoire? What do you hope to accomplish through these actions?

Answer. Statelessness is believed to be an extensive problem; the government's estimate of some 700,000 stateless persons in the country is likely a drastic understatement of the scale of the problem. Among stateless persons are long-term migrants, their descendants, and approximately 300,000 abandoned children who are ineligible for Ivoirian citizenship under current laws, as citizenship is based on Ivoirian parentage, rather than birth in the country. The country's borders are porous and migrants from its troubled neighbors are able to enter easily.

Other issues include reports of abuses and violations of human rights by security forces; arbitrary detention; harsh prison conditions; abuse of detainees; political prisoners; irregularities in electoral processes; widespread corruption in government; gender based violence, including female genital mutilation and cutting, early and forced marriage, domestic violence, and sexual violence against women and girls, with few crimes being reported to police; and the worst forms of child labor.

Question. If confirmed, what are the potential obstacles to addressing the specific human rights issues you have identified in your previous response? What challenges will you face in Côte d'Ivoire in advancing human rights, civil society and democracy in general?

Answer. The biggest challenges to democracy in Côte d'Ivoire will come in relation to the high-stakes presidential election in 2020. The 2018 local elections raised concerns due to well-documented irregularities, vote tampering, violence and intimidation of voters by those affiliated with political parties. Given Côte d'Ivoire's recent history of violence, elections not perceived as free and fair risk plunging the country into further violence.

If confirmed, I would first urge the government to ensure that governance reforms remain front and center of their agenda, as Côte d'Ivoire prepares for the presidential election in 2020. We are assisting this effort, including through a four-year USAID Political Transition and Inclusion (PTI) program being implemented by the National Democratic Institute, as well as a range of other assistance tools.

Second, I would also push for the government of Côte d'Ivoire to make good on promises of national reconciliation.

Third, I would push for reform of the electoral commission—something linked to reconciliation—and which would pave the way for a new generation to lead the country, ultimately improving the lives of the Ivoirian people.

In the context of this, I would ensure we wisely use U.S. government funds, through MCC, USAID, PEPFAR, and other assistance mechanisms provided to the country. We have provided around $140 million to Côte d'Ivoire in FY 2018 to promote good governance, economic growth, security reforms, and improved health systems.

Question. Are you committed to meeting with human rights, civil society and other non-governmental organizations in the U.S. and with local human rights NGOs in Côte d'Ivoire? If confirmed, what steps will you take to pro-actively support the Leahy Law and similar efforts, and ensure that provisions of U.S. security assistance and security cooperation activities reinforce human rights?

Answer. Meeting with human rights, civil society and other non-governmental organizations in the U.S. and with local human rights NGOs in Côte d'Ivoire will be a priority of mine if confirmed as U.S. Ambassador to the Republic of Côte d'Ivoire. This is a great privilege of those of us who serve overseas and is a key component to understanding the political and human rights situation in country.

The United States maintains a good relationship with the Ivoirian military, which has been a willing partner in key areas such as peacekeeping. Our assistance to the Ivoirian armed forces is designed to develop the professionalism of its ranks. All participants are vetted in accordance with the Department's Leahy vetting policy to ensure that there is no credible information that any participants committed gross violations of human rights. This also reinforces our message that human rights violations by security forces will not be tolerated. If confirmed, I will actively support our Embassy in gathering information to contribute to important reports such as the Human Rights Report and Trafficking in Persons report to highlight areas of weakness and opportunities for further cooperation between the United States and Côte d'Ivoire.

Question. Will you and your embassy team actively engage with Côte d'Ivoire to address cases of key political prisoners or persons otherwise unjustly targeted by Côte d'Ivoire?

Answer. If confirmed, I will actively engage with Côte d'Ivoire to address cases of key political prisoners or persons otherwise unjustly targeted by Côte d'Ivoire.

Question. Will you engage with Côte d'Ivoire on matters of human rights, civil rights and governance as part of your bilateral mission?

Answer. As Côte d'Ivoire prepares for elections in 2020, we underscore the importance of increasing protections for journalists, opposition leaders, and civil society, to ensure their human rights are protected and that they are able to exercise their fundamental freedoms without threat of reprisal. Such improvements are essential to promoting genuinely free and fair elections.

Question. Do you commit to bring to the committee's attention (and the State Department Inspector General) any change in policy or U.S. actions that you suspect may be influenced by any of the President's business or financial interests, or the business or financial interests of any senior White House staff?

Answer. I commit to comply with all relevant federal ethics laws, regulations, and rules, and to raise concerns that I may have through appropriate channels.

Question. Do you commit to inform the committee if you have any reason to suspect that a foreign government, head of state, or foreign-controlled entity is taking any action in order to benefit any of the President's business or financial interests, or the interests of senior White House staff?

Answer. I commit to comply with all relevant federal ethics laws, regulations, and rules, and to raise concerns that I may have through appropriate channels.

Question. Do you or do any members of your immediate family have any financial interests in Côte d'Ivoire?

Answer. My investment portfolio includes diversified exchange-traded funds and diversified mutual funds, which may hold interests in companies with a presence in Côte d'Ivoire, but which are exempt from the conflict of interest laws. My investment portfolio also includes financial interests in companies that maintain a presence in Côte d'Ivoire. I am committed to ensuring that my official actions will not give rise to a conflict of interest, will divest my interests in those companies as outlined in ethics agreement, and will remain vigilant with regard to my ethics obligations.

Question. Research from private industry demonstrates that, when managed well, diversity makes business teams better both in terms of creativity and in terms of productivity. What will you do to promote, mentor and support your staff that come from diverse backgrounds and underrepresented groups in the Foreign Service?

Answer. I wholeheartedly embrace diversity as enriching, will do my utmost to promote equitable treatment for all staff, and will proactively facilitate frank communication to identify and address issues as they arise.

Question. What steps will you take to ensure each of the supervisors at the Embassy are fostering an environment that is diverse and inclusive?

Answer. My first in-house priority is to persuade staff to speak truth to power, especially when I am the power. Among the most fundamental guidance I will give all supervisors is the importance of their cultivation of a similar spirit of open, respectful, responsive two-way communication and commitment to equitable treat-

ment for all.. I will meet regularly face-to-face with more junior staff to hear directly from them, while respecting chain of command relationships.

Question. How do you believe political corruption impacts democratic governance and the rule of law generally, and in Côte d'Ivoire specifically?

Answer. Good governance is the foundation for economic growth and free societies. While Côte d'Ivoire has made major strides in economic growth, corruption is a challenge that everyone, including the government, could do more to address.

- Corruption reduces the amount of funding available to create jobs, build schools, and provide social services.
- Corruption harms citizens' faith in government, leading to disenchantment and creating instability.
- Corruption deters foreign investment, thus robbing Ivoirians of jobs and products that would otherwise be available.

Question. What is your assessment of corruption trends in Côte d'Ivoire and efforts to address and reduce it by that government?

Answer. Côte d'Ivoire remains the fastest growing economy in Francophone Africa and one of the fastest in the world, with seven to nine percent growth since 2012. Unfortunately, women, youth, and the working class have been largely left out of Côte d'Ivoire's economic recovery, and 46 percent of the population lives below the poverty line.This growth rate demonstrates that there are tremendous opportunities here for investors, both domestic and foreign.

That said, the continued growth of the economy will depend heavily on three things: First, it will depend on a peaceful 2020 presidential election and transition of power.

Second, future economic growth depends on creating opportunities for people at all levels of society across the country—particularly youth, because almost 60 percent of the population is under 25 years old—as well as women and rural Ivoirians. The recent updates to Côte d'Ivoire's family code are a very positive step, but Côte d'Ivoire's gender inequality is striking for a country that has made such impressive economic and political strides, and women face myriad challenges, abuse, and cultural stereotypes that impede their full economic participation.

And third, it will depend on the government's commitment to good governance. By fighting corruption, and improving the transparency and predictability of the business environment, both domestic and foreign businesses will be able to be more profitable, hire more employees and spur economic growth.

Question. If confirmed, what steps will you take to strengthen good governance and anticorruption programming in Côte d'Ivoire?

Answer. Corruption must be addressed to attract additional U.S. investment to Côte d'Ivoire. The MCC program has been a key way we have encouraged Côte d'Ivoire to improve its business climate and address corruption. If confirmed, I would also leverage at every opportunity the need for the government of Côte d'Ivoire to make the country more favorable to U.S. investment.

I would also tackle corruption by engaging with civil society and promoting our exchange programs. Last year, an alumnus of one the State Department's Young African Leaders Initiative (YALI) fellowships launched a newspaper that has emerged as perhaps the most important voice against corruption in Côte d'Ivoire. The paper revealed corruption scandals and resulted in prosecutions of dozens of customs officials. In October, he ran for and was elected mayor of his hometown where he once received death threats for an investigation into cashew industry corruption. In addition to high-level engagement, I, if confirmed, would promote these influential exchange programs, which build the capacity of future African leaders to act and govern honestly.

RESPONSES TO ADDITIONAL QUESTIONS FOR THE RECORD
SUBMITTED TO MARY BETH LEONARD BY SENATOR ROBERT MENENDEZ

Question. What steps will you take to support conditions conducive to transparent, and credible elections in the future if confirmed?

Answer. If confirmed, I will continue working with Nigeria's leaders, institutions, civil society organizations, and the Nigerian people to ensure genuinely free and fair elections without violence. In my understanding, as the result of tireless work by countless Nigerians, bolstered by U.S. support, Nigerian election administration and institutions are stronger than ever. Nigerian civil society organizations support

more robust election monitoring efforts and political engagement, political parties are being encouraged to engage citizens on issue-based platforms, and Nigerian civil society organizations are better able to educate voters, increase participation in the democratic process, and reduce violence. If confirmed, I will aim to use U.S. government influences and assistance to further this progress.

Question. What if any progress have you seen in Buhari's efforts to reform the petroleum sector? What additional steps should be taken to reform the sector and what role should the U.S. play to help facilitate such reforms if any?

Answer. In my understanding, reform of Nigeria's petroleum sector has been a high-profile topic over the past year. In 2018, the Nigerian House of Representatives and Senate passed the Petroleum Industry Governance Bill which many had hoped would be a critical first step in reforming the petroleum sector, improving transparency in a notoriously opaque sector. Although President Buhari did not assent to the bill, if confirmed, I look forward to encouraging action from President Buhari and the National Assembly on legislation that will increase transparency in this critical sector and improve Nigeria's competitiveness. If confirmed, I will continue to urge Nigeria's leadership to make progress towards a more transparent, fair, and competitive marketplace for U.S., Nigerian, and international investors.

Question. How would you assess Buhari's anti-corruption efforts? What steps will you take, if confirmed, to assist in that sector?

Answer. President Buhari, recently elected to a second term, continues to emphasize tackling corruption as a priority. Nevertheless, corruption remains a serious impediment to Nigeria's prosperity, from health, to education, to its justice sector. In my understanding, President Buhari has taken positive steps to combat corruption, including through the Economic and Financial Crimes Commission (EFCC), which has increased its rate of convictions since Buhari took office. The EFCC is also prosecuting high level officials once thought to be above the law, but I recognize that some Nigerians believe the choice and timing of cases reflect political motives. If confirmed, I will work closely with the Nigerian government and its people to combat corruption in all of its forms, directly through capacity building and ensuring that private sector firms are aware of the Foreign Corrupt Practices Act and its requirements.

Question. Has the Buhari Administration taken credible steps to investigate and prosecute those suspected of involvement in the illegal trade? What more could the Nigerian government do to address transnational crime networks operating there? How should the United States be involved in these efforts if at all?

Answer. In my understanding, President Buhari has taken steps to crack down on those suspected of illegal trade, including through an increased rate of convictions. These are positive steps, but corruption remains pervasive in Nigeria. The federal, state, and local governments need to hold those who violate the law accountable. If confirmed, I will continue U.S. efforts to improve the transparency and accountability in particular of Nigerian customs and tax systems.

Question. Have the Buhari Administration's efforts to address the rising violence between pastoralist and settled communities in central and northern Nigeria been successful? What steps, if any, should the U.S. take to help Nigerian's mitigate, reduce and end such intercommunal violence?

Answer. In my understanding, Nigerian Vice President Osinbajo has said publicly that there are two aspects to the violence: (1) conflict over land, which his government is working to address through economic and resource policies and programs, including a National Livestock Transformation Plan, and (2) a criminal element of banditry, kidnapping, and cattle rustling, which his government is working to address through law enforcement measures. The Nigerian government surged military forces, police, and investigative teams to conflict-affected areas, and arrested those it believes are perpetrating violence. If confirmed, I will ensure the U.S. government continues to help Nigerians prevent and mitigate conflict through our diplomacy, public messaging, peacebuilding, dialogue efforts, and development programs, including by connecting U.S. agriculture and livestock experts to Nigerian policy makers and supporting strong Nigerian inter-faith networks.

Question. What are the major obstacles to the Nigerian military's effectiveness in countering Boko Haram and ISIS West Africa Province in northeastern Nigeria?

Answer. In my understanding, Nigeria's military is under staffed, under trained, and under equipped; it is also overstretched. With limited police capacity, the military is conducting operations in the vast majority of Nigeria's 36 states and thus not fully able to focus on countering terrorist groups in the Northeast. Further, the

soldiers in the Northeast are deployed for years at a time and generally not rotated out, creating a largely unmet need for post-traumatic stress disorder care and restorative leave. At the same time, ISIS-West Africa is attacking military bases, seizing (or destroying) materiel, armored vehicles, weapons, and ammunition, placing further stress on Nigeria's already strained military readiness and capabilities. A perceived lack of professionalism, poor civil-military relations, and inconsistent accountability for allegations of human rights violations and abuses contribute to a lack of civilian trust in the security forces and can even fuel their enemy's recruitment.

Question. To what extent has the Nigerian government reasserted stability and security in areas "liberated" from Boko Haram? What are the obstacles to doing so?

Answer. In my understanding, the status of areas formerly held by Boko Haram remains in flux and difficult to decipher. While Boko Haram controls less territory than it did at its height in 2014-2015, both it and ISIS are still able to move across borders to conduct attacks. In fact, ISIS is attacking with greater sophistication than in years' past and Boko Haram's efforts are waning in comparison. Nevertheless, the situation remains fluid.

The Nigerian military and police are not fully able to protect the population across the Northeast. The obstacles to securing "liberated" territory are rooted in the large area of the territory in question, the limited number and capacity of the Nigerian police, and the fact that Nigeria's military is under staffed, under trained, and under equipped, while still being overstretched. Further, poor civil-military relations and inconsistent accountability for allegations of human rights violations and abuses contribute to a lack of civilian trust in the security forces and can even fuel recruitment for their enemies.

Question. What is Nigeria doing to improve accountability for security sector abuses? What concrete steps has the government of Nigeria taken to hold accountable those accused of the 2015 Zaria massacre in keeping with the recommendations in the Kaduna State Commission of Judicial Inquiry? Has the report of the Nigerian Air Force's inquiry into the January 2017 accidental bombing in Rann, Borno State of a camp of internally displaced persons been made public? If not, why not? What steps has the government of Nigeria taken to hold accountable security forces responsible for disproportionate use of force against members of the Shia Islamic Movement of Nigeria—including firing live ammunition into a processional-in October of 2018?

Answer. I understand that the Nigerian government established an independent, civilian-led Presidential Investigative Panel in 2017 with a broad mandate to investigate allegations of human rights abuses by the military, but its findings have not yet been made public. I have not heard of any of the security force officials accused of wrongdoing by the Kaduna state Judicial Commission of Inquiry being found responsible and held accountable for the Zaria attacks.

In regards to the tragic accident at Rann, the Nigerian Air Force established a six-person panel to investigate the January 2017 bombing. The Defense HQ also set up a Board of Inquiry in early 2017; their results were released publicly in July 2017 and acknowledged the unfortunate airstrike, contributing factors that resulted in the mistaken targeting, and noted operational changes to reduce the risk of such accidents.

Regarding the ongoing tension between Nigerian government security forces and the Islamic Movement of Nigeria, I understand that the embassy continues to raise U.S. government concerns with the Nigerian government at the highest levels privately as well as publicly. The State Department has called for thorough and transparent investigations into these incidents, which resulted in abuse and deaths. Those responsible for injuries and killings should be held accountable. I do not have any information on whether an investigation has been launched, but if confirmed, I will look into this important matter.

If confirmed, I will continue the U.S. government's prioritization of human rights and accountability for those found responsible for human rights violations and abuses throughout our engagements with the Nigerian government.

Question. Has the Nigerian military's respect for human rights improved under President Buhari? What steps will you take if confirmed to encourage concrete steps be taken to hold human rights abusers accountable in a credible transparent manner?

Answer. I have heard that under President Buhari, the Nigerian government has taken some positive steps to improve respect for human rights and has become much more willing to engage with the U.S. government on the topic and to undertake human rights-related training. The Nigerian Army set up a full-time, staffed

hotline to receive and investigate specific civilian complaints of misconduct by military personnel and, where appropriate, recommend court martial proceedings. The Nigerian Army and Air Force have also used social media to promote respect for human rights among their forces and with the public.

Nonetheless, allegations of human rights abuses and violations continue, and more remains to be done. If confirmed, I would work with my colleagues at Mission Nigeria, in Washington, and partners in Nigeria to advance our military professionalization efforts, with respect for human rights and the protection of Nigerian civilians at its core.

Question. What concrete steps do you plan to take to help ensure that USG security assistance, particularly assistance channeled to Nigeria's armed forces, helps with efforts to prevent and mitigate potential human rights abuses?

Answer. If confirmed, I would continue to build on the training we provide to Nigeria's armed forces, which emphasizes professionalization, improving respect for human rights, and mitigating harm to civilians. I understand that the recently sold A-29 aircraft package includes human rights and law of armed conflict training as a backbone of that partnership and, if confirmed, I would work to incorporate and implement the inclusion of that model in future efforts.

Question. What will you do to help ensure that the Nigerian military has ceased unlawful use of children, including in collaboration with the Civilian Joint Task Force (CJTF), and investigate any reports of military personnel's use of children; work with CJTF and the U.N. to implement fully the child soldier action plan to remove all children from CJTF's ranks and, if it is not, cut provision of financial and in-kind support to CJTF?

Answer. My understanding is that, for the first reporting period since 2014, there have not been any verified cases of the Civilian Joint Task Force (CJTF) or the Nigerian military using child soldiers. As a result, Nigeria was not listed in the 2019 Child Soldiers Prevention Act List.

The 2019 Trafficking in Persons (TIP) Report notes that the CJTF continues to implement a 2017 action plan it has with UNICEF to end its recruitment or use of child soldiers. According to UNICEF, 1,727 children and young people have been released as a part of that effort. If confirmed, I would work with the relevant Nigerian government entities to implement the Prioritized Recommendations included in the most recent TIP report.

Meanwhile, Boko Haram and ISIS continued to forcibly recruit, abduct, and use child soldiers as young as 12-years-old as cooks, spies, messengers, bodyguards, armed combatants, and increasingly as suicide bombers in attacks in Nigeria and neighboring countries. If confirmed, I will continue to work with Nigerian military and civilian officials to enhance their efforts to combat these despicable groups.

Question. What assistance stands to be suspended should Nigeria be designated Tier Three under the Trafficking Victims Protection Act next year?

Answer. The Trafficking Victims Protection Act restrictions apply to the obligation of non-trade, non-humanitarian U.S. assistance to the governments of Tier 3 countries. Trade-related and humanitarian assistance are excepted from the restrictions, as are specific types of security assistance related to counter narcotics, anti-terrorism, and nonproliferation. The applicability of the restrictions, or a waiver from the restrictions, is subject to a Presidential determination each year.

Question. What are the most important actions you have taken in your career to date to support democracy and human rights? What has been the impact of your actions?

Answer. I have had the privilege of addressing human rights concerns throughout my Foreign Service career, from my very first tour following the trial of a Cameroonian opposition figure. As Ambassador to the African Union, I worked to promote a United Nations Security Council (UNSC) arms embargo against South Sudan and to press for the establishment of a Hybrid Court on South Sudan (HCSS). As Ambassador to Mali, I received the Diplomacy for Human Rights prize in 2013. My actions there included speaking out early and forcefully for a rapid return to elected governance after the 2012 coup; forestalling potential human rights violations and abuses by engaging leaders from groups with records of violations in previous political eras to make clear both U.S. disapproval and dispel any notion that inter-communal violence was consistent with any concept of Malian patriotism; seeking accountability for crimes and excesses by the military junta; and calling out mistreatment of journalists.

Question. What issues are the most pressing challenges to democracy or democratic development in Nigeria? These challenges might include obstacles to participatory and accountable governance and institutions, rule of law, authentic political competition, civil society, human rights and press freedom. Please be as specific as possible.

Answer. In the 2018 Human Rights Report, the State Department highlighted examples of electoral interference and malpractice, including widespread vote buying and selling and ballot hijacking by party agents despite the presence of Independent National Electoral Commission (INEC) and security agents. Independent observers reported thugs and members of security services engaged in intimidation of voters and harassment of party monitors, journalists, and domestic observers. Civil society organizations reported no legal restrictions on their ability to comment or observe parts of the electoral process, but reported that aspects of the electoral process remained opaque, allegedly because of deliberate attempts to undermine or circumvent the integrity of the process by stakeholders or because of INEC's financial or logistical constraints. While no laws limit participation of women in the political process, the number of women candidates was disproportionally low. INEC points to the scale of national elections, with more than 82 million registered voters and over 119,000 polling units, as a major logistical and technical challenge.

Question. What steps will you take—if confirmed—to support democracy in Nigeria? What do you hope to accomplish through these actions? What are the potential impediments to addressing the specific obstacles you have identified?

Answer. If confirmed I will continue to advance the U.S. government's elections-related diplomacy and programs that seek to improve Nigeria's ability to carry out a genuinely free and fair electoral process, prevent and mitigate electoral violence, and support civic and political engagement. If confirmed I will engage all stakeholders, including the Nigerian government and electoral officials, political parties, candidates, civil society, as well as Nigerian business, religious and community leaders, to work towards our shared goal of supporting a robust democracy in Nigeria. The logistic challenge of organizing elections in Africa's most populous country with more than 82 million registered voters and over 119,000 polling units is one impediment to these goals, the areas of insecurity and displaced people are another challenge. If confirmed, my team and I will look into how best to help the Nigerians tackle these challenges.

Question. How will you utilize U.S. government assistance resources at your disposal, including the Democracy Commission Small Grants program and other sources of State Department and USAID funding, to support democracy and governance, and what will you prioritize in processes to administer such assistance?

Answer. While the Democracy Commission Small Grants program is only for countries in Europe, if confirmed, I will ensure that all U.S. government democracy and governance assistance for Nigeria is used effectively and efficiently. I will ensure that State Department and USAID democracy and governance funding is prioritized in the ways that it can best be harnessed to advance U.S. government interests and strategic goals in Nigeria, including improving good governance; increasing civilian security; strengthening democratic institutions and increasing rule of law, respect for human rights, and transparency and accountability in government; and reducing endemic corruption in Nigeria. I will ensure that our resources support Nigerian electoral reforms to ensure genuinely free and fair elections in 2023 without violence.

Question. If confirmed, do you commit to meet with civil society members, human rights and other non-governmental organizations in the U.S. and with local human rights NGOs, and other members of civil society in Nigeria? What steps will you take to pro-actively address efforts to restrict or penalize NGOs and civil society via legal or regulatory measures?

Answer. Yes, if confirmed, I commit to meet with civil society members, human rights and other non-governmental organizations in the U.S. and with Nigerian human rights NGOs, and other members of civil society in Nigeria. As appropriate, I will raise concerns with the Nigerian government over attempts to unduly restrict NGOs and civil society. I will encourage Nigerians to ensure their country remains a democratic leader on the continent, by working with both government and civil society to improve democratic processes, promote good governance, and ensure respect for human rights.

Question. If confirmed, do you commit to meet with democratically oriented political opposition figures and parties? What steps will you take to encourage genuine

political competition? Will you advocate for access and inclusivity for women, minorities and youth within political parties?

Answer. Yes, if confirmed, I commit to meet with democratically oriented political opposition figures and parties. Nigeria enjoys a vibrant, multi-party democracy and 2019 is the 20th anniversary of its return to democratic rule.

If confirmed, I will advocate in favor of improvements to Nigeria's young democracy such as more democratic selection processes within political parties; the institution of electoral reform legislation; as well as greater access to and equal opportunity for women, minorities, and youth within political parties. If confirmed, I will continue Mission Nigeria's efforts to promote opportunities for women and youth. Last year, in my understanding, a coalition of youth civil society advocates led a successful nation-wide campaign to amend the Nigerian constitution to lower the age at which Nigerians are eligible to hold elected office. If confirmed, I will encourage Nigeria to continue to implement reforms to open access for youth, women, and minorities as it deepens its role as a democratic leader on the continent.

Question. Will you and your embassy team actively engage with Nigeria on freedom of the press and address any government efforts designed to control or undermine press freedom through legal, regulatory or other measures? Will you commit to meeting regularly with independent, local press in Nigeria?

Answer. Yes. Nigeria has a robust and vibrant press sector and tradition of public discourse and debate. Mission Nigeria has a strong relationship with the Nigerian press and the United States has funded many types of training for journalists. If confirmed, I will continue to encourage freedom of the press, work to address any government efforts designed to control or undermine freedom of expression, and my team and I will engage frequently with independent, local press in Nigeria.

Question. Will you and your embassy team actively engage with civil society and government counterparts on countering disinformation and propaganda disseminated by foreign state or non-state actors in the country?

Answer. Yes. If confirmed, my team and I will actively engage with civil society and government counterparts on countering disinformation and malign propaganda disseminated by foreign state or non-state actors. Mission Nigeria supports training on accurate and independent reporting for the Nigerian press. Mission Nigeria also harnesses public diplomacy and countering violent extremism programs and funding to counter propaganda from Boko Haram and ISIS, and I would aim to continue this programming if confirmed.

Question. Will you and your embassy teams actively engage with Nigeria on the right of labor groups to organize, including for independent trade unions?

Answer. Yes, if confirmed, my Embassy team and I will actively engage with the government of Nigeria, employers, and civil society to promote internationally recognized worker rights, including freedom of association. Moreover, ensuring U.S. trade partners respect internationally recognized worker rights and adhere to high labor standards promotes a level playing field for U.S. workers and helps create stronger trading partners for the United States.

Question. Will you commit to using your position, if confirmed, to defend the human rights and dignity of all people in Nigeria, no matter their sexual orientation or gender identity? What challenges do the lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender and queer (LGBTQ) people face in Nigeria? What specifically will you commit to do to help LGBTQ people in Nigeria?

Answer. Yes. If confirmed, I would work with existing civil society and governmental organizations to promote the basic humanity of all citizens and residents of Nigeria, regardless of sexual orientation or gender identity.

The 2014 Same Sex Marriage Prohibition Act (SSMPA), a Nigerian law prohibiting marriages and civil unions among persons of the same sex, criminalizes the free association of any persons through so-called gay organizations. Citizens suspected of same-sex activities are frequently harassed, intimidated, and arrested. The 2014 SSMPA effectively renders illegal all forms of activity supporting or promoting lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, and intersex (LGBTI) rights. According to the SSMPA, anyone convicted of entering into a same-sex marriage or civil union may be sentenced to up to 14 years' imprisonment.

Following passage of the SSMPA, LGBTI persons reported increased harassment and threats against them based on their perceived sexual orientation or gender identity. News reports and LGBTI advocates reported numerous arrests, but detainees were in all cases released without formal charges after paying a bond.

If confirmed, I will convey the importance on defending the human rights and dignity of all people. I will also support Mission Nigeria's continued efforts to train and fund opportunities for LGBTI civil society organizations.

Question. Will you commit, if confirmed, to ensuring that you fully brief Members of Congress and/or their staff each time you are in Washington for visits or consultations during your tenure as Ambassador to Nigeria?

Answer. If confirmed, I am committed to ensuring that the State Department is in close contact with Congress about topics related to Nigeria. If confirmed, I commit to work with my colleagues in the State Department to ensure that the Department appropriately briefs Members of Congress and their staff on a regular basis, including briefs, as appropriate, when I am in Washington on official business.

Question. Do you agree that any targeting of or retaliation against career employees based on their perceived political beliefs, prior work on policy, or affiliation with a previous administration, is wholly inappropriate and has no place in the federal government?

Answer. If confirmed, I will work to prevent any attempts to target or retaliate against career employees on the basis of their perceived political beliefs, prior work on policy, or affiliation with a previous administration. I take allegations of such practices seriously and will ensure they are referred to the Department's Inspector General.

Question. If confirmed, what will you do to ensure that all employees under your leadership understand that any retaliation, blacklisting, or other prohibited personnel practices will not be tolerated?

Answer. If confirmed, I would clearly state at my very first Country Team meeting with Mission Nigeria leadership and my first Town Hall with all Mission staff that U.S. government and State Department personnel policies must be respected and adhered to, and I would continue to reinforce this message through word and deed throughout my tenure as Chief of Mission.

Question. Has anyone ever made a formal or informal complaint or allegation of sexual harassment, discrimination (e.g., racial, ethnic, religious, etc.), or inappropriate conduct against you, in a workplace or any other setting)? If so, please describe the nature of the complaint or allegation, your response, and any resolution, including any settlements.

Answer. I take the issues of sexual harassment, discrimination (e.g., racial, ethnic, religious, etc.), and inappropriate conduct with the utmost seriousness and throughout my career, I have immediately addressed any issues raised to me in accordance with the Department of State's policies in dealing with such conduct.

In 2006, an employee filed an EEO complainant alleging that an ambassador and I used insensitive language. We denied this. The EEOC found no discrimination or harassment in that case. In 2009, an employee who was denied tenure filed an EEO complaint, which I understand was subsequently closed with no finding of discrimination. In 2014, I was asked for information as a witness on an EEO matter. I had no further involvement and I understand the case was settled in November 2015.

Question. Have you ever addressed concerns or allegations of sexual harassment, discrimination (e.g., racial, ethnic, religious, etc.), or inappropriate conduct made against any employee over whom you had supervisory authority? If so, please describe the outcome and actions taken.

Answer. I take the issues of sexual harassment, discrimination (e.g., racial, ethnic, religious, etc.), and inappropriate conduct with the utmost seriousness and throughout my career, I have immediately addressed any issues raised to me in accordance with the Department of State's policies in dealing with such conduct.

With regard to discrimination, I have counseled a number of employees on EEO issues. In these instances, I followed Department protocols fully.

RESPONSES TO ADDITIONAL QUESTIONS FOR THE RECORD
SUBMITTED TO MARY BETH LEONARD BY SENATOR BENJAMIN L. CARDIN

Question. What are your most meaningful achievements to date in your career to promote human rights and democracy? What has been the impact of your actions?

Answer. I have had the privilege of addressing human rights concerns throughout my Foreign Service career, from my very first tour following the trial of a Cameroonian opposition figure. As Ambassador to the African Union, I worked to promote a United Nations Security Council (UNSC) arms embargo against South Sudan and to press for the establishment of a Hybrid Court on South Sudan

(HCSS). As Ambassador to Mali, I received the Diplomacy for Human Rights prize in 2013. My actions there included speaking out early and forcefully for a rapid return to elected governance after the 2012 coup; forestalling potential human rights violations and abuses by engaging leaders from groups with records of violations to make clear both U.S. disapproval and dispel any notion that inter-communal violence was consistent with any concept of Malian patriotism; seeking accountability for crimes and excesses by the military junta; and calling out mistreatment of journalists.

Question. What are the most pressing human rights issues in Nigeria? What are the most important steps you expect to take—if confirmed—to promote human rights and democracy in Nigeria? What do you hope to accomplish through these actions?

Answer. The 2018 Human Rights Report identified several human rights concerns, including abuses and violations by both government and nonstate actors, prolonged arbitrary detention, harsh and life threatening prison conditions, interference with the rights of peaceful assembly and freedom of association, in particular for lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, and intersex persons, refoulement of refugees, and corruption. If confirmed, I will continue to raise U.S. government concerns at the highest levels of the Nigerian government and publicly call for justice and accountability. If confirmed, I will support State Department efforts that enable the development of effective and professional law enforcement actors who prevent, detect, and investigate crime while respecting and protecting human rights.

Question. If confirmed, what are the potential obstacles to addressing the specific human rights issues you have identified in your previous response? What challenges will you face in Nigeria in advancing human rights, civil society and democracy in general?

Answer. In my understanding, while Nigeria has taken steps to investigate allegations of human rights abuses and violations by security forces, including establishing an independent, civilian-led Presidential Investigative Panel, the U.S. government frequently does not see the results of those investigations. As stated in the 2018 Human Rights Report, impunity for human rights violations and abuses remains widespread at all levels of government. If confirmed, I will prioritize raising our concerns at the highest levels of government and target our programs in areas where the Nigerians have demonstrated political will to build capacity while respecting and protecting human rights.

Question. Are you committed to meeting with human rights, civil society and other non-governmental organizations in the U.S. and with local human rights NGOs in Nigeria? If confirmed, what steps will you take to pro-actively support the Leahy Law and similar efforts, and ensure that provisions of U.S. security assistance and security cooperation activities reinforce human rights?

Answer. As I did in both Mali and at the African Union, if confirmed, I will engage with both U.S. and Nigerian human rights, civil society, and other non-governmental organizations. These organizations and the work that they do are essential to strengthening human rights adherence and meeting U.S. objectives in Africa. I will continue to ensure that the U.S. government does not provide assistance to security force units or individuals where there is credible information that they committed gross violations of human rights in accordance with the Leahy Law. If confirmed, I will continue our engagement with civil society partners to ensure that our limited security assistance is in accordance with the law.

Question. Will you and your embassy team actively engage with Nigeria to address cases of key political prisoners or persons otherwise unjustly targeted by Nigeria?

Answer. If confirmed, yes, my team will engage with Nigeria to address cases of key persons unjustly targeted. As Ambassador to Mali, I became the first to denounce the March 6, 2013 arrest of local editor Boukary Daou, who was tortured after his newspaper printed a letter criticizing coup leader Sanogo. Within hours of his disappearance, I spearheaded efforts to coordinate a diplomatic community effort to press the Malian government to respect human rights, including freedom of expression, and press freedom, and called out in public events for his release. Mr. Daou credits this activism with helping secure his freedom, and linked the end of his physical mistreatment in detention to his jailors' acknowledgment of my public expressions of interest and concern.

Question. Will you engage with Nigeria on matters of human rights, civil rights and governance as part of your bilateral mission?

Answer. Human rights, civil rights, and governance are key priorities of the U.S. government policy with respect to Nigeria. If confirmed, I will continue to engage on those priorities.

Question. Do you commit to bring to the committee's attention (and the State Department Inspector General) any change in policy or U.S. actions that you suspect may be influenced by any of the President's business or financial interests, or the business or financial interests of any senior White House staff?

Answer. I commit to comply with all relevant federal ethics laws, regulations, and rules, and to raise concerns that I may have through appropriate channels.

Question. Do you commit to inform the committee if you have any reason to suspect that a foreign government, head of state, or foreign-controlled entity is taking any action in order to benefit any of the President's business or financial interests, or the interests of senior White House staff?

Answer. I commit to comply with all relevant federal ethics laws, regulations, and rules, and to raise concerns that I may have through appropriate channels.

Question. Do you or do any members of your immediate family have any financial interests in Nigeria?

Answer. No.

Question. Research from private industry demonstrates that, when managed well, diversity makes business teams better both in terms of creativity and in terms of productivity. What will you do to promote, mentor and support your staff that come from diverse backgrounds and underrepresented groups in the Foreign Service?

Answer. I deeply appreciate how critically important it is for leaders to promote, mentor, and support all staff members, irrespective of their gender, ethnic background, sexual orientation, or religious beliefs. If confirmed, I would work with the Mission's Deputy Chief of Mission to ensure post has a robust mentoring program in place for all entry-level officers, and I would regularly discuss mentoring with the Mission's supervisory team. To promote an environment of transparency and equality, I would also institute an open-door policy and encourage all Mission staff to come directly to me for guidance and support as desired and to make me aware of any issues as needed.

Question. What steps will you take to ensure each of the supervisors at the Embassy are fostering an environment that is diverse and inclusive?

Answer. If confirmed, during my very first Country Team meeting, I would stress the importance that I place on fostering an inclusive and diverse environment and that this is an important criteria upon which I will evaluate supervisors as part of the annual employee review process. I would also stress these values in my introductory Town Hall meeting with all Mission staff and continue to do so throughout my tenure at Embassy Abuja.

Question. How do you believe political corruption impacts democratic governance and the rule of law generally, and in Nigeria specifically?

Answer. Political corruption negatively affects democratic governance and rule of law throughout the world, but in Nigeria, Africa's most populous country-with an estimated 87 million people living in extreme poverty--political corruption is literally taking food out of the mouths of the neediest. If confirmed, I will continue to support programs that combat political corruption, including through the Bureau of International Narcotics and Law Enforcement Affairs and USAID, including USAID's efforts to increase transparency and participation in Nigeria's election processes. I understand that Nigerian organizations are doing great work in this sector, including the Youth Initiative for Advocacy, Growth, and Advancement (YIAGA), which deployed more than 3,000 observers to every local government area and conducted parallel vote tabulations (PVT) during the Presidential and National Assembly elections earlier this year.

Question. What is your assessment of corruption trends in Nigeria and efforts to address and reduce it by that government?

Answer. Corruption is not an easy problem; if it was, we would no longer be dealing with it across the world. While corruption remains an endemic problem in Nigeria, the government is making progress in addressing it through creating a Treasury Single Account, enacting government payroll reform, increasing prosecutions by the Economic and Financial Crimes Commission (EFCC), and drafting legislation to increase transparency in the petroleum sector. If confirmed, I will continue to encourage all members of our country team to engage their interlocutors to reduce corrup-

tion in every sector where we work closely with the Nigerian government, from health, to civilian security, to the military.

Question. If confirmed, what steps will you take to strengthen good governance and anticorruption programming in Nigeria?

Answer. Good governance and anticorruption programming are a cornerstone of the priorities for Mission Nigeria. If confirmed, I will work closely with my Nigerian interlocutors from the President to the National Assembly to civil society and the private sector to encourage progress in combatting corruption throughout Nigeria. I will support our USAID, Bureau of International Narcotics and Law Enforcement Affairs (INL), and Democracy, Human Rights, and Labor (DRL) programs that focus on increasing the capacity of Nigerians to develop effective and professional government institutions, especially in the justice and law enforcement spheres that are responsive to citizens needs and to strengthen anticorruption efforts throughout the country.

RESPONSES TO ADDITIONAL QUESTIONS FOR THE RECORD
SUBMITTED TO MARY BETH LEONARD BY SENATOR JEANNE SHAHEEN

Question. From your extensive experience within the State Department, including in your current post to the African Union, what is the extent to which the Department examines the impact of youth bulges and gender inequality on U.S. foreign policy and security objectives on the continent? What metrics are used to determine where the problem is most acute and would benefit the most from U.S. aid? Does this inform programmatic spending in the Sahel and across Sub-Saharan Africa?

Answer. Addressing youth bulges and gender inequality are an important part of all U.S. foreign policy, development, and security objectives throughout the globe, but particularly in Africa. The Department works to ensure that efforts to promote gender equality and advance the status of women and girls are incorporated across the full range of foreign assistance and public diplomacy programming. We use publically available and reputable metrics, including from international partner organizations such as the U.N. the World Bank, and the IMF, to determine where problems are most acute and to determine which areas would benefit most from U.S. aid. This informs our programmatic spending throughout the Sahel as well as across Sub-Saharan Africa. If confirmed, I will encourage Mission Nigeria to design and evaluate policy and programs with Nigeria's demographic dynamics in mind. I would also emphasize female education as a proven method to address these important issues.

Question. If confirmed, how would you engage with the Bureau of African Affairs, the Department of Defense, regional organizations and civil society to ensure that this is a priority issue that has wide collaboration in addressing?

Answer. If confirmed, I would seek to integrate a whole of government approach to make youth and gender a priority. I will tap into the knowledge and studies of regional organizations and civil society as well. As U.S. Ambassador to the African Union (AU), I helped develop innovative ways to address these pressing issues, designing adjunct youth components with U.S. government and third party entities. I supported events on youth and gender preceding our Trade and Investment Forum and an energy conference. We included a full day event prior to these conferences on brainstorming youth/women's input involving our Young African Leaders Initiative (YALI) and African Union youth volunteers. Their participation and input were mainstreamed into the formal program. If confirmed, I will spearhead similarly comprehensive and impactful approaches.

RESPONSES TO ADDITIONAL QUESTIONS FOR THE RECORD
SUBMITTED TO MICHELLE A. BEKKERING BY SENATOR ROBERT MENENDEZ

Economic Statecraft

Question. I am increasingly concerned that the United States is losing ground on engaging in economic statecraft for the twenty-first century, including promoting U.S. jobs, business and economic interests, engaging in development financing for infrastructure and other needs, including climate change-related resiliency, and setting standards for emergent technologies and the digital economy.

- Can you expand upon how you view your role and your institutions role, if you are confirmed, in helping to renew and replenish U.S. economic statecraft instruments? Where do you see the biggest challenges? Biggest opportunities?

Answer. We strongly believe the U.S. Agency for International Development (USAID) is at the forefront of the U.S. government's efforts to improve and expand our economic statecraft around the world. Addressing the need for development finance for infrastructure, for example, was one of the principal motivations behind the creation of the new United States International Development Finance Corporation ("DFC") which resulted from bipartisan passage of the Better Utilization of Investments Leading to Development (BUILD) Act last year. The new DFC will combine USAID's Office of Development Credit, which is currently within the Bureau of Economic Growth, Education and Environment (E3), with the Overseas Private Investment Corporation (OPIC). The E3 Bureau, and its planned successor under USAID's Transformation, the Bureau for Democracy, Development, and Innovation, will be the primary organizational interface between USAID and the DFC. If confirmed, I will ensure USAID will forge and retain strong institutional linkages with the new DFC, to ensure continued U.S government leadership in development and economic statecraft.

Under its One Belt, One Road Initiative, the People's Republic of China has been augmenting its investments in transport and trade infrastructure—railways, roads, bridges, and airports—and investing heavily in digital infrastructure. These investments are unprecedented in scale, and the Chinese are making them in countries that are traditional USAID partners. However, the potential for the U.S. private sector to address these challenges is significant.

If confirmed, I will ensure a robust focus on creating business-friendly environments that facilitate access to new markets for U.S. companies. We will advance our partnership with private-sector companies under the Global Alliance for Trade Facilitation to identify opportunities to address delays and unnecessary red tape at borders, and design and deploy targeted reforms that deliver commercially quantifiable results. In addition, we recognize that the digital revolution is opening opportunities for small businesses to engage in cross-border trade, grow into multinational sellers, and craft their own global supply-chains. If confirmed, I will explore opportunities to improve the enabling environments in our partner countries to expand platform-enabled trade. I will also ensure USAID's continued robust engagement with the interagency Digital Connectivity and Cybersecurity Partnership initiative, which aims to increase U.S. investments in the telecom and cyber security sectors in developing countries, including the Indo-Pacific region.

If confirmed, I will prioritize work with the interagency to promote and unleash the potential of the U.S. private sector by fostering access to new markets and promoting its leadership in critical and emergent industries.

Climate Change

Question. I am encouraged by the positive overtures you made towards USAID's work to address climate change and your acknowledgement of how climate change is increasing risks and challenges to economic growth around the world. Given the skepticism and cynicism the President expresses towards the need take seriously the threat challenge presents to the world, and his hostility towards U.S. action on climate change I fear that despite your well-reasoned personal beliefs on the matter, you may be challenged to act appropriately.

- How will the efforts being led by Senior Advisor on the National Security Council, Dr. William Happer, to "reevaluate" to utility of climate science in national security planning impact USAID's development missions?

Answer. I personally believe that climate impacts human health, the environment, and climate-dependent livelihoods. If confirmed, I will continue to support USAID programs that help developing countries manage and adapt to risks from the environment; protect, manage and restore forests and other landscapes; and develop and deploy energy systems that are clean, reliable, and resilient.

My knowledge of the efforts to which you refer comes mostly from press reports. Generally speaking, as a development agency, USAID is a consumer, rather than a producer, of science and scientific data. USAID draws on validated scientific information from a variety of U.S. government and other sources to inform our development work. If confirmed, I will work to ensure that E3 maintains its technical leadership on environmental and related development challenges.

Question. How important is high-quality, unbiased data collection and analysis to informing USAID's policies and programs?

Answer. It is essential. USAID has a long-standing commitment to evidence-based development assistance, and to using the best available scientific and technical information to inform our work. If confirmed, I will continue to support this commitment.

Question. What purpose do you believe is being served by the following policies and actions affecting the quality and integrity of U.S. data?:

- the "red team vs. blue team" climate science review proposed by former EPA Administrator, Scott Pruitt;
- limiting the scope of computer-generated climate change impact models used by U.S. government agencies making climate related policy decision to only project through 2040 (rather than through the end of the century as is accepted by the broader scientific community);
- eliminating the publication of "worst case scenarios" from reports on climate change effects;
- or the work within the White House, led by Dr. William Happer, to review the role climate science serves in U.S. national security planning; and
- Are you concerned with the effect these actions could have the quality and integrity of U.S. (produced) climate change data?

Answer. To the best of my knowledge, the U.S. Agency for International Development (USAID) has not been tracking these efforts closely, nor have they affected our day-to-day work. Generally speaking, as a development agency, USAID is a consumer, rather than a producer, of science and scientific data. USAID continues to base its development programs on the best available scientific and technical information, and I do not expect this to change. Within the Executive Branch of the U.S. government, scientific agencies such as the National Oceanographic and Atmospheric Administration within the U.S. Department of Commerce, the U.S. Geological Survey within the U.S. Department of the Interior, and the National Aeronautics and Space Administration (NASA) generally play lead roles in developing and publishing climate-related data. USAID works in countries where the data and analysis required for long-term investments in sustainable development are often lacking, and we value deeply the investments of U.S. science agencies and universities to improve the quality of data and analysis around the world. SERVIR, our joint venture with NASA that provides state-of-the-art, satellite-based Earth monitoring data, geospatial information and tools to help improve environmental decision-making among developing nations, is an example of this.

Question. What will you do to protect the integrity, impartiality, and quality of the scientific data on climate change that USAID utilizes in making policy and program decisions and provides to its implementing partners in program beneficiaries?

Answer. Generally speaking, the U.S. Agency for International Development (USAID) is a consumer, rather than a producer, of science and scientific data. USAID relies on climate science to support early-warning systems, disaster assistance, the promotion of drought-resistant crops, and other strategies to help countries cope with drought, extreme weather, or other climate-related conditions. If confirmed, I will support USAID's technical teams in continuing their technical leadership based on the highest-quality scientific data and information.

Northern Triangle

Question. In March, the Administration froze all foreign assistance to Guatemala, Honduras and El Salvador.

- Do you believe freezing or ending foreign assistance to the Northern Triangle is an effective or appropriate action to prevent or lessen the number of migrants we see at the U.S. southern border from these countries?

Answer. As Administrator Green stated when he testified before the Senate Foreign Relations Committee on May 8, 2019, we are frustrated by the situation at the Southern border. We have been working with the U.S. Department of State to implement the Administration's policy related to the Northern Triangle.

The U.S. Agency for International Development (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. USAID is working hard to develop new metrics specifically tied to migration so that our programs in Central America can be more targeted and effective.

Question. Does the freeze advance El Salvador, Guatemala, and Honduras on the journey to self-reliance?

Answer. As you know, globally, the U.S. Agency for International Development (USAID) is reorienting its strategies, partnership models, and programmatic prac-

tices to achieve greater development outcomes. Our vision is to end the need for foreign assistance; we call this "the Journey to Self-Reliance." As partners on this Journey, we are empowering host-country governments and our partners to achieve locally-sustained results, helping countries mobilize public and private revenues, strengthening local capacities, and accelerating enterprise-driven development. This approach fosters stable, resilient, and prosperous countries that are more self-reliant, and prioritizes enduring partnerships. It is an approach that is good for our partner countries worldwide, U.S. national security, and the American taxpayer.

As part of their Journeys to Self-Reliance, we need more commitment from the governments of the Northern Triangle to curb outmigration, corruption, impunity, and violence. Our programs are most effective when coordinated closely with, and supported by, the governments of these countries, as well as with civil society and the private sector.

Question. Do you believe that the governments of these countries are sending migrants to the U.S. as the President has asserted?

Answer. I have not seen any evidence to suggest the governments of the Northern Triangle countries are sending migrants to the United States, and I commit to working with my colleagues in the Bureau for Latin America and the Caribbean at the Agency who are the lead in this matter.

Question. What do you believe are the root causes of migration from these countries?

Answer. I believe extreme poverty, corruption, violence, the lack of economic opportunity, food-insecurity, and the threat of gang violence are drivers of migration from Central America. Effective development assistance should address economic prosperity and the security of citizens in local communities and include migration-related data as a key metric of progress.

Question. How are USAID's development programs in the Northern Triangle working to address the root causes of migration from the Northern Triangle?

Answer. Senator, I would defer you to our Bureau for Latin America and the Caribbean for specific information regarding targeted programs in the Northern Triangle. However, generally, programming in Central America funded by the U.S. Agency for International Development (USAID) advances the U.S. Strategy for Central America (Strategy), which addresses the economic, security, and governance drivers of illegal migration. With funding appropriated by Congress, USAID has supported efforts by the Northern Triangle governments to reduce poverty and improve their own security conditions.

Question. Do you believe these programs are effective?

Answer. My colleagues in the Bureau for Latin America and the Caribbean can better speak to the efficacy of our specific programs but, in general, I believe programs funded by the U.S. Agency for International Development (USAID) in the Northern Triangle are in our national interest. USAID's programs address some of the drivers we believe contribute to illegal migration by creating opportunities in Northern Triangle countries for their citizens, and also work to address challenges like transnational crime, corruption, and the lack of safe spaces for families.

Question. How is the freeze in foreign assistance to these countries affecting USAID's programs in these countries and what will you do, if confirmed, in your capacity as AA for E3 to keep E3s programs effective and operational as the freeze is realized?

Answer. The U.S. Agency for International Development (USAID) has been working with our implementing partners to understand the entire picture of the programmatic implications of this decision. We expect this will vary by program and each implementing partner. If confirmed, I will work with the USAID Bureau for Latin. America and the Caribbean (LAC) on how to proceed programmatically as we implement this policy decision.

Question. Will you travel to the missions in these region to meet USAIDs personnel who's jobs are effected by the freeze, and meet with USAID's implementing partners in these countries, and visit projects that are at risk in order to see both the importance of these programs and the risks that arise from abruptly ending these programs?

Answer. Yes.

Overall Commitment to Gender Equality and Integration

Question. Sustainable international development rests on the recognition and promotion of human rights, including the equal rights of women and girls. As you are aware from your previous role as the Senior Coordinator for Gender Equality and Women's Empowerment, USAID's concerted investment in empowering women and girls and integrating gender equality throughout USAID's work is critical to lasting change and development.

- If you are confirmed as the Assistant Administrator for the E3 Bureau, what will you specifically do to ensure that gender equality is elevated, prioritized, and integrated into the wide-reaching work USAID does globally?

Answer. Equality between women and men and female empowerment is a priority for the Administration and the U.S. Agency for International Development (USAID). The President's National Security Strategy clearly identifies women's empowerment as one of its five priority actions, noting its commitment to " . . . support efforts to advance women's equality, protect the rights of women and girls, and promote women and youth empowerment programs." Gender equality and female empowerment are also core to the Agency's development goals, and serve as a tenet of the Agency's approach to the Journey to Self-Reliance.

The Women's Entrepreneurship and Economic Empowerment (WEEE) Act of 2018 bolsters USAID's efforts to elevate, prioritize and integrate gender equality across USAID programs by codifying the requirement of the Agency Gender Equality and Female Empowerment Policy that a gender analysis must shape all of our strategies and programs.

If confirmed, I will continue to uphold and strengthen USAID's commitment to gender equality and female empowerment. I will ensure we adhere to the principles and parameters set forth in the WEEE Act, all relevant Agency policies and strategies, and the recently-launched Women's Global Development and Prosperity initiative. As part of USAID leadership, I will ensure to communicate clearly our expectations regarding the integration of gender equality and female empowerment into all policies and programs within the Bureau for Economic Growth, Education and Environment and across the Agency, and that we fully meet them.

Question. How will you ensure that existing and longstanding U.S. policy commitments to ending gender-based violence, advancing the rights of adolescent girls, and promoting women's leadership and participation will be respected and advanced as Assistant Administrator?

Answer. The U.S. Agency for International Development (USAID) is committed to promoting gender equality and female empowerment. Existing law, such as the Women's Entrepreneurship and Economic Empowerment (WEEE) Act, and USAID's policies, such as the Gender Equality and Female Empowerment Policy, direct our work; the objectives and promising interventions tied to each are reflected in and will serve to enhance, the goals and structure of the Agency's Transformation. The U.S. Strategy to Prevent and Respond to Gender-Based Violence (GBV) Globally continues to guide USAID's work on GBV, including child, early, and forced marriage (CEFM), and the U.S. Global Strategy to Empower Adolescent Girls shapes USAID's "whole-of-girl" approach, which encompasses the interconnected events across a girl's life from birth to adulthood and across sectors.

If confirmed, I will continue to uphold and strengthen USAID's commitment in this sphere. I will ensure we adhere to the principles and parameters set forth in the WEEE Act, all relevant Agency policies and strategies, and the recently-launched Women's Global Development and Prosperity initiative. As part of USAID leadership, I will ensure to communicate clearly our expectations regarding the integration of gender equality and female empowerment into all policies and programs within the Bureau for Economic Growth, Education and Environment and across the Agency, and that we fully meet them.

Question. How will you ensure that the Senior Coordinator for Gender Equality and Women's Empowerment and the Office of Gender and Development, which would be under your purview if confirmed as Assistant Administrator of the E3 Bureau, successfully integrate gender equality principles throughout USAID's work even outside of E3, particularly as it relates to core USAID issues such as food and nutrition security, agricultural development and livelihoods, water and sanitation access, humanitarian response, and global health?

Answer. As noted, the Senior Coordinator for Gender Equality and Women's Empowerment and the Office of Gender Equality and Women's Empowerment (GenDev) are housed within the Bureau for Economic Growth, Education and Environment (E3). If confirmed, I will fully support the Senior Coordinator's role and GenDev's mandate for the benefit of the entire Agency, including the design and oversight of

training courses on gender integration, gender-based violence (GBV), and women's economic empowerment; the development and delivery of technical assistance, programming, and communications resources across Bureaus and the field; and guiding and coordinating work on key cross-cutting issues such as women's economic empowerment and GBV.

E3 provides technical assistance, research and field support across the Agency. This provides the Bureau the opportunity to elevate, prioritize and integrate equality between women and men in the Agency's entire portfolio through close collaboration and information-exchange.

For example, we collaborate with the Water Office, the Bureau for Global Health, and the Regional Bureaus to ensure the integration of gender considerations across all the Agency's activities in water, sanitation, and hygiene. The two governing documents for the activities of the U.S. Agency for International Development (USAID) in water and sanitation, the U.S. government Global Water Strategy and the Senator Paul Simon Water for the World Act, reinforce the importance of gender equality and women's empowerment.

The same close partnership for gender integration exists with the Bureau for Food Security (BFS). One of the key guidance documents for the U.S. government Global Food Security Strategy is the Technical Guidance on Advancing Gender Equality and Female Empowerment. GenDev coordinates with BFS on technical gender issues, such as supporting the implementation of a framework for monitoring and evaluation to measure women's empowerment. We also recognize the integral role that health plays in empowering women, and work closely with the Bureau for Global Health to advance our shared goals. If confirmed, I commit to ensure the continued integration of gender throughout USAID's work by collaborating with my counterparts in BFS, and the Bureaus for Democracy, Conflict, and Humanitarian Assistance and Global Health.

Finally, USAID benefits from an organizational structure that includes more than 70 Gender Advisors at USAID Missions around the world. If confirmed, under my leadership, we will continue to support our Gender Advisors located in each Bureau within Washington, as well as in our field Missions, as they carry out USAID's policies and programs in the field of gender equality and female empowerment.

Commitment to Comprehensive Approaches to Gender Equality and Women's Empowerment

Question. GBV and Reproductive Rights: This administration has clearly made a commitment to advancing women's economic empowerment as its signature initiative for women's rights and prosperity. While this initiative is highly focused on issues related to women's entrepreneurship, workforce development, and establishing an enabling environment, we see very little (if any) emphasis on some of the key areas in which women are being held back from economic independence—namely, access to reproductive rights and services and the right to live free from violence.

- If you are confirmed as the Assistant Administrator of the E3 Bureau, what will you commit to doing to ensure a comprehensive view of women's empowerment that includes access to reproductive rights and freedom from gender-based violence?

Answer. I recognize that achieving equality between women and men and women's empowerment depends on inputs and outcomes across several spheres, and at the individual, community and national levels. The robust programming of the U.S. Agency for International Development (USAID) in multiple regions and sectors, including agriculture, crisis and conflict, democracy and governance, education, economic growth, environment, and health, provide ample opportunities to ensure the Agency's investments address every facet of gender equality and women's empowerment.

USAID is committed to increasing access to high-quality health care for women, their children and their families. Investments in women's health yield a return of up to 20 times in the form of societal and economic benefits. When women have access to basic health care for both themselves and their families, and are empowered to make healthy, positive choices, the well-being of the entire community improves.

Preventing and responding to gender-based violence (GBV) is also a priority for USAID, integrated across development programming and humanitarian assistance. We know that conflict and natural disasters often exacerbate the vulnerability of individuals, particularly women and girls, and GBV can escalate in these scenarios. As such, at the onset of an emergency, USAID prioritizes specialized GBV interventions to address the immediate impact of the situation on women and girls' health, psychosocial well-being and safety.

If confirmed, I will ensure that the leadership of the Bureau for Economic Growth, Education and Environment (E3) in advancing gender equality and women's empowerment includes recognition and support for efforts in this area across sectors, and will make certain that USAID programming continues to address the prevention of, and response to, GBV, coordinated effectively by E3.

Question. Women's Health: One of the greatest obstacles to advancing women's empowerment and gender equity is a lack of quality healthcare, including access to reproductive health services. The U.S. government had led global efforts to combat preventable maternal deaths through investments in maternal and child health, nutrition, family planning, and other critical health interventions, however, the United States' global health policies since 2017, such as the Global Gag Rule, have severely undermined these efforts.

- If you are confirmed as Assistant Administrator for the E3 Bureau, what specifically will you do support your counterpart in the Global Health Bureau to ensure USAID's commitment to these efforts?

Answer. Equality between men and women and women's empowerment depends on inputs and outcomes across several spheres, and at the individual, community and national levels. The robust programming of the U.S. Agency for International Development (USAID) in multiple regions and sectors, including agriculture, crisis and conflict, democracy and governance, education, economic growth, environment, and health, provide ample opportunities to ensure our work gives attention to addressing the many facets of gender equality and women's empowerment. We know that multi-sectoral efforts to address these issues reap a multitude of development outcomes—in health, education, gender equality, women's empowerment, and economic and social development. If confirmed, I will continue these efforts.

As the world's largest bilateral donor to global health programs, the United States remains committed to helping women and their children thrive. When women have access to basic health care for both themselves and their families, and are empowered to make healthy, positive choices, the well-being of the entire community improves. While voluntary family planning and reproductive-health programming is under the purview of the USAID Bureau for Global Health, if confirmed, I commit to continuing collaboration by the Bureau for Education, Economic Growth and Environment with our Global Health counterparts on our programming.

Question. Property Rights: Rights organizations have documented how women in communities displaced by large scale commercial agriculture suffer distinctive and disproportionate harmful impacts due to their social roles and status, and had the least opportunity to negotiate and assert their rights. Women face enormous struggles to sustain their families after losing safe water for drinking and household use, access to fertile land for cultivating food crops, and hunting or foraging grounds. In many countries, divorced women and widows face many challenges in asserting equal property rights. Widows may be evicted from their homes and land, and their property is stolen by in-laws when their husbands die or by their former spouses if they seek a divorce.

- As Assistant Administrator, how will you ensure U.S. policy and programs will support and promote women's land and property rights? And, how will you ensure that programs support by USAID will not work to undermine women's land and property rights?

Answer. The U.S. Agency for International Development (USAID) views good governance of land and natural resources as a critical foundation for successful U.S. foreign assistance in all technical areas and regions. USAID's Office of Land and Urban (LU) within the Bureau for Economic Growth, Education and Environment leads the Agency's efforts on ensuring land rights with the mandate to improve the governance of land and resources and strengthen property rights for all members of society, especially women. Strengthening women's land rights continues to be an integral component of all LU land activities. Furthermore, the Women's Global Development and Prosperity (W-GDP) Initiative recognizes the necessity of improving the enabling environment, including securing land and property rights for women. Other U.S. government and USAID policies and programs that include an explicit focus on land rights for all, including women, are the U.S. government's Global Food-Security Strategy, and USAID's new Environmental and Natural-Resources Management (ENRM) Framework. Through these existing policies, frameworks and practices, I will, if confirmed, be able to ensure the U.S. government's policy and programs will support and promote women's land and property rights.

Equipped with the above policies and a clear focus on intentionally strengthening women's land rights, USAID will be able to ensure our programs will not undermine

women's land and property rights. Furthermore, if confirmed, I will continue to support the deployment of existing best practices to strengthen women's land rights purposefully. For instance, when working with communities to map and document their land, USAID always insists that women be at least equally represented on the mapping teams, which encourages women landholders to participate in the process. Also, good practice dictates that, in all USAID programs, two or more spaces for landholder names are included on land documentation, at a minimum, so titles can name both husband and wife. These are just two examples of the ways in which USAID programs purposefully focus on women's land rights.

If confirmed, I will support USAID's continued exploration and expansion of new best practices to continue this critical work.

Sexual and Reproductive Health and Rights

Question. Siljander: As you may be aware from recent State Department announcements, a policy known as the Siljander amendment prohibits the use of foreign assistance funds to lobby for or against abortion. Repeatedly at the U.N. representatives of the State Department, USAID, and U.S. Mission to the U.N. including your Senior Advisor Bethany Kozma, have made statements that "we do not support abortion," spreading false information that comprehensive sex education programs "promote abortion as a solution to teen pregnancy," and "the U.S. is a pro-life country" despite that fact that for over 40 years the right to abortion has been established in the this country under Roe *v.* Wade.

- Can you explain to me how these statements directly made by employees of the U.S. State Department are not considered to be lobbying against abortion, and thus a direct violation of the Siljander amendment?

Answer. Consistent with longstanding practice, the United States routinely describes its foreign-policy position on issues before multilateral bodies.

Question. What will you do to hold your employees accountable for complying with the Siljander prohibition on lobbying against abortion?

Answer. The U.S. Agency for International Development (USAID) takes compliance with the Siljander Amendment very seriously, and I will ensure that staff are familiar with its provisions. We would address any specific response to a compliance issue on a case-by-case basis.

Question. Removing sexual and reproductive health from U.N. agreements: I am deeply concerned by the reports that the U.S. consistently advocated for removing references from sexual and reproductive health care from international agreements, including in critical spaces like the annual Commission on the Status of Women. I understand this administration has argued they have other priorities for these meetings, like economic empowerment and entrepreneurship.

Answer. The United States routinely describes its foreign-policy position on issues before multilateral bodies, including on issues related to sexual and reproductive health.

Question. How can women develop and lead their own businesses and participate in the economy if they are not able to have autonomous control of their own bodies, supported by comprehensive access to sexual and reproductive health care?

Answer. I recognize that equality between men and women and women's empowerment depends on inputs and outcomes across several spheres, and at the individual, community, and national levels. The robust programming of the U.S. Agency for International Development (USAID) in multiple regions and sectors, including agriculture, crisis and conflict, democracy and governance, education, economic growth, environment, and health, provide ample opportunities to address every facet of gender equality and women's empowerment in our work.

USAID is committed to increasing access to high-quality health care for women, their children and their families. Investments in women's health yield a return of up to 20 times in the form of societal and economic benefits. When women have access to basic health care for both themselves and their families, and are empowered to make healthy, positive choices, the well-being of the entire community improves. While voluntary family planning and reproductive-health programming is under the purview of the USAID Bureau for Global Health, I commit to continuing collaboration by the Bureau for Economic Growth, Education and Environment with our Global Health counterparts in our programming.

Adolescent Girls/Child Marriage

Question. The E3 Bureau (Bureau for Economic Growth, Education, and Environment) provides research and technical leadership on economic growth and empower-

ment, gender equality and women's empowerment, education, and more. In addition to the large portfolio, the Bureau represents the Agency to Congress, donors, multilaterals, and other outside partners. Child marriage is any formal marriage or informal union where one or both parties are under the age of 18. Each year, 12 million girls are married before they turn 18. Child marriage traps girls in cycles of poverty and increases the likelihood that they will be pregnant earlier and more often, and that they will experience intimate partner violence. It also has enormous economic impacts, and inaction on the issue will cost the global economy trillions of dollars. A country like Ethiopia could reduce their reliance on overseas development assistance by a sixth if they were to end child marriage, which is money that could potentially be reinvested into the country and increase development outcomes in a number of key areas.

- As the Assistant Administrator of E3 for USAID, how will you ensure that the needs of adolescent girls are being met in the areas of economic growth, education and environment in a holistic way? Specifically, how do you anticipate implementing the U.S. Global Strategy to Empower Adolescent Girls and to otherwise ensure that U.S. foreign assistance is part of a holistic solution to ensuring that girls get the education and training they need to succeed now and if they are ever to become economically empowered women later?
- As the Assistant Administrator of E3 for USAID, how will you ensure that the USAID Child Marriage Resource Guide is implemented, and that the impact projects and programs may have on child marriage rates is better documented and understood?

Answer. Empowering adolescent girls is fundamental to achieving our development goals and unlocking the full potential of societies. The U.S. Agency for International Development (USAID) is the lead agency for the implementation of the U.S. Global Strategy to Empower Adolescent Girls across sectors, including health, education, water, and sanitation. USAID uses a "whole-of-girl" approach to see the overlapping areas of vulnerability in an adolescent girl's life. The Agency defines the whole-of-girl approach as enhancing girls' access to high-quality education in safe environments; providing economic opportunities and incentives for girls and their families; empowering girls with information, skills, services, and support; and mobilizing and educating communities.

If confirmed, I will ensure USAID's programs address the differentiated needs of girls in specific stages of adolescence, by recognizing that the challenges young adolescents encounter are distinct from those experienced by older adolescents who are approaching adulthood, and will work to support and enhance current activities, such as efforts to increase access to early-childhood education, and using geographic information system technology to map areas where adolescent girls are at high risk of female genital mutilation and cutting.

USAID recognizes the harmful impact associated with child, early or forced marriage (CEFM) and annually attributes at least $11 million to address this practice. To tackle this issue, USAID has looked to support programming to prevent and respond to CEFM through a multi-pronged approach as outlined in the Agency's Child, Early, and Forced Marriage Resource Guide. Not only does USAID fund stand-alone CEFM activities, it works to integrate them in four main areas: education and economic opportunities, health care, regulatory reform, and public-awareness campaigns. If confirmed, I will ensure that USAID's efforts in CEFM, coordinated by the Bureau for Economic Growth, Education and Environment, continue to adhere to best practices in this area, and that we compile and share lessons from these programs.

Question. In your previous role as Senior Deputy Assistant Administrator, it was unclear whether USAID was working to prevent child marriage and address the needs of already married girls, including the provision of youth-friendly reproductive health services for already married adolescents and sexuality education as a key part of learning in areas where child marriage is highly prevalent. How will you address these gaps in your elevated role as the Assistant Administrator of E3 for USAID?

Answer. As part of our work, the U.S. Agency for International Development (USAID) funds a number of health-related interventions for young girls to deal with the consequences of child marriage. For example, USAID's partners provide care to young girls who endure pregnancy and delivery before their bodies are fully matured, as they are more likely to develop obstetric fistula (OF) than older women. OF is an issue most pervasive in countries and communities with high rates of child marriage. Additionally, poverty and malnutrition in children contribute to the condi-

tion of stunting (one's body does not fully mature), which exacerbates OF in those patients.

If confirmed, I will ensure that CEFM programming, coordinated out of the Bureau for Economic Growth, Education and Environment, continue to provide support for married adolescents in addition to advancing prevention efforts. Additionally, if confirmed, I will ensure that USAID continues to implement the Agency's Child Marriage Resource Guide.

Question. It has been well-documented that climate change and the humanitarian impacts of natural disasters has implications for child marriage. In times of conflict and crisis, child marriage increases as parents often see it as the only way to keep their daughters safe-economically and physically. And yet we know that child marriage is not protective and actually increases the likelihood that a girl will never escape a cycle of poverty, and that she is more likely than her peers that wait until adulthood to marry to experience intimate partner violence. As the Assistant Administrator of E3 for USAID, how will you connect the dots between economic growth, environment and education to ensure that this generation of girls has alternatives to child marriage, including access to quality education tied to real workforce opportunities if and when she is ready to enter the workforce, and a healthy climate where risks of disasters do not derail her education or ability to participate in safe and formal sector work when she is legally able to do so?

Answer. Empowering adolescent girls is fundamental to achieving our development goals and unlocking the full potential of societies. The U.S. Agency for International Development (USAID) is the lead agency for the implementation of the U.S. Global Strategy to Empower Adolescent Girls across sectors, including health, education, water, and sanitation. USAID uses a "whole-of-girl" approach to see the overlapping areas of vulnerability in an adolescent girl's life. The Agency's programs address the differentiated needs of girls in specific stages of adolescence, by recognizing that the challenges young adolescents encounter are distinct from those experienced by older adolescents who are approaching adulthood.

These include the risk of child, early, and forced marriage (CEFM). USAID's efforts to curtail this harmful cultural practice include testing the effectiveness of various community-based approaches to prevent child marriage through community education, educational support, health care, and economic incentives. In Ethiopia, for example, USAID is addressing the high prevalence of child marriage through a number of programs that address its root causes, including education, empowerment of women and girls, and health care. In one such program, USAID trained 875 members of the judiciary and law-enforcement communities on child marriage. As a result, courts annulled 748 early child marriages in the Amhara region, where this illegal activity is widely practiced.

If confirmed as Assistant Administrator for Economic Growth, Education and Environment, I will ensure that USAID continues its whole-of-girl approach, a platform to ensure our programs for younger and adolescent girls—and their communities—in education, environment, and economic growth contribute in tandem to create the conditions to ensure girls have access to quality education tied to real workforce opportunities, if and when they are ready to enter the workforce, and that they are able to participate in safe and formal work when legally able to do so.

DDI

Question. As part of the re-organization of USAID, the E3 Bureau will now become part of the larger DDI (Development, Democracy and Innovation) Bureau. DDI will combine a number of important areas of work like democracy promotion, economic growth, gender equality, youth and several others.

- When E3 transforms into DDI, will you be the Assistant Administrator for DDI?

Answer. Yes.

Question. Under what authorities will your confirmation to head E3 transfer to DDI?

Answer. There are two different legal authorities that identify 12 Presidentially appointed, Senate-confirmed (PAS) positions at the U.S. Agency for International Development (USAID). First, Section 624 of the Foreign Assistance Act of 1961 (Section 2384 of Title 22 of the United States Code [USC]) states that "the President may appoint, by and with the advice and consent of the Senate, twelve officers in the agency . . . " The statute does not give any of these positions a name or title. Instead, the 1998 Foreign Affairs Restructuring and Reform Act that established USAID as a statutory entity only gives one PAS position a title: "the Administrator."

Second, Sections 5313-5351 of Title 5 of the USC lists 12 USAID PAS positions by Executive Schedule Level, identified in the following ways:

Administrator, Agency for International Development (Section 5313 of Title 5 of the USC);

Deputy Administrator, Agency for International Development (Section 5314 of Title 5 of the USC);

Assistant Administrators, Agency for International Development (six) (Section 5315 of Title 5 of the USC); and

Regional Assistant Administrators, Agency for International Development (four) (Section 5315 of Title 5 of the USC)

Please note that neither of these statutes identifies a position called "Assistant Administrator for the Bureau of Economic Growth, Education and Environment (E3)"

In the past, the President has submitted nominees as either "Assistant Administrator for E3 Bureau" or as "Assistant Administrator (E3)." USAID has interpreted the former nomination as being to a specific organizational entity (i.e., E3), while the latter allowed mutability in the organizational elements the nominee would lead.

In this case, the President nominated me after USAID submitted the Congressional Notification (CN) that specifically explained the transformation of E3 into the Bureau for Democracy, Development, and Innovation (DDI), but before Congress cleared the CN. Under that circumstance, the President could not nominate me for a Bureau that did not yet exist (DDI), so the nomination was made to allow USAID the flexibility to change her responsibility if the Congress concurred in the creation of the DDI Bureau. USAID has informed Congress consistently, on numerous occasions, that the President's intent was for me to serve in the position of the Assistant Administrator for DDI if Congress cleared the CN.

Question. How do you see programmatic priorities like climate change adaptation, energy, and education programs changing under DDI?

Answer. The Bureau for Democracy, Development, and Innovation (DDI) will continue to prioritize these and other areas of work. DDI will be the home of the Agency Environment Coordinator and Senior Coordinator for United States International Basic Education, as well as the functions previously performed by the Higher Education and Climate Change Coordinators. DDI will have a Center for Environment, Energy, and Infrastructure and a Center for Education that will allow continued technical leadership in these domains while fostering the kind of cross-cutting work that is especially needed today. While our team that works on climate adaptation is moving to the new Bureau for Resilience and Food Security, DDI will continue to play a coordinating role on this issue internally and with the State Department and other parts of the Federal government. Under DDI, I also welcome the opportunity to lead the increased integration of priorities like innovation, private-sector engagement, and women's empowerment across the entire breadth of the Agency's programming.

Question. How would you suggest that USAID use the additional resources of the DDI Bureau to amplify the reach of gender equality across the Agency's programming and ensure it is not downgraded within the larger Bureau?

The current work of the U.S. Agency for International Development (USAID) in gender equality and women's empowerment (GEWE) will grow and thrive in the new Bureau for Democracy, Development, and Innovation (DDI). DDI will provide Agency-wide support and services, his including leadership and coordination of expertise found throughout the organization, assistance to field Missions and other Operating Units at all phases of the Program Cycle, and global engagement to advance GEWE. The operations of the Office of Gender Equality and Women's Empowerment within the current Bureau for Economic Growth, Education and Environment will also serve as a model for other DDI Hubs also tasked with integrating core issues and values throughout USAID's sectoral programming. USAID stands ready and willing to implement all current and future gender-related policies and strategies. DDI will manage funds and programs, including funds for Missions that incentivize the inclusion of GEWE in programming as well as to improve the knowledge, practices, and skills of staff in GEWE.

Question. What will you do to expand basic human rights for LGBT people?

Answer. If confirmed as Assistant Administrator, I will oversee the work of the Coordinator for Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender, and Intersex (LGBTI) programming and the LGBTI team in the Inclusive Development Hub in the new Bureau for Democracy, Development, and Innovation. By placing the LGBTI Coordi-

nator in DDI, we are making an intentional effort to integrate and institutionalize inclusive development as a critical lens to apply across the breadth of the Agency's programs. I will ensure that the team leads the Agency's analyses and programming to help protect LGBTI people from violence, discrimination, stigma, and criminalization.

Question. As a possible official of the Trump administration, will you condemn and oppose policies and practices that are derogatory and discriminatory on the basis of race, religion, nationality, gender, sexual orientation, or gender identity?

Answer. Yes, I will condemn and oppose policies and practices that are derogatory and discriminatory on the basis of race, religion, nationality, gender, sexual orientation, or gender identity.

Question. What will you do to ensure that statements by the Trump campaign and transition teams that are racist, xenophobic, misogynistic, or otherwise denigrate human rights and support abuses, will not become government policy?

Answer. If confirmed, I will support all existing laws, case law, and policies that support the dignity, respect, and equality of treatment for all peoples.

Question. Will you uphold the rights of all persons to equality and freedom from discrimination, and call on Americans to refrain from discrimination of any sort?

Answer. Yes. I am committed to our Agency's values of integrity, respect, empowerment, and inclusion. Under my leadership, we will continue to recognize that our strength comes from diversity. We will value all of our employees equally, and all employees in the current Bureau for Economic Growth, Education and Environment and its successor Bureau for Democracy, Development, and Innovation will be expected to demonstrate professionalism and respect in their communications and behavior. I will foster an environment that empowers every team member to meet his or her full potential. I will also work to advance equal opportunity and address inequality within our Agency, and in our work in the field.

Political Targeting

Question. Do you agree that any targeting of or retaliation against career employees based on their perceived political beliefs, prior work on policy, or affiliation with a previous administration, is wholly inappropriate and has no place in the federal government?

Answer. Yes. I have a reputation within the U.S. Agency for International Development of deep respect for all my colleagues. I will carry forward this history of collegiality, professionalism, and respect into my new role if confirmed.

Question. If confirmed, what will you do to ensure that all employees under your leadership understand that any retaliation, blacklisting, or other prohibited personnel practices will not be tolerated?

Answer. Leadership starts from the top. If I am confirmed, my staff within the Bureau for Economic Growth, Education and Environment and its successor Bureau for Democracy, Development, and Innovation will know that I expect us to uphold the Agency's values of integrity, respect, empowerment and inclusion, and that I will not tolerate such behavior as retaliation, blacklisting, or other prohibited personnel practices. If confirmed, I will hold all staff, but especially those in leadership and supervisory positions, accountable for protecting these values in fulfilling their responsibilities. I will also lead by example, and hold myself to the highest standards of accountability.

Harassment

Question. Has anyone ever made a formal or informal complaint or allegation of sexual harassment, discrimination (e.g., racial, ethnic, religious, etc.), or inappropriate conduct against you, in a workplace or any other setting)?

- If so, please describe the nature of the complaint or allegation, your response, and any resolution, including any settlements.

Answer. No, not to my knowledge.

Question. Have you ever addressed concerns or allegations of sexual harassment, discrimination (e.g., racial, ethnic, religious, etc.), or inappropriate conduct made against any employee over whom you had supervisory authority?

- If so, please describe the outcome and actions taken.

Answer. I have not addressed any concerns or allegations of sexual harassment, discrimination (e.g., racial, ethnic, religious, etc.), or inappropriate conduct made against any employee over whom I have had supervisory authority. While I have

served at the U.S. Agency for International Development (USAID), there was an allegation of inappropriate behavior between two employees who worked in the Bureau for Economic Growth, Education and Environment, but the employees' immediate supervisor and the Agency Office of Civil Rights and Diversity handled it. While I did closely monitor the allegation and investigation, the ultimate resolution did not require me to intervene and address the matter.

Let Girls Learn

Question. There is a lack of clarity as to the Administration's stance on Let Girls Learn.

- Will you commit to making girls education a priority among USAID's youth and child education missions?

Answer. The U.S. Agency for International Development (USAID) recognizes that education is a force-multiplier for all our development work. However, 132 million girls are out of school around the globe, and in conflict-affected countries, adolescent girls are at particular risk. Moreover, gender and social norms, along with inadequate or inaccessible infrastructure—including poor water, sanitation, and hygiene facilities—often prevent girls from continuing their education. USAID's programs work to overcome these restraints.

The *U.S. government International Basic Education Strategy,* launched in September 2018, sets a comprehensive approach to international basic education for ten U.S. government Agencies and Departments, including USAID. The Strategy sets one of its two objectives as "Expand access to quality basic education for all, particularly marginalized and vulnerable populations." Girls' access to quality education is at the core of this goal. Similarly, USAID's new Education Policy, launched in November 2018, established promoting equity and inclusion as one of its main principles, and specifically notes the unique barriers girls face in accessing and continuing education.

If confirmed, I will continue to make girls' education a priority of USAID's portfolio.

RESPONSES TO ADDITIONAL QUESTIONS FOR THE RECORD
SUBMITTED TO MICHELLE A. BEKKERING BY SENATOR BENJAMIN L. CARDIN

Human Rights

Question. What are the most important actions you have taken in your career to date to promote human rights and democracy? What has been the impact of your actions?

Answer. My career has been founded in promoting human rights and democracy, and, if confirmed, I will continue to make the defense and promotion of democracy, human rights, and governance a priority.

Prior to joining USAID, I spent twelve years at the International Republican Institute (IRI), an international democracy-development organization dedicated to promoting freedom and democracy worldwide. We worked to strengthen citizen voices and help make their leaders more accountable and responsive.

I served as an election observer multiple times in Afghanistan, Jordan, Tunisia, and Ukraine to monitor whether the elections took place in a transparent and open manner and that the results truly represented citizen votes.

During my time at IRI, I also led programs charged with increasing the political inclusion of women; a cause about which I am passionate. I served as director of the Women's Democracy Network (WDN), an office that focuses on the empowerment of women to participate in political processes and equips them with the skills needed to assume greater leadership roles in government, political parties, and civil society. Our work recognized the need for women to be present at decision-making tables to ensure the issues that face them were not only heard, but addressed. We accomplished our goals through mentoring, capacity-building, and most important, by fostering a global network of women leaders who could encourage and support each other through their shared problems and triumphs. Under my leadership, WDN expanded its reach exponentially in every region of the world. I also elevated the profile of the gender-equality and women's empowerment portfolio across the organization so that it became a priority across the breadth of IRI programs. Through our work in Bangladesh, we supported women's micro-finance, and put procedures in place to protect women in the markets from harassment and extortion. In Cameroon, we worked with women activists who successfully worked with tribal leaders to change customary laws to recognize women's independence and equality. In Perú,

we supported the members of the Women's Peruvian Parliamentary Caucus to work with teachers and community advocates to identify gender-based violence, offer treatment to victims, and increase the capacity of law-enforcement officials and the judiciary to apprehend and prosecute perpetrators of these crimes. These are but a few of many examples of how I worked to advance the empowerment and equality of women.

I also gained valuable field experience as IRI's Resident Country Director in Indonesia. I oversaw efforts to support the development of the country's political sphere, and my portfolio included a focus on public-opinion polling to encourage political parties to focus on constituent concerns and aid them in developing issue-based platforms.

If confirmed, I look forward to continuing the important investments by the U.S. Agency for International Development promote democracy, human rights, and citizen-responsive governance.

Diversity

Question. What will you do to promote, mentor and support your staff that come from diverse backgrounds and underrepresented groups at USAID?

Answer. I am committed to our Agency's values of integrity, respect, empowerment, and inclusion. Under my leadership, we will continue to recognize that strength that comes from diversity. We will value all of our employees equally, and all employees of the Bureau for Economic Growth, Education and Environment will be expected to demonstrate professionalism and respect in their communications and behavior. I will foster an environment that empowers every team member to meet his or her full potential. I will also advance equal opportunity and address inequality within our Agency and in our work in the field.

Question. What steps will you take to ensure each of the supervisors at USAID are fostering an environment that is diverse and inclusive?

Answer. I commit to ensuring that all supervisors under my purview complete the mandatory U.S. Agency for International Development (USAID) University Supervisory Certification Course, a two-week class designed to target both management and leadership competencies to equip our supervisors with the skills and tools needed to perform in their role as supervisors of an inclusive diverse and multicultural workforce.

Additionally, the Bureau for Economic Growth, Education and Environment and the future Bureau for Democracy, Development, and Innovation will engage closely with USAID's Office of Civil Rights and Diversity to prioritize our focus on diversity and inclusion, through explicit attention to best practices and opportunities to execute on these issues across all levels of the organization. We will create opportunities for training on inclusiveness, diversity, and leadership at all levels.

Commitment to Gender Equality and Integration

Question. Sustainable international development rests on the recognition and promotion of human rights, including the equal rights of women and girls. As you are aware from your previous role as the Senior Coordinator for Gender Equality and Women's Empowerment, USAID's concerted investment in empowering women and girls and integrating gender equality throughout USAID's work is critical to lasting change and development.

- If you are confirmed as the Assistant Administrator for the E3 Bureau, what will you specifically do to ensure that gender equality is elevated, prioritized, and integrated into the wide-reaching work USAID does globally?

Answer. Equality between women and men and female empowerment is a priority for the Administration and the U.S. Agency for International Development (USAID). The President's National Security Strategy clearly identifies women's empowerment as one of its five priority actions, noting its commitment to "... support efforts to advance women's equality, protect the rights of women and girls, and promote women and youth empowerment programs." Gender equality and female empowerment are also core to the Agency's development goals, and serve as tenets of the Agency's approach to the Journey to Self-Reliance.

The Women's Entrepreneurship and Economic Empowerment (WEEE) Act of 2018 bolsters USAID's efforts to elevate, prioritize, and integrate gender equality across USAID programs by codifying the requirement of the Agency Gender Equality and Female Empowerment Policy that a gender analysis must shape all of our strategies and programs.

If confirmed, I will continue to uphold and strengthen USAID's commitment to gender equality and female empowerment. I will ensure we adhere to the principles

and parameters set forth in the WEEE Act, all relevant Agency policies and strategies, and the recently-launched Women's Global Development and Prosperity initiative. As part of USAID leadership, I will ensure to communicate clearly our expectations regarding the integration of gender equality and female empowerment into all policies and programs within the Bureau for Economic Growth, Education and Environment and across the Agency, and that we fully meet them.

Question. How will you ensure that existing and longstanding U.S. policy commitments to ending gender-based violence, advancing the rights of adolescent girls, and promoting women's leadership and participation will be respected and advanced as Assistant Administrator?

Answer. The U.S. Agency for International Development (USAID) is committed to promoting gender equality and female empowerment. Existing law, such as the Women's Entrepreneurship and Economic Empowerment Act, and USAID's policies, such as the Gender Equality and Female Empowerment Policy, direct our work; the objectives and promising interventions tied to each are reflected in and will serve to enhance, the goals and structure of the Agency's Transformation. The U.S. Strategy to Prevent and Respond to Gender-Based Violence (GBV) Globally continues to guide USAID's work on GBV, including child, early, and forced marriage (CEFM), and the U.S. Global Strategy to Empower Adolescent Girls shapes USAID's "whole-of-girl" approach, which encompasses the interconnected events across a girl's life from birth to adulthood and across sectors.

If confirmed, I will continue to uphold and strengthen USAID's commitment in this sphere. I will ensure we adhere to the principles and parameters set forth in the WEEE Act, all relevant Agency policies and strategies, and the recently-launched Women's Global Development and Prosperity initiative. As part of USAID leadership, I will ensure to communicate clearly our expectations regarding the integration of gender equality and female empowerment into all policies and programs within the Bureau for Economic Growth, Education and Environment and across the Agency, and that we fully meet them.

Question. How will you ensure that the Senior Coordinator for Gender Equality and Women's Empowerment and the Office of Gender and Development, which would be under your purview if confirmed as Assistant Administrator of the E3 Bureau, successfully integrate gender equality principles throughout USAID's work even outside of E3, particularly as it relates to core USAID issues such as food and nutrition security, agricultural development and livelihoods, water and sanitation access, humanitarian response, and global health?

Answer. As noted, the Senior Coordinator for Gender Equality and Women's Empowerment (E3) and the Office of Gender Equality and Women's Empowerment (GenDev) are housed within the Bureau for Economic Growth, Education and Environment. If confirmed, I will support fully the Senior Coordinator's role and GenDev's mandate for the benefit of the entire Agency, including the design and oversight of training courses on gender integration, gender-based violence (GBV), and women's economic empowerment; the development and delivery of technical assistance, programming, and communications resources across Bureaus and the field; and guiding and coordinating work on key cross-cutting issues such as women's economic empowerment and GBV.

E3 provides technical assistance, research, and field support across the Agency. This provides the Bureau the opportunity to elevate, prioritize and integrate gender equality in the Agency's entire portfolio through close collaboration and information-exchange.

For example, we collaborate with the Water Office, the Bureau for Global Health, and the Regional Bureaus to ensure the integration of gender considerations across all the Agency's activities in water, sanitation, and hygiene. The two governing documents for the activities of the U.S. Agency for International Development (USAID) in water and sanitation, the U.S. government Global Water Strategy and the Senator Paul Simon Water for the World Act, reinforce the importance of gender equality and women's empowerment.

The same close partnership for gender-integration exists with the Bureau for Food Security (BFS). One of the key guidance documents for the U.S. government Global Food-Security Strategy is the Technical Guidance on Advancing Gender Equality and Female Empowerment. GenDev coordinates with BFS on technical gender issues, such as supporting the implementation of a framework for monitoring and evaluation to measure women's empowerment. We also recognize the integral role that health plays in empowering women and work closely with the Bureau for Global Health to advance our shared goals. If confirmed, I commit to ensure the continued integration of gender throughout USAID's work by collaborating with my coun-

terparts in BFS and the Bureaus for Democracy, Conflict, and Humanitarian Assistance and Global Health.

Finally, USAID benefits from an organizational structure that includes more than 70 Gender Advisors at USAID Missions around the world. If confirmed, under my leadership, we will continue to support our Gender Advisors located in each Bureau within Washington, as well as in the field Missions, as they carry out USAID's policies and programs in the field of gender equality and female empowerment.

Gender Equality and Women's Empowerment

Question. As the previous USAID Senior Coordinator for Gender Equality and Women's Empowerment, you know well that U.S. government investments in gender equality and women's and girls' empowerment are critical to achieving U.S. foreign policy objectives, strengthening our national security, and increasing economic opportunities. Recently USAID has authorized an update of its Gender Equality and Female Empowerment (GE/FE) Policy, which has been a critical foundation for progress on the promotion of gender equality throughout development and humanitarian assistance efforts over the last seven years.

- How will you use your new role to continue strengthening USAID's advancement of gender equality globally, and specifically how will you ensure that the review and update process of the GE/FE Policy includes meaningful, substantive consultations with civil society organizations with proven expertise in global gender equality issues?

Answer. The efforts of the U.S. Agency for International Development (USAID) to advance equality between men and women and female empowerment are significantly bolstered when the Senior Leadership of the Agency affirms the importance of these goals and our expectations for their inclusion in our programming. If confirmed, I will ensure the policies and programs of the Bureau for Economic Growth, Education and Environment meet the highest standards regarding gender equality and gender integration. Furthermore, if confirmed, I will collaborate with other Bureau Leadership to maintain the Agency at the forefront of work in gender equality and women's empowerment globally.

USAID'S Gender Equality and Female Empowerment Policy has been instrumental to the Agency's leadership in this area, and to the integration of this work in our programming across sectors and regions. Current efforts to update the policy serve as an opportunity to reaffirm and build on USAID's structure and experience, incorporate the most recent information on best practices and innovation, and reflect the priorities of the Administration and Administrator Green. USAID's longstanding and productive partnerships with civil society have been vital to the success of our work in gender equality and female empowerment. USAID's current Senior Gender Coordinator and Office of Gender Equality and Women's Empowerment have prioritized including substantive consultation with civil society as part of the update; if confirmed, I will ensure this continues to be the case.

Sexual and Reproductive Health and Rights

Question. If you are confirmed as the Assistant Administrator of the E3 Bureau, what will you commit to doing to ensure a comprehensive view of women's empowerment that includes access to reproductive rights and freedom from gender-based violence?

Answer. I recognize that achieving gender equality and women's empowerment depends on inputs and outcomes across several spheres, and at the individual, community and national levels. The robust programming of the U.S. Agency for International Development (USAID) in multiple regions and sectors, including agriculture, crisis and conflict, democracy and governance, education, economic growth, environment, and health, provide ample opportunities to ensure the Agency's investments address every facet of gender equality and women's empowerment.

USAID is committed to increasing access to high-quality health care for women, their children and their families. Investments in women's health yield a return of up to 20 times in the form of societal and economic benefits. When women have access to basic health care for both themselves and their families, and are empowered to make healthy, positive choices, the well-being of the entire community improves.

Preventing and responding to gender-based violence (GBV) is also a priority for USAID, integrated across development programming and humanitarian assistance. We know that conflict and natural disasters often exacerbate the vulnerability of individuals, particularly women and girls, and GBV can escalate in these scenarios. As such, at the onset of an emergency, USAID prioritizes specialized GBV interventions to address the immediate impact of the situation on women and girls' health, psychosocial well-being, and safety.

If confirmed, I will ensure that the leadership of the Bureau for Economic Growth, Education and Environment (E3) in advancing gender equality and women's empowerment includes recognition and support for efforts in this area across sectors and will make certain that USAID programming continues to address the prevention of, and response to, GBV, coordinated effectively by E3.

Siljander Amendment

Question. As you may be aware from recent State Department announcements, a policy known as the Siljander amendment prohibits the use of foreign assistance funds to lobby for or against abortion. Repeatedly at the U.N. representatives of the State Department, USAID, and U.S. Mission to the U.N. including your Senior Advisor Bethany Kozma, have made statements that "we do not support abortion," spreading false information that comprehensive sex education programs "promote abortion as a solution to teen pregnancy," and "the U.S. is a pro-life country" despite that fact that for over 40 years the right to abortion has been established in the this country under Roe *v.* Wade.

- In your opinion, how are these statements, directly made by employees of the U.S. State Department, not considered to be lobbying against abortion, and thus a direct violation of the Siljander amendment?

Answer. Consistent with longstanding practice, the United States routinely describes its foreign-policy position on issues before multilateral bodies, including on issues related to abortion.

Question. What will you do to hold your employees accountable to complying with the Siljander prohibition on lobbying against abortion?

Answer. The U.S. Agency for International Development (USAID) takes compliance with the Siljander Amendment very seriously. I will ensure that staff are familiar with guidance and resources on the Siljander Amendment. We would address any specific response to a compliance issue on a case-by-case basis.

Adolescent Girls/Child Marriage

Question. As the Assistant Administrator of E3 for USAID, how will you ensure that the needs of adolescent girls are being met in the areas of economic growth, education and environment in a holistic way?

- How do you anticipate implementing the U.S. Global Strategy to Empower Adolescent Girls and to otherwise ensure that U.S. foreign assistance is part of a holistic solution to ensuring that girls get the education and training they need to succeed now and if they are ever to become economically empowered women later?
- As the Assistant Administrator of E3 for USAID, how will you ensure that the USAID Child Marriage Resource Guide is implemented, and that the impact projects and programs may have on child marriage rates is better documented and understood?

Answer. Empowering adolescent girls is fundamental to achieving our development goals and unlocking the full potential of societies. The U.S. Agency for International Development (USAID) is the lead agency for the implementation of the U.S. Global Strategy to Empower Adolescent Girls across sectors, including health, education, water, and sanitation. USAID applies a "whole-of-girl" approach to see the overlapping areas of vulnerability in an adolescent girl's life. We define the whole-of-girl approach as enhancing girls' access to quality education in safe environments; providing economic opportunities and incentives for girls and their families; empowering girls with information, skills, services, and support; and mobilizing and educating communities.

If confirmed, I will ensure that USAID's programs address the differentiated needs of girls in specific stages of adolescence, by recognizing that the challenges young adolescents encounter are distinct from those experienced by older adolescents who are approaching adulthood, and will work to support and enhance our current activities, such as efforts to increase access to early-childhood education, and using geographic information system technology to map areas where adolescent girls are at high risk of female genital mutilation and cutting.

USAID recognizes the harmful impact associated with Child, Early or Forced Marriage (CEFM), and annually attributes at least $11 million to address this practice. To tackle this issue, USAID has looked to fund programming to prevent and respond to CEFM through a multi-pronged approach as outlined in the Agency's Child, Early, and Forced Marriage Resource Guide. Not only does USAID finance stand-alone CEFM activities, it works to integrate CEFM activities in four main areas: education and economic opportunities, health care, regulatory reform, and

public-awareness campaigns. If confirmed, I will ensure that USAID's efforts in CEFM, coordinated by the Bureau for Economic Growth, Education and Environment, continue to adhere to best practices in this area, and that we compile and share lessons from these programs.

USAID Reorganization

Question. As part of the re-organization of USAID, the E3 Bureau will now become part of the larger DDI (Development, Democracy and Innovation) Bureau. DDI will combine a number of important areas of work like democracy promotion, economic growth, gender equality, youth and several others.

- How would you suggest that USAID use the additional resources of the DDI Bureau to amplify the reach of gender equality across the Agency's programming and ensure it is not downgraded within the larger Bureau?

Answer. The current work of the U.S. Agency for International Development (USAID) in gender equality and women's empowerment (GEWE) will grow and thrive in the new Bureau for Democracy, Development, and Innovation (DDI). DDI will provide Agency-wide support and services, including leadership and coordination of expertise found throughout the organization, assistance to field Missions and other Operating Units at all phases of the Program Cycle, and global engagement to advance GEWE. The operations of the Office of Gender Equality and Women's Empowerment within the current Bureau for Economic Growth, Education and Environment will also serve as a model for other DDI Hubs also tasked with integrating core issues and values throughout USAID's sectoral programming. USAID stands ready and willing to implement all current and future gender-related policies and strategies. DDI will manage funds and programs, including funds for Missions that incentivize the inclusion of GEWE in programming, as well as to improve the knowledge, practices, and skills of staff in GEWE.

Conflicts of Interest

Question. Do you commit to bring to the committee's attention (and the Inspector General of USAID) any change in policy or U.S. actions that you suspect may be influenced by any of the President's business or financial interests, or the business or financial interests of any senior White House staff?

Answer. I commit to comply with all relevant federal ethics laws, regulations and rules, and to raise concerns that I may have through appropriate channels.

Question. Do you commit to inform the committee if you have any reason to suspect that a foreign government, head of state, or foreign-controlled entity is taking any action in order to benefit any of the President's business or financial interests, or the interests of senior White House staff?

Answer. I commit to comply with all relevant federal ethics laws, regulations and rules, and to raise concerns that I may have through appropriate channels.

Question. Do you or do any members of your immediate family have any financial interests in any country abroad?

Answer. No.

RESPONSES TO ADDITIONAL QUESTIONS FOR THE RECORD
SUBMITTED TO MICHELLE A. BEKKERING BY SENATOR BENJAMIN L. CARDIN

Human Rights

Question. What are the most important actions you have taken in your career to date to promote human rights and democracy? What has been the impact of your actions?

Answer. My career has been founded in promoting human rights and democracy, and, if confirmed, I will continue to make the defense and promotion of democracy, human rights, and governance a priority.

Prior to joining USAID, I spent twelve years at the International Republican Institute (IRI), an international democracy-development organization dedicated to promoting freedom and democracy worldwide. We worked to strengthen citizen voices and help make their leaders more accountable and responsive.

I served as an election observer multiple times in Afghanistan, Jordan, Tunisia, and Ukraine to monitor whether the elections took place in a transparent and open manner and that the results truly represented citizen votes.During my time at IRI, I also led programs charged with increasing the political inclusion of women; a

cause about which I am passionate. I served as director of the Women's Democracy Network (WDN), an office that focuses on the empowerment of women to participate in political processes and equips them with the skills needed to assume greater leadership roles in government, political parties, and civil society. Our work recognized the need for women to be present at decision-making tables to ensure the issues that face them were not only heard, but addressed. We accomplished our goals through mentoring, capacity-building, and most important, by fostering a global network of women leaders who could encourage and support each other through their shared problems and triumphs. Under my leadership, WDN expanded its reach exponentially in every region of the world. I also elevated the profile of the gender-equality and women's empowerment portfolio across the organization so that it became a priority across the breadth of IRI programs. Through our work in Bangladesh, we supported women's micro-finance, and put procedures in place to protect women in the markets from harassment and extortion. In Cameroon, we worked with women activists who successfully worked with tribal leaders to change customary laws to recognize women's independence and equality. In Perú, we supported the members of the Women's Peruvian Parliamentary Caucus to work with teachers and community advocates to identify gender-based violence, offer treatment to victims, and increase the capacity of law-enforcement officials and the judiciary to apprehend and prosecute perpetrators of these crimes. These are but a few of many examples of how I worked to advance the empowerment and equality of women.

I also gained valuable field experience as IRI's Resident Country Director in Indonesia. I oversaw efforts to support the development of the country's political sphere, and my portfolio included a focus on public-opinion polling to encourage political parties to focus on constituent concerns and aid them in developing issue-based platforms.

If confirmed, I look forward to continuing the important investments by the U.S. Agency for International Development promote democracy, human rights, and citizen-responsive governance.

Diversity

Question. What will you do to promote, mentor and support your staff that come from diverse backgrounds and underrepresented groups at USAID?

Answer. I am committed to our Agency's values of integrity, respect, empowerment, and inclusion. Under my leadership, we will continue to recognize that strength that comes from diversity. We will value all of our employees equally, and all employees of the Bureau for Economic Growth, Education and Environment will be expected to demonstrate professionalism and respect in their communications and behavior. I will foster an environment that empowers every team member to meet his or her full potential. I will also advance equal opportunity and address inequality within our Agency and in our work in the field.

Question. What steps will you take to ensure each of the supervisors at USAID are fostering an environment that is diverse and inclusive?

Answer. I commit to ensuring that all supervisors under my purview complete the mandatory U.S. Agency for International Development (USAID) University Supervisory Certification Course, a two-week class designed to target both management and leadership competencies to equip our supervisors with the skills and tools needed to perform in their role as supervisors of an inclusive diverse and multicultural workforce.

Additionally, the Bureau for Economic Growth, Education and Environment and the future Bureau for Democracy, Development, and Innovation will engage closely with USAID's Office of Civil Rights and Diversity to prioritize our focus on diversity and inclusion, through explicit attention to best practices and opportunities to execute on these issues across all levels of the organization. We will create opportunities for training on inclusiveness, diversity, and leadership at all levels.

Commitment to Gender Equality and Integration

Question. Sustainable international development rests on the recognition and promotion of human rights, including the equal rights of women and girls. As you are aware from your previous role as the Senior Coordinator for Gender Equality and Women's Empowerment, USAID's concerted investment in empowering women and girls and integrating gender equality throughout USAID's work is critical to lasting change and development.

- If you are confirmed as the Assistant Administrator for the E3 Bureau, what will you specifically do to ensure that gender equality is elevated, prioritized, and integrated into the wide-reaching work USAID does globally?

Answer. Equality between women and men and female empowerment is a priority for the Administration and the U.S. Agency for International Development (USAID). The President's National Security Strategy clearly identifies women's empowerment as one of its five priority actions, noting its commitment to "... support efforts to advance women's equality, protect the rights of women and girls, and promote women and youth empowerment programs." Gender equality and female empowerment are also core to the Agency's development goals, and serve as tenets of the Agency's approach to the Journey to Self-Reliance.

The Women's Entrepreneurship and Economic Empowerment (WEEE) Act of 2018 bolsters USAID's efforts to elevate, prioritize, and integrate gender equality across USAID programs by codifying the requirement of the Agency Gender Equality and Female Empowerment Policy that a gender analysis must shape all of our strategies and programs.

If confirmed, I will continue to uphold and strengthen USAID's commitment to gender equality and female empowerment. I will ensure we adhere to the principles and parameters set forth in the WEEE Act, all relevant Agency policies and strategies, and the recently-launched Women's Global Development and Prosperity initiative. As part of USAID leadership, I will ensure to communicate clearly our expectations regarding the integration of gender equality and female empowerment into all policies and programs within the Bureau for Economic Growth, Education and Environment and across the Agency, and that we fully meet them.

Question. How will you ensure that existing and longstanding U.S. policy commitments to ending gender-based violence, advancing the rights of adolescent girls, and promoting women's leadership and participation will be respected and advanced as Assistant Administrator?

Answer. The U.S. Agency for International Development (USAID) is committed to promoting gender equality and female empowerment. Existing law, such as the Women's Entrepreneurship and Economic Empowerment Act, and USAID's policies, such as the Gender Equality and Female Empowerment Policy, direct our work; the objectives and promising interventions tied to each are reflected in and will serve to enhance, the goals and structure of the Agency's Transformation. The U.S. Strategy to Prevent and Respond to Gender-Based Violence (GBV) Globally continues to guide USAID's work on GBV, including child, early, and forced marriage (CEFM), and the U.S. Global Strategy to Empower Adolescent Girls shapes USAID's "whole-of-girl" approach, which encompasses the interconnected events across a girl's life from birth to adulthood and across sectors.

If confirmed, I will continue to uphold and strengthen USAID's commitment in this sphere. I will ensure we adhere to the principles and parameters set forth in the WEEE Act, all relevant Agency policies and strategies, and the recently-launched Women's Global Development and Prosperity initiative. As part of USAID leadership, I will ensure to communicate clearly our expectations regarding the integration of gender equality and female empowerment into all policies and programs within the Bureau for Economic Growth, Education and Environment and across the Agency, and that we fully meet them.

Question. How will you ensure that the Senior Coordinator for Gender Equality and Women's Empowerment and the Office of Gender and Development, which would be under your purview if confirmed as Assistant Administrator of the E3 Bureau, successfully integrate gender equality principles throughout USAID's work even outside of E3, particularly as it relates to core USAID issues such as food and nutrition security, agricultural development and livelihoods, water and sanitation access, humanitarian response, and global health?

Answer. As noted, the Senior Coordinator for Gender Equality and Women's Empowerment (E3) and the Office of Gender Equality and Women's Empowerment (GenDev) are housed within the Bureau for Economic Growth, Education and Environment. If confirmed, I will support fully the Senior Coordinator's role and GenDev's mandate for the benefit of the entire Agency, including the design and oversight of training courses on gender integration, gender-based violence (GBV), and women's economic empowerment; the development and delivery of technical assistance, programming, and communications resources across Bureaus and the field; and guiding and coordinating work on key cross-cutting issues such as women's economic empowerment and GBV.

E3 provides technical assistance, research, and field support across the Agency. This provides the Bureau the opportunity to elevate, prioritize and integrate gender equality in the Agency's entire portfolio through close collaboration and information-exchange.

For example, we collaborate with the Water Office, the Bureau for Global Health, and the Regional Bureaus to ensure the integration of gender considerations across all the Agency's activities in water, sanitation, and hygiene. The two governing documents for the activities of the U.S. Agency for International Development (USAID) in water and sanitation, the U.S. government Global Water Strategy and the Senator Paul Simon Water for the World Act, reinforce the importance of gender equality and women's empowerment.

The same close partnership for gender-integration exists with the Bureau for Food Security (BFS). One of the key guidance documents for the U.S. government Global Food-Security Strategy is the Technical Guidance on Advancing Gender Equality and Female Empowerment. GenDev coordinates with BFS on technical gender issues, such as supporting the implementation of a framework for monitoring and evaluation to measure women's empowerment. We also recognize the integral role that health plays in empowering women and work closely with the Bureau for Global Health to advance our shared goals. If confirmed, I commit to ensure the continued integration of gender throughout USAID's work by collaborating with my counterparts in BFS and the Bureaus for Democracy, Conflict, and Humanitarian Assistance and Global Health.

Finally, USAID benefits from an organizational structure that includes more than 70 Gender Advisors at USAID Missions around the world. If confirmed, under my leadership, we will continue to support our Gender Advisors located in each Bureau within Washington, as well as in the field Missions, as they carry out USAID's policies and programs in the field of gender equality and female empowerment.

Gender Equality and Women's Empowerment

Question. As the previous USAID Senior Coordinator for Gender Equality and Women's Empowerment, you know well that U.S. government investments in gender equality and women's and girls' empowerment are critical to achieving U.S. foreign policy objectives, strengthening our national security, and increasing economic opportunities. Recently USAID has authorized an update of its Gender Equality and Female Empowerment (GE/FE) Policy, which has been a critical foundation for progress on the promotion of gender equality throughout development and humanitarian assistance efforts over the last seven years.

- How will you use your new role to continue strengthening USAID's advancement of gender equality globally, and specifically how will you ensure that the review and update process of the GE/FE Policy includes meaningful, substantive consultations with civil society organizations with proven expertise in global gender equality issues?

Answer. The efforts of the U.S. Agency for International Development (USAID) to advance equality between men and women and female empowerment are significantly bolstered when the Senior Leadership of the Agency affirms the importance of these goals and our expectations for their inclusion in our programming. If confirmed, I will ensure the policies and programs of the Bureau for Economic Growth, Education and Environment meet the highest standards regarding gender equality and gender integration. Furthermore, if confirmed, I will collaborate with other Bureau Leadership to maintain the Agency at the forefront of work in gender equality and women's empowerment globally.

USAID'S Gender Equality and Female Empowerment Policy has been instrumental to the Agency's leadership in this area, and to the integration of this work in our programming across sectors and regions. Current efforts to update the policy serve as an opportunity to reaffirm and build on USAID's structure and experience, incorporate the most recent information on best practices and innovation, and reflect the priorities of the Administration and Administrator Green. USAID's longstanding and productive partnerships with civil society have been vital to the success of our work in gender equality and female empowerment. USAID's current Senior Gender Coordinator and Office of Gender Equality and Women's Empowerment have prioritized including substantive consultation with civil society as part of the update; if confirmed, I will ensure this continues to be the case.

Sexual and Reproductive Health and Rights

Question. If you are confirmed as the Assistant Administrator of the E3 Bureau, what will you commit to doing to ensure a comprehensive view of women's empowerment that includes access to reproductive rights and freedom from gender-based violence?

Answer. I recognize that achieving gender equality and women's empowerment depends on inputs and outcomes across several spheres, and at the individual, community and national levels. The robust programming of the U.S. Agency for Inter-

national Development (USAID) in multiple regions and sectors, including agriculture, crisis and conflict, democracy and governance, education, economic growth, environment, and health, provide ample opportunities to ensure the Agency's investments address every facet of gender equality and women's empowerment.

USAID is committed to increasing access to high-quality health care for women, their children and their families. Investments in women's health yield a return of up to 20 times in the form of societal and economic benefits. When women have access to basic health care for both themselves and their families, and are empowered to make healthy, positive choices, the well-being of the entire community improves.

Preventing and responding to gender-based violence (GBV) is also a priority for USAID, integrated across development programming and humanitarian assistance. We know that conflict and natural disasters often exacerbate the vulnerability of individuals, particularly women and girls, and GBV can escalate in these scenarios. As such, at the onset of an emergency, USAID prioritizes specialized GBV interventions to address the immediate impact of the situation on women and girls' health, psychosocial well-being, and safety.

If confirmed, I will ensure that the leadership of the Bureau for Economic Growth, Education and Environment (E3) in advancing gender equality and women's empowerment includes recognition and support for efforts in this area across sectors and will make certain that USAID programming continues to address the prevention of, and response to, GBV, coordinated effectively by E3.

Siljander Amendment

Question. As you may be aware from recent State Department announcements, a policy known as the Siljander amendment prohibits the use of foreign assistance funds to lobby for or against abortion. Repeatedly at the U.N. representatives of the State Department, USAID, and U.S. Mission to the U.N. including your Senior Advisor Bethany Kozma, have made statements that "we do not support abortion," spreading false information that comprehensive sex education programs "promote abortion as a solution to teen pregnancy," and "the U.S. is a pro-life country" despite that fact that for over 40 years the right to abortion has been established in the this country under Roe *v.* Wade.

- In your opinion, how are these statements, directly made by employees of the U.S. State Department, not considered to be lobbying against abortion, and thus a direct violation of the Siljander amendment?

Answer. Consistent with longstanding practice, the United States routinely describes its foreign-policy position on issues before multilateral bodies, including on issues related to abortion.

Question. What will you do to hold your employees accountable to complying with the Siljander prohibition on lobbying against abortion?

Answer. The U.S. Agency for International Development (USAID) takes compliance with the Siljander Amendment very seriously. I will ensure that staff are familiar with guidance and resources on the Siljander Amendment. We would address any specific response to a compliance issue on a case-by-case basis.

Adolescent Girls/Child Marriage

Question. As the Assistant Administrator of E3 for USAID, how will you ensure that the needs of adolescent girls are being met in the areas of economic growth, education and environment in a holistic way?

- How do you anticipate implementing the U.S. Global Strategy to Empower Adolescent Girls and to otherwise ensure that U.S. foreign assistance is part of a holistic solution to ensuring that girls get the education and training they need to succeed now and if they are ever to become economically empowered women later?
- As the Assistant Administrator of E3 for USAID, how will you ensure that the USAID Child Marriage Resource Guide is implemented, and that the impact projects and programs may have on child marriage rates is better documented and understood?

Answer. Empowering adolescent girls is fundamental to achieving our development goals and unlocking the full potential of societies. The U.S. Agency for International Development (USAID) is the lead agency for the implementation of the U.S. Global Strategy to Empower Adolescent Girls across sectors, including health, education, water, and sanitation. USAID applies a "whole-of-girl" approach to see the overlapping areas of vulnerability in an adolescent girl's life. We define the whole-of-girl approach as enhancing girls' access to quality education in safe environments; providing economic opportunities and incentives for girls and their fami-

lies; empowering girls with information, skills, services, and support; and mobilizing and educating communities.

If confirmed, I will ensure that USAID's programs address the differentiated needs of girls in specific stages of adolescence, by recognizing that the challenges young adolescents encounter are distinct from those experienced by older adolescents who are approaching adulthood, and will work to support and enhance our current activities, such as efforts to increase access to early-childhood education, and using geographic information system technology to map areas where adolescent girls are at high risk of female genital mutilation and cutting.

USAID recognizes the harmful impact associated with Child, Early or Forced Marriage (CEFM), and annually attributes at least $11 million to address this practice. To tackle this issue, USAID has looked to fund programming to prevent and respond to CEFM through a multi-pronged approach as outlined in the Agency's Child, Early, and Forced Marriage Resource Guide. Not only does USAID finance stand-alone CEFM activities, it works to integrate CEFM activities in four main areas: education and economic opportunities, health care, regulatory reform, and public-awareness campaigns. If confirmed, I will ensure that USAID's efforts in CEFM, coordinated by the Bureau for Economic Growth, Education and Environment, continue to adhere to best practices in this area, and that we compile and share lessons from these programs.

USAID Reorganization

Question. As part of the re-organization of USAID, the E3 Bureau will now become part of the larger DDI (Development, Democracy and Innovation) Bureau. DDI will combine a number of important areas of work like democracy promotion, economic growth, gender equality, youth and several others.

- How would you suggest that USAID use the additional resources of the DDI Bureau to amplify the reach of gender equality across the Agency's programming and ensure it is not downgraded within the larger Bureau?

Answer. The current work of the U.S. Agency for International Development (USAID) in gender equality and women's empowerment (GEWE) will grow and thrive in the new Bureau for Democracy, Development, and Innovation (DDI). DDI will provide Agency-wide support and services, including leadership and coordination of expertise found throughout the organization, assistance to field Missions and other Operating Units at all phases of the Program Cycle, and global engagement to advance GEWE. The operations of the Office of Gender Equality and Women's Empowerment within the current Bureau for Economic Growth, Education and Environment will also serve as a model for other DDI Hubs also tasked with integrating core issues and values throughout USAID's sectoral programming. USAID stands ready and willing to implement all current and future gender-related policies and strategies. DDI will manage funds and programs, including funds for Missions that incentivize the inclusion of GEWE in programming, as well as to improve the knowledge, practices, and skills of staff in GEWE.

Conflicts of Interest

Question. Do you commit to bring to the committee's attention (and the Inspector General of USAID) any change in policy or U.S. actions that you suspect may be influenced by any of the President's business or financial interests, or the business or financial interests of any senior White House staff?

Answer. I commit to comply with all relevant federal ethics laws, regulations and rules, and to raise concerns that I may have through appropriate channels.

Question. Do you commit to inform the committee if you have any reason to suspect that a foreign government, head of state, or foreign-controlled entity is taking any action in order to benefit any of the President's business or financial interests, or the interests of senior White House staff?

Answer. I commit to comply with all relevant federal ethics laws, regulations and rules, and to raise concerns that I may have through appropriate channels.

Question. Do you or do any members of your immediate family have any financial interests in any country abroad?

Answer. No.

RESPONSES TO ADDITIONAL QUESTIONS FOR THE RECORD
SUBMITTED TO MICHELLE A. BEKKERING BY SENATOR JEANNE SHAHEEN

Question. Sustainable international development rests on the recognition and promotion of human rights, including the equal rights of women and girls. As I'm sure you are aware from your previous role as the Senior Coordinator for Gender Equality and Women's Empowerment, USAID's investment in empowering women and girls and integrating gender equality is critical to lasting change and development. If you are confirmed as the Assistant Administrator for the E3 Bureau, what will you specifically do to ensure that gender equality is elevated, prioritized and integrated into the wide-reaching work USAID does globally?

Answer. Equality between women and men and female empowerment are priorities for the Administration and the U.S. Agency for International Development (USAID). The President's National Security Strategy clearly identifies women's empowerment as one of its five priority actions, noting its commitment to " . . . support efforts to advance women's equality, protect the rights of women and girls, and promote women and youth empowerment programs." Gender equality and female empowerment are also core to the Agency's development goals, and serve as tenets of the Agency's approach to the Journey to Self-Reliance.

The Women's Entrepreneurship and Economic Empowerment (WEEE) Act of 2018 bolsters USAID's efforts to elevate, prioritize and integrate gender equality across USAID programs by codifying the requirement of the Agency Gender Equality and Female Empowerment Policy that a gender analysis must shape all of our strategies and programs.

If confirmed, I will continue to uphold and strengthen USAID's commitment to gender equality and female empowerment. I will ensure we adhere to the principles and parameters set forth in the WEEE Act, all relevant Agency policies and strategies, and the recently-launched Women's Global Development and Prosperity initiative. As part of USAID leadership, I will ensure to communicate clearly our expectations regarding the integration of gender equality and female empowerment into all policies and programs within the Bureau for Economic Growth, Education and Environment and its successor Bureau for Democracy, Development, and Innovation and across the Agency, and that we fully meet them.

Question. As you know, if confirmed, the Senior Coordinator for Gender Equality and Women's Empowerment and the Office of Gender and Development would fall under your purview. Given your experience in the role of Senior Coordinator, what needs to be done to further integrate gender equality principles throughout USAID's work? If confirmed, how will you support the Senior Coordinator and gender perspective integration within your bureau but also outside of E3, particularly as it relates to food and nutrition security, water and sanitation access, humanitarian response and global health?

Answer. As noted, the Senior Coordinator for Gender Equality and Women's Empowerment (E3) and the Office of Gender Equality and Women's Empowerment (GenDev) are housed within the Bureau for Economic Growth, Education and Environment. If confirmed, I will support fully the Senior Coordinator's role and GenDev's mandate for the benefit of the entire Agency, including the design and oversight of training courses on gender integration, gender-based violence (GBV), and women's economic empowerment; the development and delivery of technical assistance, programming, and communications resources across Bureaus and the field; and guiding and coordinating work on key cross-cutting issues such as women's economic empowerment and GBV.

E3 provides technical assistance, research and field support across the Agency. This provides the Bureau the opportunity to elevate, prioritize and integrate equality between women and men in the Agency's entire portfolio through close collaboration and information exchange.

For example, we collaborate with the Water Office, the Bureau for Global Health, and the Regional Bureaus to ensure the integration of gender considerations across all the Agency's activities in water, sanitation and hygiene. The two governing documents for the activities of the U.S. Agency for International Development (USAID) in water and sanitation, the U.S. government Global Water Strategy and the Senator Paul Simon Water for the World Act, reinforce the importance of gender equality and women's empowerment.

The same close partnership for gender integration exists with the Bureau for Food Security (BFS). One of the key guidance documents for the U.S. government Global Food Security Strategy is the Technical Guidance on Advancing Gender Equality and Female Empowerment. GenDev coordinates with BFS on technical gender issues, such as supporting the implementation of a framework for monitoring and

evaluation to measure women's empowerment. We also recognize the integral role that health plays in empowering women and work closely with the Bureau for Global Health to advance our shared goals. If confirmed, I commit to ensure the continued integration of gender throughout USAID's work by collaborating with my counterparts in the BFS and the Bureaus for Democracy, Conflict, and Humanitarian Assistance and Global Health.

Finally, USAID benefits from an organizational structure that includes more than 70 Gender Advisors at USAID Missions around the world. If confirmed, under my leadership, we will continue to support our Gender Advisors located in each Bureau within Washington, as well as in the field Missions, as they carry out USAID's policies and programs in the field of gender equality and female empowerment.

Question. Gender-based violence is one of the most pervasive human rights violations in the world. Gender-based violence and gender inequality are enduring impediments to development, security, economic advancements and democratic governance. In addition to administering crucial programs that work to prevent GBV and increase access to vital services for GBV survivors, USAID is a critical player in implementing the U.S. Strategy to Prevent and Respond to Gender-Based Violence. This is a longstanding and important policy intended to prioritize the response to GBV in foreign assistance and foreign policy.

- As Assistant Administrator, how would you build on the work of your predecessors to prioritize gender analysis into U.S. foreign policy, which includes attention to gender-based violence?

Answer. If confirmed, I will build on the work of my predecessors and will continue to prioritize gender analysis. The Women's Entrepreneurship and Economic Empowerment (WEEE) Act of 2018 codified the integration of gender analysis across the programming of the U.S. Agency for International Development (USAID), a requirement I intend to reinforce in my tenure at USAID as Assistant Administrator, if confirmed. Specifically, I will ensure that Agency continues to integrate gender analysis into programming at every stage of the Program Cycle, which will strengthen our efforts to promote equality between women and men and women's empowerment.

Gender-based violence (GBV) is an important part of our current programmatic efforts. If confirmed, I will continue to support the Agency's investments designed to prevent and respond to GBV.

Question. How will you ensure gender-focused metrics such as constraints on women's mobility, levels of violence against women, rates of child marriage and girls' access to quality education, are integrated into programs and assessments?

Answer. The U.S. Agency for International Development (USAID) requires that a gender analysis inform all of our strategies and projects. These analyses include assessing national and sub-national data on the key barriers to equality between women and men and women's empowerment, such as women's mobility, rates of child marriage and violence against women, and girls' access to quality education. The Agency's programmatic activities and interventions are expected to address the issues identified in these analyses, and to monitor their progress as part of a monitoring plan.

As part of our standard internal management system, USAID's Missions, Bureaus and Independent Offices are required to disaggregate all individual-level indicators by sex to assess whether we are reaching men and women with programs and services across all sectors. Missions and Bureaus also report on the Standard Foreign Assistance (F) indicator related to GBV, namely, "Number of people reached by a U.S. government-funded intervention providing GBV services (e.g.) health, legal, psycho-social counseling, shelters, hotlines, other." This includes activities related to the prevention of child, early, and forced marriage and programs for married adolescents. USAID programs also report on a number of F, as well as custom, performance indicators that measure access to high-quality primary, secondary, and tertiary education by male and female students. USAID also funds program and impact evaluations on specific gender programs to build the evidence base for our work. For example, the Office of Gender Equality and Women's Empowerment in the Bureau for Economic Growth, Education and Environment is conducting an evaluation on the effects of "whole-of-girl" programmatic interventions in Tanzania and Malawi aimed at increasing school enrollment, retention, safety and well-being for adolescent girls. If confirmed, I will work to ensure we fulfill the legal requirement to conduct gender analyses by collaborating with colleagues in E3 and its successor Bureau for Democracy, Development, and Innovation; the Bureau for Policy, Planning; and Learning, and other Bureaus. I will also emphasize that USAID's efforts at

monitoring and evaluation and our metrics continue to address the most-pressing issues related to gender equality and women's empowerment.

Question. If you are confirmed as the Assistant Administrator, what will you do in order to ensure a comprehensive view of women's empowerment that includes access to reproductive rights and freedom from gender-based violence?

Answer. I recognize that achieving equality between women and men and women's empowerment depends on inputs and outcomes across several spheres, and at the individual, community and national levels. The robust programming of the U.S. Agency for International Development (USAID) in multiple regions and sectors, including agriculture, crisis and conflict, democracy and governance, education, economic growth, environment, and health, provide ample opportunities to ensure the Agency's investments address every facet of gender equality and women's empowerment.

USAID is committed to increasing access to high-quality health care for women, their children and their families. Investments in women's health yield a return of up to 20 times in the form of societal and economic benefits. When women have access to basic health care for both themselves and their families, and are empowered to make healthy, positive choices, the well-being of the entire community improves.

Preventing and responding to gender-based violence (GBV) is also a priority for USAID, integrated across development programming and humanitarian assistance. We know that conflict and natural disasters often exacerbate the vulnerability of individuals, particularly women and girls, and GBV can escalate in these scenarios. As such, at the onset of an emergency, USAID prioritizes specialized GBV interventions to address the immediate impact of the situation on women and girls' health, psychosocial well-being, and safety.

If confirmed, I will ensure that the leadership of the Bureau for Economic Growth, Education and Environment (E3) and its successor Bureau for Democracy, Development, and Innovation (DDI) in advancing gender equality and women's empowerment includes recognition and support for efforts in this area across sectors, and will make certain that USAID's programming continues to address the prevention of, and response to, GBV, coordinated effectively by E3 and DDI.

Question. The State and Foreign Operations Appropriations bill annually allocates $150 million to GBV prevention efforts. In your former capacity as Senior Coordinator, where did you see that assistance have the greatest impact? Where do we need to devote more resources? How will you support the continued development and implementation of the U.S. Strategy to Prevent and Respond to Gender-Based Violence Globally?

Answer. Gender-based violence (GBV) requires serious attention and integration throughout foreign assistance because it harms millions of individuals every year, undermines development progress, and threatens the resilience and recovery of countries affected by crisis and conflict. We also know that conflict and natural disasters often exacerbate the vulnerability of individuals, particularly women and girls, and GBV can escalate in these scenarios. As such, the U.S. Agency for International Development (USAID) prioritizes specialized GBV interventions to address the immediate impact of the situation on women and girls' health, psychosocial well-being, and safety at the onset of an emergency.

If confirmed, I will remain strongly committed to supporting USAID's GBV efforts through my leadership role in the Bureau for Economic Growth, Education and Environment; its successor Bureau for Democracy, Development, and Innovation; and the entire Agency. I will continue to support the integration of efforts to prevent and respond to GBV efforts into cross-cutting and stand-alone programming. We will also continue to focus on changing the social norms that perpetuate violence, while also fostering environments within communities that ensure girls and women are valued as key members of society, to eliminate some of the drivers of GBV. USAID will also continue robust efforts to prevent and respond to a range of types of GBV, including child, early, and forced marriage, female genital cutting and mutilation, sexual violence, school-related gender-based violence, and violence against children.

Question. This administration has made a strong and commendable commitment to advancing women's economic empowerment. A key factor in supporting the achievement of women's economic empowerment is ensuring that the barriers that prevent them from access are addressed as well. If you are confirmed as the Assistant Administrator of the E3 Bureau, what will you do to ensure a comprehensive view of women's empowerment also includes access, a full education, reproductive rights and freedom from gender-based violence?

Answer. Women's empowerment requires more than just economic empowerment. It is critical that women and girls have access to education, protection from gender-based violence, are healthy, and have access to, control over and benefit from all resources. If confirmed, I will make sure the Bureau for Economic Growth, Education and Environment (E3) and its successor Bureau for Democracy, Development, and Innovation (DDI) will continue to prioritize women's empowerment across these intersecting spheres. While voluntary family planning and reproductive-health programming is under the purview of the Bureau for Global Health, I commit to continuing collaboration by E3 and DDI with our Global Health counterparts in this field.

We also recognize that investing in women's economic empowerment has a multiplier effect on positive development outcomes, including health, not just for themselves, but for their families. To that end, we will continue our robust efforts to implement the Women's Global Development and Prosperity (W-GDP) Initiative, launched in February 2019. The first pillar of W-GDP recognizes the role that education and vocational training in science, technology, engineering, and mathematics have on women's ability to prosper in the workforce. In addition, the third pillar recognizes the necessity of removing the legal, regulatory, and cultural barriers, including gender-based violence, that constrain women from being able to participate fully and freely in the economy. W-GDP applies across the wide portfolio of the U.S. Agency for International Development (USAID), and thus requires close coordination within and across Bureaus and Operating Units to design and implement programming. USAID's already extensive work on women's health issues and education, for example, can thus work in tandem with USAID's portfolio of investments in economic growth to advance women's empowerment broadly.

Question. Rights organizations have documented how women in communities displaced by large scale commercial agriculture suffer distinctive and disproportionate harmful impacts due to their social roles and status, and had the least opportunity to negotiate and assert their rights. Women face enormous struggles to sustain their families after losing safe water for drinking and household use, access to fertile land for cultivating food crops, and hunting or foraging grounds. In many countries, divorced women and widows face many challenges in asserting equal property rights. Widows may be evicted from their homes and land, and their property is stolen by in-laws when their husbands die or by their former spouses if they seek a divorce. As Assistant Administrator, how will you ensure U.S. policy and programs will support and promote women's land and property rights? And, how will you ensure that programs support by USAID will not work to undermine women's land and property rights?

Answer. The U.S. Agency for International Development (USAID) views good governance of land and natural resources as a critical foundation for successful U.S. foreign assistance in all technical areas and regions. USAID's Office of Land and Urban (LU) within the Bureau for Economic Growth, Education and Environment leads the Agency's efforts on ensuring land rights with the mandate to improve the governance of land and resources and strengthen property rights for all members of society, especially women. Strengthening women's land rights continues to be an integral component of all LU's activities. Furthermore, the Women's Global Development and Prosperity (W-GDP) Initiative recognizes the necessity of improving the enabling environment, including securing land and property rights for women. Other U.S. government and USAID policies and programs that include an explicit focus on land rights for all, including women, are the U.S. government's Global Food-Security Strategy, and USAID's new Environmental and Natural Resources Management (ENRM) Framework. Through these existing policies, frameworks and practices, I will, if confirmed, be able to ensure the U.S. government's policy and programs will support and promote women's land and property rights.

If confirmed, I will make sure our programs will continue to support and promote women's land and property rights. Furthermore, if confirmed, I will continue to support the deployment of existing best practices to strengthen women's land rights purposefully. For instance, when working with communities to map and document their land, USAID always insists that women be at least equally represented on the mapping teams, which encourages women landholders to participate in the process. Also, good practice dictates that, in all USAID programs, two or more spaces for landholder names should be included on land documentation, at a minimum, so titles can name both husband and wife. These are just two examples of the ways in which USAID programs purposefully focus on women's land rights.

If confirmed, I will support USAID's continued exploration and expansion of new best practices to continue this critical work.

Question. As the Assistant Administrator of E3 for USAID, how will you ensure that the needs of adolescent girls are being met in the areas of economic growth, education and environment in a holistic way? Specifically, how do you anticipate implementing the U.S. Global Strategy to Empower Adolescent Girls and to otherwise ensure that U.S. foreign assistance is part of a holistic solution to ensuring that girls get the education and training they need to succeed now and if they are ever to become economically empowered women later? How will you ensure that the USAID Child Marriage Resource Guide is implemented, and that the impact projects and programs may have on child marriage rates is better documented and understood?

Answer. Empowering adolescent girls is fundamental to achieving our development goals and unlocking the full potential of societies. The U.S. Agency for International Development (USAID) is the lead agency for the implementation of the U.S. Global Strategy to Empower Adolescent Girls across sectors, including health, education, water, and sanitation. USAID applies a "whole-of-girl" approach to see the overlapping areas of vulnerability in an adolescent girl's life. We define the whole-of-girl approach as enhancing girls' access to quality education in safe environments; providing economic opportunities and incentives for girls and their families; empowering girls with information, skills, services, and support; and mobilizing and educating communities.

If confirmed, I will ensure that USAID's programs address the differentiated needs of girls in specific stages of adolescence, by recognizing that the challenges young adolescents encounter are distinct from those experienced by older adolescents who are approaching adulthood, and will work to support and enhance our current activities, such as efforts to increase access to early-childhood education, and using geographic information system technology to map areas where adolescent girls are at high risk of female genital mutilation and cutting.

USAID recognizes the harmful impact associated with child, early or forced marriage (CEFM), and annually attributes at least $11 million to address this practice. To tackle this issue, USAID has looked to fund programming to prevent and respond to CEFM through a multi-pronged approach as outlined in the Agency's Child, Early, and Forced Marriage Resource Guide. Not only does USAID finance stand-alone CEFM activities, it works to integrate CEFM activities in four main areas: education and economic opportunities, health care, regulatory reform, and public-awareness campaigns. If confirmed, I will ensure that USAID's efforts in CEFM, coordinated by the Bureau for Economic Growth, Education and Environment and later its successor Bureau for Democracy, Development, and Innovation, continue to adhere to best practices in this area, and that we compile and share lessons from these programs.

Question. Do you believe that climate change is a real and present threat to our health, environment, economy and way of life? If confirmed, will you support, empower and protect the Global Climate Change Office? What more can the U.S. do to support developing countries as they fight the effects of climate change?

Answer. Yes, I personally believe that climate impacts human health, the environment, and climate-dependent livelihoods. If confirmed, I will continue to support USAID's programs that help developing countries manage and adapt to climate risks from the environment; protect, manage and restore forests and other landscapes; and develop and deploy energy systems that are clean, reliable and resilient.

If confirmed, I will also challenge the Bureau for Economic Growth, Education and Environment (E3) and its successor Bureau for Democracy, Development, and Innovation (DDI) to work with USAID's Missions and other Operating Units to address a wide range of issues that concern the environment and the management of natural resources in an integrated fashion. This will require collaboration with governments, civil society and the private sector actors at the national, regional, and municipal levels. In this respect, the leadership of the Agency's Private-Sector Engagement Strategy by E3 and DDI can help to leverage additional domestic resources in developing countries in addressing this challenge. These measures can help to ensure sustained success at the scale required for transformational impact.

NOMINATIONS

TUESDAY, JULY 30, 2019

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

The committee met, pursuant to notice, at 2:30 p.m., in Room SD-419, Dirksen Senate Office Building, Hon. Ron Johnson, presiding.

Present: Senators Johnson [presiding], Gardner, Young, and Shaheen.

OPENING STATEMENT OF HON. RON JOHNSON, U.S. SENATOR FROM WISCONSIN

Senator JOHNSON. Good afternoon. This hearing of the Senate Foreign Relations Committee will come to order.

We are meeting to hear the statements and ask questions of four nominees for the ambassadorships of—ambassadorships to Latvia, Serbia, Bulgaria, Papua New Guinea, the Solomon Islands—and I will not pronounce this right—Van-—somebody help me——

Ms. MCKEE. Vanuatu.

Senator JOHNSON [continuing]. Vanuatu, okay. Close enough. My excuse is, it is not in the European Subcommittee's jurisdiction.

[Laughter.]

Senator JOHNSON. But, I really want to welcome our nominees. I want to thank you for your prior to service. You are all long-term, professional, career Foreign Service. I like to see that in ambassadorships. I do want to encourage you to introduce your families in your opening statements. We realize, you know, really, what big responsibilities these are, how this is—you know, your careers have taken your away from your families, in many respects. And so, we realize this truly is a—an act of family service to this Nation, as well, and we truly do appreciate it.

I will ask that my written opening statement be entered into the record.

[The prepared statement of Senator Johnson follows:]

OPENING STATEMENT OF SENATOR RON JOHNSON

Good afternoon and welcome.

The Senate Foreign Relations Committee is meeting today to consider the nomination of ambassadorships to Latvia, Serbia, Bulgaria, and Papua New Guinea, the Solomon Islands, and Vanuatu. Our nominees today, if confirmed, will represent U.S. interests in six important relationships.

Latvia is a stalwart NATO ally of the United States. In 2018, Latvia reached the two percent of gross domestic product defense spending threshold pledged at the 2014 NATO Wales Summit. Latvian soldiers have deployed alongside U.S. forces in

both Afghanistan and Iraq where they continue to serve with distinction. As the U.S. and NATO look to blunt further Russian aggression towards its neighbors, Latvia has become a critical part of the West's deterrent posture. It has provided host-nation support to rotating Operation Atlantic Resolve units and a NATO enhanced forward presence multinational battle group. Riga has also taken an active leadership role in advancing the NATO Cooperative Cyber Defense Center of Excellence in Estonia, the NATO Strategic Communications Center of Excellence in Latvia, and the NATO Energy Security Center of Excellence in Lithuania. Latvia's record of political and economic reform since the fall of the Soviet Union stands as a model for other countries struggling to cast off the bitter legacy of communist rule.

Bulgaria is a committed NATO ally in a region of increasing strategic importance to the United States. Over the past three decades, Bulgarian armed forces have played important roles in NATO, EU, and coalitions operations in Afghanistan, Libya, Kosovo, Bosnia, and Iraq, and Bulgarian soldiers continue to serve in Afghanistan as part of NATO's Resolute Support mission. In 2006, the U.S. and Bulgaria signed the U.S.-Bulgarian Defense Cooperation Agreement, giving the U.S. military access to and shared use of select Bulgarian military facilities. With Russia's occupation of Crimea and concerns over U.S.-Turkish relations, Bulgaria will continue to grow in geo-strategic importance as a Black Sea littoral state.

Serbia is a key country in Southeast Europe. Serbia's leaders have stated that their country's prosperity will best be achieved by embracing Western political and economic reforms and joining the European Union, which is their goal. This would have a tremendous stabilizing effect on Southeast Europe, but Belgrade and Pristina must first reach an agreement to settle their disputes and normalize relations between their countries. The U.S. needs to take a more active role in the region and support the leaders of these countries returning to dialogue to reach an accord that can bring peace and greater stability to the region.

U.S. relations with Papua New Guinea, the Solomon Islands, and Vanuatu have taken on renewed significance in light of China's growing assertiveness in the Western Pacific. Papua New Guinea and Vanuatu have signed on to significant Belt Road Initiative infrastructure projects and the Solomon Islands is currently considering switching its diplomatic relations from Taiwan to China so it can do the same. China's use of covert, corrupt, and coercive means to interfere in the affairs of countries in the region is troubling. The U.S. needs to redouble its diplomatic and development efforts in the region both to inform countries about the dangers of Chinese infrastructure development aid and to stress the benefits of close relations with the U.S. and our allies in the region.

Senator JOHNSON. And I will turn it over to Senator Shaheen, because we do have votes that are going to definitely affect this hearing.

Senator Shaheen.

STATEMENT OF HON. JEANNE SHAHEEN, U.S. SENATOR FROM NEW HAMPSHIRE

Senator SHAHEEN. Well, thank you, Mr. Chairman.

And, congratulations to each of our nominees. I look forward to your statements.

I will also submit my opening statement for the record.

Thank you.

[The prepared statement of Senator Shaheen follows:]

OPENING STATEMENT OF SENATOR JEANNE SHAHEEN

Thank you, Mr. Chairman, and thank you to the nominees before us today and to their families. We appreciate your service to the United States through long, successful careers in the Foreign Service and USAID. Your resumes speak to your dedication and sacrifice.

Mr. Carwile, Ms. McKee, Mr. Godfrey and Ms. Mustafa, in the diverse countries you have been nominated to serve in, you will have to advocate for U.S. foreign policy priorities in the face of significant challenges, not only Russian and Chinese influence, but domestic challenges as well.

Mr. Godfrey, the accession of Montenegro and, soon, North Macedonia into NATO has been the greatest success story for Europe and the Western Balkans in recent years. Our work, however, is far from complete.

Serbia lies at the heart of the difficult issues the United States will have to negotiate to make further progress: to normalize relations between Serbia and Kosovo, to ensure strong European Union support for the Western Balkans and to address Russian influence.

If confirmed, I hope that you will press Serbia on the deeply concerning backsliding of independent media, opposition voices and civil society. These trends are inconsistent with Serbia's long and vibrant history, and the U.S. should ensure that we do not turn a blind eye to authoritarian tendencies in Serbia.

Mr. Carwile, our perspective on Europe has changed dramatically since 2014 and there are few places where that is more significant than in Latvia, where our close ally is on the front line with Russia in all respects. From its experience, Latvia can surely teach us how to address Russian interference in the United States.

Ms. Mustafa, like Latvia, Bulgaria has a long and complicated relationship with Russia that also involves considerable energy independence. I am interested to hear how the United States can help make its allies strong and independent so that they become more resistant to malign foreign influence.

And finally, Ms. McKee, your experience in development will be valuable, if confirmed, as the ambassador to Papua New Guinea, the Solomon Islands and Vanuatu.

I look forward to hearing how development in these countries and countering Chinese influence is very much in the interest of the United States. And since today is the National Day of independence in Vanuatu, it is particularly appropriate that we have you here today!

Again, welcome and congratulations to all of the nominees today. I look forward to your testimony and answers to our questions.

Senator JOHNSON. Well, we will just hop right into it.

Our first nominee is Mr. John Leslie Carwile. Mr. Carwile is the President's nominee to be Ambassador to Latvia. Mr. Carwile—by the way, am I pronouncing that right?

Mr. CARWILE. Yes, sir.

Senator JOHNSON. Mr. Carwile is a career member of the State Department's Senior Foreign Service, and currently serves as Deputy Director of the Office of Career Development and Assignments. Previously, he served as Deputy Chief of Mission at the U.S. Embassies in Brunei and Nepal, Minister-Counselor for Economic Affairs at the U.S. Embassy in Italy, and Counselor for Economic Affairs at the U.S. Embassies in Iraq and Canada.

Mr. Carwile.

STATEMENT OF JOHN LESLIE CARWILE, OF MARYLAND, A CAREER MEMBER OF THE SENIOR FOREIGN SERVICE, CLASS OF MINISTER-COUNSELOR, NOMINEE TO BE AMBASSADOR EXTRAORDINARY AND PLENIPOTENTIARY OF THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA TO THE REPUBLIC OF LATVIA

Mr. CARWILE. Mr. Chairman, Ranking Member, distinguished members of the committee, I am honored and privileged to be addressing the committee as the President's nominee to be the United States Ambassador to the Republic of Latvia. I deeply appreciate the trust and confidence that President Trump and Secretary Pompeo are placing in me with this nomination.

If confirmed, I promise to focus my time and attention on advancing the interests of the United States in the Republic of Latvia. My number-one priority will be the security and welfare of U.S. citizens and that of the extraordinary Embassy team in Latvia. I will place the utmost importance on strengthening the robust partnership between our two great countries and friendship between our people. And I pledge to work closely with this committee, your staffs, and other Members of Congress, to achieve these goals.

I would like to thank my friends, family, and colleagues for their support during my career. I also want to acknowledge our two daughters: Katherine, who is here today, and Madeline, who is in Boston. I am so proud of them as good people and for their accomplishments. I especially want to thank my wife and partner, Karin Hauschild, an outstanding representative of the United States during nine overseas tours, for her wisdom and constant support, and to whom I owe so much.

After 32 years in the Foreign Service, I bring experiences and skills that have prepared me well, if confirmed, to serve as the U.S. Ambassador to Latvia. I have successfully led large teams, both in Washington and overseas, including heading the State Department's economic effort in Baghdad and serving as Economic Minister-Counselor at Embassy Rome. I have twice been Deputy Chief of Mission, first in Brunei and later in Nepal, when the 2015 earthquake struck and we sheltered over 500 Americans and worked with the U.S. military to provide disaster assistance throughout much of the country.

Mr. Chairman, the United States and Latvia have been close friends for nearly a century. This was shown most clearly in the 1940 Sumner Welles Declaration, which stated the United States' refusal to recognize the forced annexation of Latvia, Estonia, and Lithuania by the Soviet Union. From 1940 until the full restoration of Latvian independence, a half a century later, the flag of the Republic of Latvia continued to fly in Washington. The Welles Declaration made clear our steadfast commitment to Latvia's freedom, sovereignty, and territorial integrity. If confirmed, I pledge to strengthen this commitment and further show that the United States will always remain a friend to, and ally of, Latvia.

Today, Latvia has proven itself one of our strongest allies. It contributes to security missions across the globe, including in Afghanistan and Iraq. It is among a select group of NATO allies that meets its commitment to spend at least two percent of GDP on defense and at least 20 percent of defense expenditures on major equipment. Latvia is among our most knowledgeable and active partners in combating Russian malign influence. Latvia advocates for Ukraine and other states threatened by Russia's aggressive activities.

President Trump celebrated 100 years of Latvian, Estonian, and Lithuanian independence at the White House on April 3, 2018. As the President affirmed that day in a joint declaration with the Presidents of Latvia, Estonia, and Lithuania, the United States appreciates the tremendous progress achieved by Latvia and the other Baltic states in political stability, economic growth, and security cooperation, and their contributions to European and international security and advancement of shared democratic values.

Mr. Chairman, if confirmed by the Senate, I intend to strengthen the U.S.-Latvian relationship while advocating for and advancing U.S. interests in Latvia and throughout Europe. I will strengthen our robust security cooperation. I will work to increase our bilateral trade and investment. I will expand upon our strong cooperation in advancing democracy, rule of law, and developments in eastern partnership states and across Central Asia.

Strengthening our relationship also means addressing difficult and complicated issues with Latvia. If confirmed, I will press the Latvian government to develop, enact, and implement reforms addressing critical corruption and money-laundering threats that persist in the country. And I will support efforts to address Holocaust-era legacies such as Jewish communal property restitution.

I recognize and fully appreciate the honor bestowed upon me by this nomination. If confirmed, I will do my utmost to reward the trust that you, your fellow congresspersons, the President, Secretary Pompeo, and the American people are placing in me. I will focus wholeheartedly in—on advancing the interests of the United States in Latvia while strengthening our bilateral partnership.

Thank you for your time, Mr. Chairman, and for inviting me to appear before you today. I look forward to answering your questions.

[The prepared statement of Mr. Carwile follows:]

PREPARED STATEMENT OF JOHN LESLIE CARWILE

Mr. Chairman, Ranking Member, distinguished members of the committee: I am honored and privileged to be addressing the committee as the President's nominee to be the United States Ambassador to the Republic of Latvia.

I deeply appreciate the trust and confidence President Trump and Secretary Pompeo are placing in me with this nomination. If confirmed, I promise to focus my time and attention on advancing the interests of the United States in the Republic of Latvia. My number one priority will be the security and welfare of U.S. citizens and that of the extraordinary Embassy team in Latvia. I will place the utmost importance on strengthening the already robust partnership between our two great countries and friendship between our people. And I pledge to work closely with this committee, your staffs, and other Members of Congress to achieve these goals.

I would like to thank my family, friends, and colleagues for their support during my career. I also want to acknowledge our two daughters, Katherine (who is here today) and Madeline (who is in Boston). I am so proud of them as good people and for their accomplishments. I especially want to thank my wife, Karin Hauschild, who has been an outstanding representative of the United States during nine overseas tours.

After 32 years in the Foreign Service, I bring experience and skills that have prepared me well, if confirmed, to serve as the U.S. ambassador to Latvia. I have successfully led large teams both in Washington and overseas, including heading the State Department's economic effort in Baghdad and serving as the Economic Minister-Counselor at Embassy Rome. I have twice been Deputy Chief of Mission, first in Brunei and later in Nepal when the 2015 earthquakes struck as we sheltered over 500 Americans and worked with the U.S. military to provide disaster assistance throughout much of the country.

Mr. Chairman, the United States and Latvia have been close friends for nearly a century. This was exemplified most clearly in the 1940 Sumner Welles Declaration, which forcefully stated the United States' refusal to recognize the forced annexation of Latvia, Estonia, and Lithuania by the Soviet Union. From 1940 until the full restoration of Latvian independence half a century later, the flag of the Republic of Latvia continued to fly in Washington. The Welles Declaration made clear America's steadfast commitment to Latvia's freedom, sovereignty, and territorial integrity. If confirmed, I pledge to strengthen this commitment and further exhibit that the United States will always remain a friend to—and Ally of—Latvia.

Today, Latvia has proven itself one our strongest Allies. It contributes to security missions across the globe, including in Afghanistan and Iraq. It is among a select group of NATO Allies that meets its commitment to spend at least two percent of GDP on defense and at least 20 percent of defense expenditures on major equipment. Latvia is amongst our most knowledgeable and active partners in combating Russian malign influence not just in Europe, but across the world. It advocates for Ukraine and other states threatened by Russia's aggressive activities.

The ties binding the United States and Latvia are unbreakable. We lead together in NATO with our commitment to collective defense and our defense spending investments. Our economic ties are vibrant. We cooperate throughout Europe and Central Asia in the promotion of democracy, good governance, market economies,

and the rule of law. And we collaborate daily to ensure our transatlantic community remains strong and resilient.

President Trump celebrated 100 years of Latvian, Estonian, and Lithuanian independence at the White House on April 3, 2018. As the President affirmed that day in a joint declaration with the Presidents of Latvia, Estonia, and Lithuania, the United States is appreciative of the "tremendous progress achieved by Latvia [and the other Baltic states] in political stability, economic growth, and security cooperation and [their] contributions.to European and international security and advancement of [shared] democratic values." If confirmed, I hope to continue assisting Latvia in advancing across political, economic, and security fields.

Mr. Chairman, if confirmed by the Senate, I intend to strengthen the U.S.-Latvian relationship while advocating for and advancing U.S. interests in Latvia and throughout Europe. I will strengthen our robust security cooperation. I will work to increase our bilateral trade and investment. I will expand upon our already strong cooperation in advancing democracy, rule of law, and development in Eastern Partnership states and across Central Asia.

Strengthening our relationship also means addressing difficult and complicated issues with Latvia. If confirmed, I will press the Latvian government to develop, enact, and implement reforms addressing critical corruption and money laundering threats that persist in the country. And I will support efforts to address Holocaust-era legacies, such as Jewish communal property restitution.

Just over 100 years ago, Latvia declared independence. Throughout those years, the United States remained amongst Latvia's strongest partners. I am honored to have the opportunity, if confirmed, to preserve and enrich that partnership.

I recognize and fully appreciate the honor bestowed upon me by this nomination. If confirmed, I will do my utmost to reward the trust you, your fellow Congresspersons, the President, Secretary Pompeo, and the American people are placing in me. I will focus wholeheartedly on advancing the interests of the United States in Latvia while strengthening our bilateral partnership.

Thank you for your time and inviting me to appear before you today. I look forward to answering your questions.

Senator JOHNSON. Thank you, Mr. Carwile.

We will just keep going right down the table there.

Our next nominee is Ms. Erin Elizabeth McKee. Ms. McKee is the President's nominee to be the Ambassador of Papua New Guinea, the Solomon Islands, and Vanuatu—close, not even—not really close. Ms. McKee is a career member of the Foreign Service—Senior Foreign Service, and currently serves as USAID's Mission Director in Indonesia. Previously, she was Senior Deputy Assistant Administrator and Chief Human Capital Officer in USAID's Office of Human Capital and Talent Management, and Senior Deputy Assistant Administrator for the Bureau of Policy, Planning, and Learning. Ms. McKee has also served at USAID missions in Kazakhstan, Iraq, Peru, Bolivia, Israel, and Russia.

Ms. McKee.

STATEMENT OF ERIN ELIZABETH McKEE, OF CALIFORNIA, A CAREER MEMBER OF THE SENIOR FOREIGN SERVICE, CLASS OF MINISTER-COUNSELOR, NOMINEE TO BE AMBASSADOR EXTRAORDINARY AND PLENIPOTENTIARY OF THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA TO THE INDEPENDENT STATE OF PAPUA NEW GUINEA, AND TO SERVE CONCURRENTLY AND WITHOUT ADDITIONAL COMPENSATION AS AMBASSADOR EXTRAORDINARY AND PLENIPOTENTIARY OF THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA TO THE SOLOMON ISLANDS AND AMBASSADOR EXTRAORDINARY AND PLENIPOTENTIARY OF THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA TO THE REPUBLIC OF VANUATU

Ms. MCKEE. Mr. Chairman, Ranking Member, distinguished members of the committee, it is a great honor to appear before you

today as the President's nominee to be Ambassador to the—of the United States to Papua New Guinea, Solomon Islands, and Vanuatu.

I am grateful to the members of the committee for the opportunity to speak to you today about my qualifications and goals. If confirmed, I pledge to work with you to advance our Nation's interests in these three Pacific Island nations.

With the Chairman's permission, I would like to quickly introduce my family. My father, Stu Kinder; my husband, Sean McKee; and my daughter Caitlin are here with me today. Their unconditional love and support have been my rock throughout my public service career. From Moscow to Lima, from Baghdad to Jakarta, they have stood by my side and shared in the sacrifice and adventure of nearly 25 years in the Foreign Service. I am so pleased that they could join me today. I could not have made this journey without them. And for that, I am truly grateful.

Since 1995, I have had the privilege of serving and representing the United States in eight overseas assignments, as well as here in Washington, D.C., with the U.S. Agency for International Development. It has been my honor to serve the American people and advance our country's interests, promote our values and principles, and offer host-country nations a model for hope, security, and prosperity across a variety of diverse contexts. I am currently serving as the USAID Mission Director to Indonesia and ASEAN, which I resumed after filling the role of Deputy Chief of Mission at Embassy Jakarta last year.

Throughout my tenure in the Foreign Service, I have proven my ability to work with host countries to advance our shared goals and principles. In multiple posts, I have developed mission and host-country strategies, securing broad interagency support. I successfully led our interagency and mission partners to strategically plan and, more importantly, successfully execute our development and security assistance budgets. If confirmed, my technical background and development expertise have prepared me well to guide my country team as we work on issues affecting Papua New Guinea, the Solomon Islands, and Vanuatu to tackle economic inequality, poor governance, and underdeveloped capacity while furthering American partnerships.

If confirmed, I am committed to advancing our vision of a free and open Indo-Pacific, which we share with other democracies in the Pacific region, including Australia, New Zealand, Taiwan, and Japan.

The Solomon Islands is one of six Pacific Island nations that has diplomatic relations with Taiwan. I will stress the importance of maintaining cross-Strait relations and work with regional partners to support increased economic engagement initiatives.

Free, fair, and transparent economies are open, accountable, and rules-based, and governments must also be. Papua New Guinea, the Solomon Islands, and Vanuatu are young democracies. Our shared history provides us with opportunities we can further build upon to help these nations attract high-quality private investment and secure their sovereignty.

However, we must also be realistic and operate with the understanding that competing models of assistance do not share our

democratic values. China's relationships with Papua New Guinea, Solomon Islands, and Vanuatu have deepened dramatically over the last 2 years. The United States should increase its visibility and sustain its commitments to become a stronger partner of choice for these three countries, as we did with our commitment to support the Papua New Guinea Electrification Program, which aims to increase household electrification from 15 percent today to 70 percent by 2030.

If confirmed, I will work to offer a shared partnership and use the tools provided by this committee to help the people of these countries expand and grow and realize their full potential. The long and distinguished history of the Peace Corps in the region, the Asia Reassurance Initiative Act, and the BUILD Act further expand this toolkit. Together, these equip us to further deliver sustained engagement and action behind our declarations of support to these countries.

If confirmed, I will also do more to support the private sector and increase investment in the region. I will use these tools to expand our cooperation, promote fair and inclusive growth, and increase opportunities for U.S. investment, strengthen our presence, and amplify our message, backed by concrete deliverables, that the United States cares about the Pacific and is there to stay.

If confirmed, I will make taking care of my team and fostering a high-performing, healthy, and secure workplace a priority, with zero tolerance for misconduct, including sexual harassment. I will prioritize the safety and security of all American citizens living in or visiting these island nations.

Thank you for this invitation to appear before you. I welcome the opportunity to answer your questions.

[The prepared statement of Ms. McKee follows:]

PREPARED STATEMENT OF ERIN ELIZABETH MCKEE

Mr. Chairman, Ranking Member, and distinguished members of the committee, it is a great honor to appear before you today as the President's nominee to be Ambassador of the United States to Papua New Guinea, Solomon Islands, and Vanuatu. I am grateful to the members of the committee for the opportunity to speak with you today about my qualifications and goals. If confirmed, I pledge to work with you to advance our nation's interests in these three Pacific Island nations.

With the Chairman's permission, I would like to quickly introduce my family. My father, Stu Kinder, my husband, Sean McKee, and my daughter Caitlin, are here with me today. Their unconditional love and support have been my rock throughout my public service career—from Moscow to Lima—from Baghdad to Jakarta, they have stood by my side and shared in the sacrifice and adventures of nearly 25 years in the Foreign Service. I am so pleased that they could join me today. I could have not made this journey without them, and for that I am truly grateful.

Since 1995, I have had the privilege of serving and representing the United States in eight overseas assignments, as well as here in Washington, D.C., with the U.S. Agency for International Development. It has been my honor to serve the American people and advance our country's interests, promote our values and principles, and offer host-country nations a model for hope, security, and prosperity across a variety of diverse contexts. I am currently serving as the USAID Mission Director to Indonesia and ASEAN, which I resumed after filling the role of Acting Deputy Chief of Mission of Embassy Jakarta last year.

Throughout my tenure in the Foreign Service, I have proven my ability to work with host countries to advance our shared goals and principles. In multiple posts, I have developed mission and host-country strategies, securing broad interagency support. I successfully led our interagency and mission partners to strategically plan and—more importantly—successfully execute our development and security assist-

ance budgets. If confirmed, my technical background and development expertise have prepared me well to guide my Country Team as they work on issues affecting Papua New Guinea, the Solomon Islands, and Vanuatu, and to tackle economic inequality, poor governance, and underdeveloped capacity, while furthering American partnerships.

Papua New Guinea, the Solomon Islands, and Vanuatu are important to U.S. national security and to peace and security in the Pacific. To enhance these countries' stability as U.S. partners and help them realize their full potential, we should continue to support their efforts to improve transparency and good governance, to combat trafficking in persons, to adapt to the impacts of climate change, to responsibly manage their rich natural resources, to protect and promote human rights and fundamental freedoms, to improve public health, and to promote gender equality.

If confirmed, I would work with the host countries, the interagency, and our many other partners to bolster environmental security, health systems, economic growth, and women's empowerment, among other critical areas. I am committed to advancing our vision of a free and open Indo-Pacific region, which we share with other democracies in the Pacific region, including Australia, New Zealand, Taiwan, and Japan.

The Solomon Islands is one of six Pacific Island nations that has diplomatic relations with Taiwan. I will stress the importance of maintaining cross-Strait relations and work with regional partners to support economic engagement initiatives.

Free, fair, and transparent economies are open, accountable, and rules-based, and governments must also be. Papua New Guinea, the Solomon Islands, and Vanuatu are young democracies. Our shared history provides us with opportunities we can further build upon to strengthen democratic systems, include civil society partners, combat corruption, protect and promote human rights and fundamental freedoms, and fortify institutions to help these nations attract high-quality private investment and secure their sovereignty.

However, we must also be realistic and operate with the understanding that competing models of assistance do not share our democratic values. China's relationships with Papua New Guinea, the Solomon Islands, and Vanuatu deepened dramatically over the past two years. The United States should increase its visibility and sustain its commitments to become a stronger partner of choice for these three countries, as we did with our commitment to support the PNG Electrification Partnership (PEP), which aims to increase household electrification from the current level of 15% to 70% by 2030.

The United States offers a shared partnership and a wide range of tools to develop opportunities for the people of these countries, which are expanding thanks to this committee. The long and distinguished history of the Peace Corps in the region, the Asia Reassurance Initiative Act (ARIA), and the Build Act further expand our tool kit. Together, these tools provide us the ability to deliver sustained engagement and action behind our declarations of support to these countries. We must also do more to support and promote private sector investment in the region. If confirmed, I will use these tools to expand our cooperation, promote fair and inclusive growth and increased opportunities for U.S. investment, strengthen our presence and amplify the message—backed by concrete deliverables—that the United States cares about the Pacific and is there to stay.

In every position that I have served, I ensured that the highest standards for accountability and integrity were set-and met. If confirmed, I will make taking care of my team and fostering a high-performing, healthy, and secure workplace a priority, with zero tolerance for misconduct, including sexual harassment. I will also prioritize the safety and security of all American citizens living in or visiting these island nations. I will work closely with our partners to promote peace and security, advance economic prosperity, and promote respect for fundamental freedoms and human rights, building an enduring presence and lasting partnership with our host-countries in the process.

Thank you for this invitation to appear before you, I welcome the opportunity to answer your questions.

Senator JOHNSON. Thank you, Ms. McKee.

"Vanuatu," it is really not that hard, is it? Just got to listen to it a couple of times.

[Laughter.]

Senator JOHNSON. Totally blew it, Cory, before you got here.

[Laughter.]

Senator JOHNSON. Our next nominee is Mr. Anthony F. Godfrey. Mr. Godfrey is the President's nominee to be the Ambassador to Serbia. Mr. Godfrey is a 12-year U.S. Navy veteran and a career member of the Senior Foreign Service. He currently serves as Deputy Chief of Mission at the U.S. Embassy in Moscow. Previously, Mr. Godfrey served as Director of the Office of Iraq Affairs in the Bureau of Near East Affairs and as Minister-Counselor for Political Affairs in the U.S. Embassy in Baghdad. He speaks Russian, Turkish, and Serbo-Croatian.

Mr. Godfrey.

STATEMENT OF ANTHONY F. GODFREY, OF VIRGINIA, A CAREER MEMBER OF THE SENIOR FOREIGN SERVICE, CLASS OF MINISTER COUNSELOR, NOMINEE TO BE AMBASSADOR EXTRAORDINARY AND PLENIPOTENTIARY OF THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA TO THE REPUBLIC OF SERBIA

Mr. GODFREY. Mr. Chairman, Ranking Member Shaheen, distinguished members of the committee, it is a great honor to appear before you today as the President's nominee for U.S. Ambassador to the Republic of Serbia. I deeply appreciate the trust and confidence President Trump and Secretary Pompeo have placed in me to represent the American people. And I hope to earn your trust, as well. If confirmed, I pledge to work closely with you to advance our Nation's interests in Serbia.

This hearing is an important event for my family, and I am very proud that my wife, Anne, and two of our three children, our sons, Peter and Jamie, are with me today. They have served overseas with me through postings in Croatia, Armenia, Turkey, and Russia. And, although they were not with me in Iraq or in Chechnya, their support was essential for my success. My sister, Dr. Katy Godfrey, and my niece, Rosemary, are also present in the room today. And not present, but hopefully watching by live stream, is our daughter, Eilis, who lives in California.

In nearly 40 years of service, both as a member of the Foreign Service and in the U.S. Navy, I have dedicated my professional life to improving America's security, prosperity, and position in the world. We have sought out challenging assignments, where America's active diplomacy can make a difference in advancing our goals. In domestic assignments, I am proud of the work I did to develop the International Coalition to Defeat ISIS. My work at the National Security Council helped advance our missile defense capability.

Mr. Chairman, as you know, I have just left Moscow. And, after serving first as the head of the policy team and then, for two years as Ambassador Huntsman's Deputy Chief of Mission, I am fully aware of Russia's aggressive behavior, malign influence, and disinformation campaigns throughout much of Europe. Our team has been an important part of U.S. efforts to confront these challenges. I believe the sum of these experiences has prepared me well to serve as Chief of Mission in Serbia.

Serbia is a political and economic leader and plays a key role in influencing regional stability and cooperation. It is in the strategic interest of the United States that Serbia develops as a modern democratic, prosperous European nation at peace with its neigh-

bors, demonstrating full respect for the rule of law and rights of all its citizens. We fully support Serbia's stated goal of European integration and EU membership. Serbia now stands at a critical inflection point, and political leaders in Belgrade must undertake serious reforms to advance Serbia on its EU path.

Most importantly, Serbia must normalize its relationship with Kosovo in order to advance both countries' European integration. The United States continues to support the EU-facilitated dialogue aimed at comprehensive normalization of relations. We remain ready to help the parties in any way as they pursue a locally owned agreement that is durable, implementable, and increases regional stability. If confirmed, I am committed to promoting normalization of relations between Pristina and Belgrade as a top U.S. priority in the region. Together with my colleagues in Pristina and Washington, our European partners, and this committee, I will work to encourage the parties to return to the table in good faith.

An important element of the United States work in Serbia is promoting and defending our shared democratic values. Violence and threats of violence against journalists in Serbia are increasing self-censorship and hindering journalists' ability to faithfully inform the public. If confirmed, I will lead my team in helping our Serbian partners to strengthen their democratic institutions, protect the rights of members of minority communities, combat corruption, and improve media freedom. Serbians must take the lead in these efforts, but the United States can be an important partner, and, if confirmed, I will ensure that we are.

Serbia has enormous potential, with an educated and talented workforce, a location at an important trading crossroads for Europe, and a long culture of hospitality. Strengthening the rule of law will enable Serbia to further attract investment and curb the debilitating emigration of its youngest and brightest. While Serbia has made great strides in reforming its economy, it needs to do more, particularly to combat the corrosive consequences of corruption, to make it a more attractive environment for business.

Serbia is also an important partner in international stability, and contributes hundreds of military personnel to U.N. and EU peacekeeping operations. Serbia's contribution of peacekeeping troops and medical professionals is among the highest per capita in all of Europe.

If confirmed, I will continue to seek resolution to a persistent irritant in our bilateral relationship. To date, there have been no prosecutions for the murder of three Americans—Ylli, Agron, and Mehmet Bytyqi—executed while in Serbian police custody in 1999. I am committed to pressing the Serbian government to complete a thorough investigation, ensure that all who were involved in these crimes are brought to justice, regardless of rank or position.

The United States and Serbia have a long and, in some ways, a complicated history. We were allied during two World Wars. In 1918, President Wilson raised the Serbian flag over the White House. But, the 1990s were a difficult time, and we must work together to find a way to come to terms with that legacy. Nevertheless, the broader arc of our ties has been positive and mutually beneficial.

It is an ambitious agenda, but, if confirmed, I would be supported by an incredibly talented team of Americans and locally employed staff at Embassy Belgrade and interagency partners in Washington. With the support of the legislative branch, I am committed to doing my utmost to promote our shared goal, a democratic Serbia providing growth and security for its citizens, at peace with all of its neighbors, and firmly set on a path of European integration.

Thank you once again for granting me the opportunity to be—appear before this committee today. And I look forward to your questions.

[The prepared statement of Mr. Godfrey follows:]

PREPARED STATEMENT OF ANTHONY F. GODFREY

Mr. Chairman, Ranking Member Shaheen, and distinguished members of the committee, it is a great honor to appear before you today as the President's nominee for U.S. Ambassador to the Republic of Serbia. I deeply appreciate the trust and confidence President Trump and Secretary Pompeo have placed in me to represent the American people, and I hope to earn your trust as well. If confirmed, I pledge to work closely with you to advance our nation's interests in Serbia.

This hearing is an important event for my family, and I'm very proud that my wife Anne and two of my three children, our sons Peter and Jamie, are present with me today; they've served overseas with me through postings in Croatia, Armenia, Turkey, and Russia; although they weren't with me in Iraq or in Chechnya, their support was essential for my success. My sister, Dr. Katy Godfrey, and my niece Rosemary are present in the room today. Not present, but surely watching by livestream, is my Dad, Bill Godfrey, who at 90 years young just finally retired from 52 years of teaching at the State University of New York at Stony Brook.

In nearly forty years of service, both as a member of the Foreign Service and in the U.S. Navy, I have dedicated my professional life to improving America's security, prosperity, and position in the world. We have sought out challenging assignments, where America's active diplomacy can make a difference in advancing our goals. In domestic assignments I am proud of the work I did to develop the international coalition to defeat ISIS; my work at the National Security Council helped advance our missile defense capability. Mr. Chairman, as you know, I've just left Moscow, and after serving first as the head of the policy team, and then for two years as Ambassador Huntsman's Deputy Chief of Mission, I am fully aware of Russia's aggressive behavior, malign influence, and disinformation campaigns throughout much of Europe; our team has been an important part of U.S. efforts to confront those challenges. I believe the sum of these experiences has prepared me well to serve as Chief of Mission in Serbia.

EUROPEAN INTEGRATION

Serbia is a political and economic leader and plays a key role in influencing regional stability and cooperation. It is in the strategic interest of the United States that Serbia develops as a modern, democratic, prosperous European nation at peace with its neighbors, demonstrating full respect for the rule of law and rights of all its citizens. We fully support Serbia's stated goal of European integration and EU membership. Serbia now stands at a critical inflection point, and political leaders in Belgrade must undertake serious reforms to advance Serbia on its EU path.

REGIONAL RELATIONS

Most importantly, Serbia must normalize its relationship with Kosovo, in order to advance both countries' European integration. The United States continues to support the EU-facilitated Dialogue, aimed at comprehensive normalization of relations. We remain ready to help the parties in any way, as they pursue a locally-owned agreement that is durable, implementable, and increases regional stability. If confirmed, I am committed to promoting normalization of relations between Belgrade and Pristina as a top U.S. priority in the region. Together with my colleagues in Pristina and Washington, our European partners, and this committee, I will work to encourage the parties to return to the table in good faith.

Serbia's relations with its other neighbors require attention too. If confirmed, I will work with Serbia to resolve legacy issues with Bosnia and Herzegovina, Monte-

negro, and Croatia—to provide all citizens of the Western Balkans a more stable, secure, and prosperous future.

DEMOCRACY AND RULE OF LAW

An important element of the United States' work in Serbia is promoting and defending our shared democratic values. Violence and threats of violence against journalists in Serbia are increasing self-censorship and hindering journalists' ability to faithfully inform the public. If confirmed, I will lead my team in helping our Serbian partners to strengthen their democratic institutions, protect the rights of members of minority communities, combat corruption, and improve media freedom. Serbians must take the lead in these efforts, but the United States can be an important partner, and if confirmed, I will ensure that we are.

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

Serbia has enormous potential, with an educated and talented workforce, a location at an important trading crossroads for Europe, and a long culture of hospitality. Strengthening the rule of law will enable Serbia to further attract investment and curb the debilitating emigration of its youngest and brightest. While Serbia has made great strides in reforming its economy, it needs to streamline the process of doing business, reduce bureaucratic impediments, and combat the corrosive consequences of corruption to make it a more attractive environment for businesses. If confirmed, I will be committed to supporting American companies as they explore opportunities in Serbia and look to build on the significant U.S. investment in Serbia, which has created over 20,000 jobs since 2000.

PEACEKEEPING AND MILITARY RELATIONS

Serbia is an important partner in international stability and contributes hundreds of military personnel to U.N. and EU peacekeeping operations in the Central African Republic, Somalia, Cyprus, and Lebanon. Serbia's contribution of peacekeeping troops and medical professionals is among the highest per capita in all of Europe. The Ohio National Guard's engagement with Serbia, through the State Partnership Program, is among the most successful in Europe.

BILATERAL CONCERNS

If confirmed, I will continue to seek resolution to a persistent irritant in our bilateral relationship. To date there have been no prosecutions for the murder of three Americans—Ylli, Agron, and Mehmet Bytyqi, executed while in Serbian police custody in 1999. I am committed to pressing the Serbian government to complete a thorough investigation and ensure that all who were involved in these crimes are brought to justice, regardless of rank or position.

CLOSING

The United States and Serbia have a long and in some ways a complicated history. We were allied during two world wars. In 1918, President Wilson raised the Serbian flag over the White House. During World War II, Serbian families saved the lives of 500 American and Allied pilots and crew members. Our assistance—in the form of food, military equipment, and technical programs—helped Yugoslavia maintain its independence from the Soviet bloc. The 1990s were a difficult time, and we must work together to find a way to come to terms with that legacy. Nevertheless, the broader arc of our ties has been positive and mutually beneficial.

This is an ambitious agenda, but if confirmed, I would be supported by an incredibly talented team of Americans and locally employed staff at Embassy Belgrade, and interagency partners in Washington. With the support of the Legislative Branch, I am committed to doing my utmost to promote our shared goal—a democratic Serbia providing growth and security for its citizens, at peace with all of its neighbors, and firmly set on a path of European integration.

Thank you once again for granting me the opportunity to appear before this committee today. I look forward to your questions.

Senator JOHNSON. Thank you, Mr. Godfrey.

Our fourth nominee is Ms. Herro Mustafa. Ms. Mustafa is the President's nominee to be the Ambassador to Bulgaria. Ms. Mustafa is a career member of the Senior Foreign Service and currently serves as Deputy Chief of Mission at the U.S. Embassy in Lisbon. Previously, she served as Political Minister-Counselor at

the U.S. Embassy in New Delhi, Advisor in the Office of the Vice President, as a Director at the National Security Council. Ms. Mustafa speaks nine languages—only nine——

[Laughter.]

Senator JOHNSON. ——including Arabic, Russia—Russian, Hindi, and Farsi, and is the recipient of the Matilda W. Sinclaire Award for Excellence in Foreign Language.

Ms. Mustafa. In English, please.

[Laughter.]

STATEMENT OF HERRO MUSTAFA, OF CALIFORNIA, A CAREER MEMBER OF THE SENIOR FOREIGN SERVICE, CLASS OF COUNSELOR, NOMINEE TO BE AMBASSADOR EXTRAORDINARY AND PLENIPOTENTIARY OF THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA TO THE REPUBLIC OF BULGARIA

Ms. MUSTAFA. Chairman Johnson, Ranking Member Shaheen, and distinguished members of the committee, I am honored to appear before you as the President's nominee to serve as Ambassador to the Republic of Bulgaria. I am thankful to the President and Secretary Pompeo for the confidence they have placed in me to undertake this role. And, if confirmed, I pledge to work closely with the Congress to advance our Nation's interests in Bulgaria.

Family is extremely important to me, and I am blessed to have so much love and support. I am proud to be the first American of Kurdish descent to be nominated as Ambassador. In the audience is my father, an incredible man who gave so much of his life so that we could live in freedom and have access to opportunity. Also in the audience is my mother, a courageous, strong woman, the bedrock of our family. My parents' one request of me and my siblings as we were growing up in Minot, North Dakota, was to always do good. They taught us to set our goals high in every aspect of life, whether career or personal, to achieve those goals and then aim even higher. That approach and optimism are what have shaped me into the person that I am today and, if confirmed, will guide my vision for achieving success for America in Bulgaria. My loving husband, Ravneesh Garg, is with our 4-year-old daughter, Ariana, watching via live stream with all my in-laws in India. Also in the audience are my incredibly hard-working brother, Hawro, my sister-in-law, Willow, my beautiful niece, Zara, and my 2-year-old daughter, Ashna. She is with my mother.

I have dedicated over two decades to serving the United States in the Department of State. Much of my work has promoted rule of law, democratization, energy security, and anti-corruption efforts. Before joining the Foreign Service, I worked as an election supervisor with the OSCE in Bosnia, and my first Foreign Service assignment was in Greece. I have worked throughout my career with my European colleagues on issues of mutual interest, such as Iraq, Afghanistan, and Iran. My last assignment was in Portugal, where I was the Deputy Chief of Mission and served as Charge d-Affaires.

I am honored now to have the opportunity, if confirmed, to serve in Bulgaria, a country renowned for its hospitable people, incredibly beautiful mountains, and rich cultural heritage. If confirmed, my top priority will be ensuring the safety and security of U.S. citi-

zens. I will also take seriously my role as Chief of Mission to manage our most precious resource, our people at the Embassy, including our local staff, who are an important part of our mission.

In addition, I will focus the work of the Embassy on the following priorities that I like to categorize as the three C's: Connectivity, Collaboration, and Corruption.

First, on connectivity. If confirmed, I will work to deepen the bonds between Bulgaria and the West on all fronts, to include economic, military, commercial, cultural, and people-people ties. This extends to civil society, including women and youth.

Bulgaria is a strong NATO ally, and I am pleased to share that the government of Bulgaria today, under the leadership of Prime Minister Borissov, has just finalized the process to ratify a deal to procure eight F-16 fighter aircraft from the United States. This marks a significant step forward towards modernizing Bulgaria's armed forces to NATO standards, and we appreciate the pivotal role that the Congress has played in supporting this deal.

I am also committed to expanding our economic relationship. Increased transparency, predictability, and stability in the investment climate are key to increased economic ties. And, if confirmed, I will work to level the playing field for U.S. businesses in Bulgaria.

Second, on collaboration, I would like to work with all my colleagues across the region to promote regional collaboration. Bulgaria has been a positive player in the region and a leader in advancing Western-Balkan integration. They have also been supportive of the recent Prespa Agreement between Greece and the Republic of North Macedonia.

Energy security is also a critical part of national security. Bulgaria imports most of its energy from Russia, including nearly all of its nuclear fuel and natural gas. If confirmed, I will work to support Bulgaria's efforts to diversify its energy supply to include the Greece-Bulgaria interconnector.

Third, on corruption, if confirmed, I will work with Bulgaria on fighting corruption and advancing rule of law, which is key to Bulgaria's continued growth.

Thank you again for this opportunity. I look forward to your questions and, if confirmed, to working with you to build the relations between our two nations.

[The prepared statement of Ms. Mustafa follows:]

PREPARED STATEMENT OF HERRO MUSTAFA

Chairman Johnson, Ranking Member Shaheen, and distinguished members of the committee, I am honored and humbled to appear before you as the President's nominee to serve as Ambassador to the Republic of Bulgaria. I am thankful to President Trump and Secretary Pompeo for the confidence they have placed in me to undertake this role. If confirmed, I pledge to work closely with the Congress to advance our nation's interests in Bulgaria.

Family is extremely important to me and I'm blessed to have the love and support of so many members of my family, some with me here today and others watching via livestream in various parts of the world. I am proud to be the first American of Kurdish descent to be nominated as Ambassador. In the audience is my father, who is an incredible man who gave so much of his life so that we could live in freedom and have access to opportunity. My strong, courageous mother, who is the bedrock of our family, is also here today. My parents' one request of me and my siblings as we grew up in Minot, North Dakota was to always do good. They taught us to set our goals high, in every aspect of life, whether career or personal, to achieve

those goals, and then aim even higher. That approach and optimism are what have shaped me into the person I am today and, if confirmed, will guide my vision for achieving success for America in Bulgaria.

Also in the audience are my incredibly hard-working brother, Helo, and sister-in-law, Willow, along with my niece Zara, and my almost two-year-old daughter Ashna. My two other brothers, Hawro and Barzan, are watching from California and Virginia. My loving husband, Ravneesh Garg, is with our almost four-year-old daughter Ariana watching with my in-laws and expanded family in India. Families of Foreign Service Officers sacrifice much, and being apart is sometimes a consequence of our service. I thank my entire family for the love and support and wisdom they show each and every day.

I have dedicated over two decades to serving the United States in the Department of State. During that time, much of my work has promoted rule of law, democratization, energy security, and anti-corruption efforts. Before joining the Foreign Service, I worked as an Elections Supervisor in Bosnia and my first Foreign Service assignment was in Athens, Greece. My experience with Europe has continued throughout my career, as I have worked with my European colleagues on issues of mutual interest, such as Iraq, Afghanistan, and Iran. My last assignment was in Western Europe, in Lisbon, Portugal, where I was the Deputy Chief of Mission and served for long periods as Charge d'Affaires. I am honored now to have the opportunity, if confirmed, to serve in Bulgaria, a country renowned for its incredibly beautiful mountains, hospitable people, and rich cultural heritage in a strategic part of the world.

If confirmed, my top priority will be ensuring the safety and security of U.S. citizens, including travelers and residents in Bulgaria, and my Embassy team. In addition, I will focus the work of the Embassy on the following priorities that I like to categorize as Connectivity, Collaboration, and Corruption, (the three Cs):

On Connectivity: If confirmed I will work to strengthen and deepen the bonds between Bulgaria and the West, particularly the United States, on all fronts to include economic, military, commercial, cultural, and people-to-people ties. This connectivity should extend to civil society, including women and youth.

Bulgaria is a strong NATO Ally. Fifteen years ago this year, Bulgaria joined the Alliance, sealing its security bonds with the West and affirming its commitment to a strong and free Europe. Bulgaria has accompanied the United States in operations—and taken casualties—in both Iraq and Afghanistan. Bulgaria has also participated in coalition operations in Libya, Kosovo, and Bosnia. Bulgaria is actively taking steps to increase defense spending and modernize its military, to make Bulgaria an even stronger and more capable NATO Ally. If confirmed, I will work to sustain and expand our security relationship and encourage Bulgaria to play a greater role, especially in transitional Forward Presence on NATO's Southeast flank.

I am also committed to expanding our economic relationship. Overall bilateral trade between Bulgaria and the United States jumped from $963 million in 2014 to $1.36 billion in 2018. Increased transparency, predictability, and stability in the investment climate are key to increased economic ties. One way Bulgaria can enhance its appeal to U.S. businesses is by increasing transparency and ensuring good corporate governance. Greater transparency would benefit not only U.S. firms, but also Bulgaria as a whole. I want to see U.S. businesses thrive, and if confirmed I will work to ensure a level playing fieldfor U.S. business in Bulgaria.

On Collaboration: If confirmed, I would like to work with my counterparts across the region to promote regional collaboration. Bulgaria has been a positive player in the region and a leader in advancing Western Balkan integration. They have also been supportive of the recent Prespa Agreement between the Hellenic Republic of Greece and the Republic of North Macedonia. It is exactly this type of vision and collaboration that is needed to strengthen the sovereignty of each of these nations and to bring peace and stability to the region.

Energy security is also a critical part of national security. Bulgaria imports most of its energy from Russia, including nearly all of its nuclear fuel and natural gas, which raises a range of economic, energy security, and NATO Alliance concerns. If confirmed, I will support Bulgaria's efforts to diversify its energy supply and foster increased energy collaboration across the region, in particular the Greece-Bulgaria interconnector.

On Corruption: If confirmed, I will also work with Bulgaria on fighting corruption and advancing rule of law, which is key to Bulgaria's continued growth. Rule of law reform is a long-term, multifaceted, and challenging process. Bulgaria has demonstrated a commitment to reform and taken some steps to build a more open, inclusive, and prosperous society. More needs to be done, however. If confirmed, I am

committed to working closely with Bulgaria together to find ways to promote civil society, media freedom, an independent judiciary, and the rule of law.

If confirmed, I will take seriously my role as Chief of Mission to manage and safeguard our precious resources—our people, including our local staff who are an important part in fulfilling our mission, our embassy, and the strong reputation of the United States abroad. If confirmed, I look forward to building the relations between our two nations and defending and promoting the interests of the United States in the Republic of Bulgaria.

Senator JOHNSON. Well, thank you, Ms. Mustafa.

I think it is pretty obvious, just by your opening statements and looking at your list of qualifications, that the President really has nominated four exceptional individuals, very well qualified for these posts, that will represent America well in your postings.

We have had a vote called, so—I think we have some time for some questions, but I did not want you to be insulted by the fact that we do not have more Senators here. That is what is happening. We have got stacked votes, and so everybody is, you know, flocking to the floor now to vote on time. Right?

Normally, we do like a little bit better language skills, but we will—you know, we will take that in consideration.

[Laughter.]

Senator JOHNSON. I am happy yield to you, if you have got some questions, then vote, because I will—then I will close out the hearing with my questions.

Senator SHAHEEN. Well, thank you, Mr. Chairman.

I want to begin with you, Mr. Carwile, because I had a chance to visit Latvia a couple of years ago, and one of the things that I did while I was there was to visit a building that they have turned into a museum of the terror that occurred when the Soviet Union reoccupied Latvia at the end of World War II. And they were very clear on the challenges that they continue to have with Russian influence in Latvia, and the population that still identifies with Russia. So, I wonder if you could talk about the kinds of threats that Latvia faces for Russia, and what you can do, as Ambassador, to work with them to help Latvia address those concerns.

Mr. CARWILE. Thank you, Senator, for that question.

You are absolutely right. As a front-line state, and given its history, which is very well known in last century, Latvia is very much aware of what was then the Soviet Union's threat to them, and now the Russian threat. And Russia would like nothing better than to break not only the strong relationship that we have with them, but also with NATO and the other Western democracies. So, we work closely with Latvia now, on a bilateral and also a regional or through NATO basis. The—one of the important things is to increase media literacy in the country. I do not know if you had the opportunity to visit the STRATCOM Center of Excellence and also the Baltic Media Center of Excellence. Those are two efforts that we are intimately involved in. We—there are also a number of Embassy programs that are run to try to bring truth, as it were, to the areas, mostly in the east, that are largely ethnic Russians to sort of counter that malign Russian influence. It is no secret that the Russians have very high-quality TV programming that is beamed into there. So, it is a difficult sort of message/counter-message that needs to be done, but that is done. And, if I were confirmed, it would be done by more active engagement, which former

Ambassador Pettit was very good at. But, those are the sorts of programs, whether it is in schools, whether it is with individual servicemen and women who come. And there is a lot of on-the-ground programs that are in process.

Senator SHAHEEN. Well, thank you. I did have a chance to visit the media effort that has been underway, and I thought it was a good example for us, in the United States, as we think about, How do we counter the Russian threat of disinformation in the U.S.?

And continuing on the concern about Russian influence in the Balkans, as opposed to the Baltics, where I think there are also reasons to be concerned, Mr. Godfrey, there is a report in the media today about the Serbian leader, Vucic, who is thanking the Russians for their delivery of 10 armored patrol vehicles, part of a promised supply of 30 tanks and 30 reconnaissance vehicles. And that is on top of 10 armored vehicles that have come to Serbia. And I think there are two reasons to be concerned about this. One is because of the obvious effort of Russia, the continued influence what happens in Serbia, but also the concerns that it raises among the other nations in the Balkans about—that harken back to the wars of the '90s and Serbia's role during that period. So, I wonder if you can talk about what you could do, as Ambassador, to help keep Serbia moving along the trajectory that they have been on to join the EU and to look West, as opposed to looking back to Russia?

Mr. GODFREY. Thank you, Senator, for that question.

And I am very sorry I did not get a chance to welcome you in Russia when I was there. That was not up to me, though.

Senator SHAHEEN. Yes, I was disappointed. Senator Johnson and I were both disappointed that I was not allowed in.

Mr. GODFREY. That is—that was a disappointment.

But, you are exactly right, Senator, our goals for the Western Balkans and Russia's do not align. The United States aligns with Serbia's own goals for supporting Serbia's Western integration. And Russia opposes Western integration and sows friction and distrust. And it is a real challenge. So, our goal is to model for the Serbians, to encourage, with Serbians and with the European Union, their further work towards Western integration. And, as I said in my statement, that includes normalization of its ties with Kosovo.

Senator SHAHEEN. Can you go into a little more detail about the efforts in Kosovo? I can remember when the first negotiations were looking like they were going to reach a positive outcome, hearing that Russia worked very hard to keep that from happening, and yet Serbia and Kosovo both moved forward despite that. So, can you talk about what the potential is to reduce tensions and to actually find a permanent resolution to the situation between Serbia and Kosovo?

Mr. GODFREY. Yes, of course.

We are working hard on this with our European partners, and it is, of course, America's goal that Serbia continues along this path. And we are working, both in Pristina and in Belgrade and in Washington and with our colleagues in Brussels and—thank you—with this committee, to find ways to model, for both the Serbians and the Kosovars, ways to resume these negotiations, to step back from these really counterproductive steps that both sides have taken. Both sides need this. And it will take both sides to move it

forward. And it is our job, together with the Europeans, to make this happen.

Senator SHAHEEN. Thank you. I really appreciate that. I think that Serbia's role in the Western Balkans is very important. They represent a very important country as we think about the future. And I think it is important to encourage them to resolve differences and to help them continue to look West, as opposed to East. And I think the United States role in doing that is going to be very important.

Ms. Mustafa, first of all, congratulations on being the first Kurdish-American appointed to an ambassadorship.

Ms. MUSTAFA. Thank you very much.

Senator SHAHEEN. We especially appreciate the relationship that the U.S. has had with the Kurds.

As you look at the challenges that faces—face Bulgaria, obviously one of those is the potential for Russia interference in Bulgaria, as well. The efforts of Bulgaria to address corruption and some of their other challenges offer fertile ground for Russia to try and exploit some of the corruption, economic insecurity, political volatility that exists there. So, can you talk about how, as Ambassador, you can work with the Bulgarians to address that?

Ms. MUSTAFA. Yes, definitely, thank you. It is a very important question.

Rule of law is a long-term, multifaceted, and challenging process, and I know that Bulgaria has passed constitutional amendments, and that there is an anti-corruption commission. But, more needs to be done. In 2017, the State Department established a Resident Legal Advisor's Office in Embassy Sofia, and I think strengthening that office is extremely important. The State Department also sends participants to the International Law Enforcement Academy. Thank you for your support on that. That has been truly tremendous and very——

Senator SHAHEEN. It is very impressive.

Ms. MUSTAFA [continuing]. Yes. Yes.

And so, as Ambassador, if confirmed, I will continue these efforts, as well as efforts to engage civil society and to speak publicly about the importance of reform. I think that is very important to do from the top.

Senator SHAHEEN. Thank you.

And if I can ask one more question, Mr. Chairman.

Senator JOHNSON. Absolutely.

Senator SHAHEEN. Finally, Ms. McKee, obviously you talked about the importance of Southeast Asia and our role there. As we look at other potential adversaries of the United States, China's influence in Asia is growing, and it is important for us to provide, I think, a counterweight to that. Can you talk about the ways in which you see working on that, if you are confirmed?

Ms. MCKEE. Thank you very much, Senator, for the question. It is an important one.

Countering China, I prefer to characterize it as providing alternatives and options. And one of the ways——

Senator SHAHEEN. I like that characterization.

Ms. MCKEE [continuing]. Thank you. One of the ways, I think, that is important, and that I mentioned in my statement, is to in-

crease our presence and demonstrate and follow through with our commitment with concrete deliverables so that alternative models of financing, infrastructure investment, attractive playing field for the private sector, and other alternatives to state-led options that China provides, is what I would aim for. I would deepen our work to demonstrate that commitment, advance human rights and other things that I believe we share, in terms of values and principles, with these Pacific Island nations. And, through this amplified presence and demonstrated commitment, I believe the United States would serve as the partner of choice for these countries.

Senator SHAHEEN. Thank you.

Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Senator JOHNSON. Thank you, Senator Shaheen.

The vote has been called, so if you want to head on down.

Let me follow up with you, Ms. McKee. What investments or what activity has China been engaged in in that region?

Ms. MCKEE. Thank you for the question, sir.

I cannot give you specifics for the three countries. I am not there on the ground yet. However, I do know that they—that there are some debt financing and infrastructure deals on the table for those countries, for the three Pacific Island nations. What——

Senator JOHNSON. So, they have not been concluded yet?

Ms. MCKEE [continuing]. Some of them have not been concluded yet. We hear a lot of deals being discussed coming out of the Belt and Road forum. But, for them to materialize, I think it would be very important for us to make sure that those countries, if they are going to enter into negotiations, have sound economic advice and adhere to the importance of transparency and clarity as they come to the negotiation table.

Senator JOHNSON. I do get the sense that, as other nations are looking at the results of some of these other, you know, no-strings-attached investments—and it is not "no strings," there is chains attached to them—they are becoming a little bit more wary. So, I like, also, your typification of providing an alternative and, I would argue, the best alternative.

Mr. Godfrey, I think you are aware that I have been engaged pretty in-depth with Serbia and Kosovo. Three trips there. I have met repeatedly, in other forums back here in the U.S., with both President Vucic and Thaci and the Foreign and Prime Minister. It is disappointing that we have not made progress there. There have been, as you say, actions taken on both sides which have not been helpful.

In my most recent meetings with both sides—you talked about the EU-led negotiations—there was a real plea for greater U.S. involvement. Is that something that you are aware that the State Department, this administration, is willing to engage in, become—provide more of a leadership role in trying to hammer out an agreement, as opposed to what we have been stating—it think it is been valid, too—giving them the space, let the parties come to an agreement?

Mr. GODFREY. Thank you, Mr. Chairman. And thank you for your leadership on this issue. It has been very important. And I hope it will continue to be.

We are disappointed that there has not been more progress. And your leadership has been part—has been an important part of the United States stepping up more. And I suggest that Acting Assistant Secretary for European and Eurasian Affairs Reeker's recent meeting with the Foreign Minister, when he was here in Washington to attend the Ministerial for International Religious Freedom, was a good step in that direction, as well.

It is an EU process. They own it. It is Western integration, with a goal of EU membership. There are ways that we can make it more attractive. And, if confirmed, I will continue to pursue them. We have important assistance programs that are about choice, making clear that the Serbians understand where their goals and their own pursuits lie. And very often that is in opposition or at least not together with where the Russians want them to head. But, as I said earlier, sir, it has got to be something to—for it to be a durable solution, the parties have to own it, and they have to work it out.

Senator JOHNSON. I agree. You know, there is a window of opportunity. I do not know how long that window stays open. But, you know, windows can close, as well. So, I am assuming this is the top priority. I think you stated that in your testimony. So, I would like to do everything I can to work with you, the State Department, this administration to try and take advantage of this moment in time.

Mr. GODFREY. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Senator JOHNSON. Ms. Mustafa, just quick general-interest question. Did your parents emigrate here into the U.S.?

Ms. MUSTAFA. So, we came as refugees.

Senator JOHNSON. Okay. From where? From Iraq?

Ms. MUSTAFA. From Erbil, in Iraq.

Senator JOHNSON. Okay.

Ms. MUSTAFA. Yes. And we landed in Minot, North Dakota. So, that is where we grew up.

Senator JOHNSON. An interesting place to land.

Ms. MUSTAFA. Yes, exactly.

Senator JOHNSON. Well, I am glad you did. And again, you have taken, really, advantage of the situation, and I really commend you for that.

Ms. MUSTAFA. Thank you.

Senator JOHNSON. Russian interference is pervasive throughout Eastern Europe. As Ambassador, really, what is your primary counter to that in working with the Bulgarians?

Ms. MUSTAFA. This, I go back to the three C's: Connectivity, Collaboration, and as well as Corruption. But, on connectivity, we have to be visible. The Russians are very visible in these areas. And, for us, we have to be visible not only as Ambassadors, but also as the U.S. government. And this is where, again, working with you, if confirmed, and other Members of Congress, being present in Bulgaria, I think, is very important to demonstrate our support, to strengthen the links with the West on all of those various fronts.

Senator JOHNSON. China has been surprisingly active in Eastern, Southeastern European countries. What is the level of activity in Bulgaria?

Ms. MUSTAFA. The Bulgarians have politically good ties with the Chinese, and they are interested in greater economic ties. And so, this, for me, will obviously be a focus. They do not yet have the level of commercial investment, as they do in other parts, but this is an area to watch very closely.

Senator JOHNSON. Well, as Ms. McKee suggests, show them a better alternative.

Ms. MUSTAFA. Yes.

Senator JOHNSON. And again, now, Serbia—I mean, Bulgaria—both—the economic future of those countries lies with the West, with the EU, with America. Russia offers nothing, other than gas and destabilization and false propaganda. So, I wish you well there.

Mr. Carwile, I am certainly concerned about Russian aggression into Georgia, Crimea, Eastern Ukraine. I think we all worry about some move, if we do not show the strength/resolve, into one of the Baltic states. You know, we have the air patrols there. We have more of a forward presence. Anything else you think we should do? I am assuming you support all those efforts?

Mr. CARWILE. Thank you for the question, Senator.

Yes, of course. I think the United States is very supportive of the—you mentioned the advanced forward-presence posts that are led by the Canadians there, and we supply regional support from Warsaw, from Poland, on that. So, we already have a robust, sort of, presence there, with rotation of a lot of NATO forces. We also have some American servicemen and -women that there on a semi-permanent basis for rotary air support. And there is also a long-time, since 1991, relationship with the Michigan National Guard. So, these are the sorts of things that—for the American military presence there, but also, more broadly, in NATO.

Senator JOHNSON. Okay. Well, thank you, Mr. Carwile.

I do have to go vote. Take the fact that other Senators did not show up as a vote of confidence. I mean, I am—I mean that with all sincerity. Take a look at all of your backgrounds. You are very well suited, very well qualified, you will represent America well.

Again, I congratulate you for your nomination, wish you well. Again, thank you and your families. It is obvious in the testimony there have been a lot of sacrifices during your careers. We truly do appreciate that. So, we wish you well.

The hearing record will remain open for statements or questions until the close of business on Thursday, August 1st.

This hearing is adjourned.

[Whereupon, at 3:15 p.m., the hearing was adjourned.]

Additional Material Submitted for the Record

RESPONSES TO ADDITIONAL QUESTIONS FOR THE RECORD
SUBMITTED TO JOHN LESLIE CARWILE BY SENATOR ROBERT MENENDEZ

Question. Latvia has long been a gateway for dirty Russian money to enter Europe. How has Latvia strengthened its anti-money laundering laws and more importantly, its enforcement of those laws, since the sanctioning and collapse of ABLV? What are the biggest money laundering risks in Latvia today?

Answer. As a regional financial center with a large number of commercial banks and a sizeable non-resident deposit base, Latvia remains vulnerable to money laundering and terrorist financing. Latvia has indeed been home to several significant money laundering scandals over the past several years. U.S. concerns about money laundering in Latvia and its impact on U.S.-Latvian priorities were illustrated clearly in former U.S. Ambassador to Latvia Nancy Pettit's December 9, 2018 Op-Ed in Latvian media entitled "Let's Talk About Corruption," which included not only specific concerns about corruption and money laundering in Latvia, but provided specific recommendations on how to address shortfalls in Latvia's judicial, law enforcement, banking, and political sectors.

The current Latvian government—led by Prime Minister Krisjanis Karins—has clearly prioritized addressing money laundering. His cabinet has introduced and secured passage of legislation that downsizes Latvia's non-resident banking sector, strengthens anti-money laundering authorities and capabilities, and reforms supervisory and regulatory authorities. These are all important and strong positive steps and to the extent possible, if confirmed, I will provide support for these efforts.

Question. What are the most recent efforts by Treasury to engage Latvia on money laundering issues? Please provide a full list of the anti-money laundering recommendations Treasury has given Latvia and Treasury's assessment of Latvia's progress on those recommendations. Please do not simply refer us to Treasury in your response.

Answer. In cooperation with U.S. Embassy Riga, the U.S. Departments of State and Treasury have engaged extensively over the past several years to encourage the government of Latvia to reform and enhance its legislative authorities, regulatory controls, judiciary, and transparency in order to combat this critical vulnerability. The U.S. Embassy and U.S. departments and agencies have also facilitated assistance, training, and seminars to improve Latvian government and regulator capabilities and knowledge on anticorruption and anti-money laundering. The Department of Treasury has regularly engaged Latvian leadership on money laundering issues, including a July 10 meeting between Secretary of Treasury Steven Mnuchin and Latvian Prime Minister Krisjanis Karins. Department of Treasury Assistant Secretary Marshall Billingslea has also traveled to Riga on several occasions to discuss money laundering with Latvian officials, including as recently as May 2019.

If confirmed, I will continue to support this close partnership and engage government officials, private sector contacts, and civil society representatives on this critical international security issue. I will prioritize engaging Department of Treasury leadership as soon as possible to coordinate on money laundering issues, including on Department of Treasury recommendations to the Latvian government.

Question. Money laundering, particularly by sanctioned entities, remains a major threat to our security and combatting it must be a priority in foreign policy. How have Latvia's anti-money laundering efforts factored into discussions of U.S. programming in Latvia?

Answer. As exhibited in former U.S. Ambassador to Latvia Nancy Pettit's December 9, 2018 Op-Ed in Latvian media entitled "Let's Talk About Corruption," the United States understands the full scope of the threat posed by money laundering. Beyond domestic impact, "money laundering makes Latvia vulnerable to malign external actors who aim to undermine Latvia's independence and democratic principles by pursuing an agenda that threatens national resilience, undermines confidence in Latvia's government and regulators, and weakens economic and security ties." The government of Latvia is making impressive strides advancing important anticorruption reforms and legislation, including related to Latvia's banking sector. Nonetheless, money laundering remains a major vulnerability in Latvia, meaning continued implementation and further structural changes are required to sustain progress.

As noted, the U.S. Embassy and U.S. departments and agencies have facilitated assistance, training, and seminars to improve Latvian government and regulator capabilities and knowledge on anticorruption and anti-money laundering. If confirmed, I will continue to prioritize anticorruption and money laundering-focused programs as an essential part of U.S. assistance, public diplomacy efforts, and other programming to Latvia.

Question. I understand that the State Department is considering adding Latvia to the European Recapitalization Incentive Program (ERIP). What is the status of discussions with Latvia regarding ERIP, particularly regarding its bidding laws that could preclude it from purchasing American equipment? If confirmed, how will you specifically incorporate anti-money laundering measures into conversations with Latvia regarding ERIP?

Answer. Discussions are ongoing between the Department of State and U.S. European Command regarding a round two of the European Recapitalization Incentive Program (ERIP). No funding decisions have been made thus far, but Latvia is under consideration as a participant, along with other European partners in the region. All such discussions take into consideration relevant and applicable foreign country laws and regulations. Addressing money laundering is among the U.S. government's highest bilateral policy priorities with Latvia. If confirmed, I will ensure that money laundering issues continue to be taken into account in major policy discussions and decisions related to Latvia.

Question. What are the most important actions you have taken in your career to date to support democracy and human rights? What has been the impact of your actions?

Answer. From 2002-2006, I worked with the Northern Ireland Policing Board and engaged with political parties and community groups to demonstrate the United States' deep support for community-based policing in Northern Ireland—a critical component of the Good Friday Agreement and necessary to sustain support for the continuing peace process. The Board recognized my efforts when I departed Belfast in 2006. I also regularly engaged with non-governmental community groups in areas affected by paramilitary activities to demonstrate the United States' strong commitment to help communities come to terms with the legacies of the past and to live free from intimidation and violence. As the Deputy Chief of Mission in Kathmandu, Nepal from 2013-2016, I oversaw Embassy efforts to support and protect Tibetan refugees resident in the country, as well as to reduce trafficking in persons, especially vulnerable women and children, and to encourage the government of Nepal to prosecute traffickers and protect and rehabilitate survivors.

Question. What issues are the most pressing challenges to democracy or democratic development in Latvia? These challenges might include obstacles to participatory and accountable governance and institutions, rule of law, authentic political competition, civil society, human rights and press freedom. Please be as specific as possible.

Answer. Latvia is a strong partner on advancing shared values and principles on human rights issues. However, according to the U.S. Department of State's 2018 Human Rights Report (the latest available), Latvia still faces democracy and human rights challenges, such as large-scale corruption and widespread intolerance and serious discrimination against lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, and intersex (LGBTI) persons. U.S. concerns regarding corruption in Latvia were exhibited perhaps most clearly in former U.S. Ambassador to Latvia Nancy Pettit's December 9, 2018 Op-Ed in Latvian media entitled 'Let's Talk About Corruption,' which included not only specific concerns about corruption and money laundering in Latvia, but provided specific recommendations on how to address shortfalls in Latvia's judicial, law enforcement, banking, and political sectors.

If confirmed, I will engage Latvian government and parliament officials, regulatory bodies, and nongovernmental and civil society organizations to promote human rights issues, encourage accountability on corruption and protect human rights and fundamental freedoms for Latvia's LGBTI community, as well as other marginalized populations. I will also prioritize engagement with Latvian government, parliament, judicial, regulatory, and civil society officials on to promote efforts and programs that reduce corruption.

Question. What steps will you take—if confirmed—to support democracy in Latvia? What do you hope to accomplish through these actions? What are the potential impediments to addressing the specific obstacles you have identified?

Answer. Latvia is a vibrant democracy with resilient institutions, established respect for rule of law, and a free press. The government has effective mechanisms to investigate and punish abuse and corruption. Latvian law provides criminal penalties for corruption. Nonetheless, corruption remains an endemic problem, which has led to a widespread belief that that high-level officials are seen as enjoying impunity from corruption. If confirmed, I will prioritize engagement with Latvian officials on promoting democracy, good governance, and anticorruption reforms, measures, and programs.

Question. How will you utilize U.S. government assistance resources at your disposal, including the Democracy Commission Small Grants program and other sources of State Department and USAID funding, to support democracy and governance, and what will you prioritize in processes to administer such assistance?

Answer. If confirmed, I will leverage the full range of U.S. assistance programs to promote good governance, democracy, and human rights in Latvia. Latvia is al-

ready included in regional Department of State assistance programming that—among other objectives—strengthens civil society and promotes rule of law. We also collaborate with Latvian institutions through the Emerging Donor Challenge Fund to advance democracy and rule of law in Ukraine and Central Asian countries.

Corruption remains one of the largest threats to good governance and democracy in Latvia. The Department of State's Bureau of International Narcotics and Law Enforcement Affairs (INL) includes Latvia in a regional anti-corruption program designed to strengthen its capacity to identify, investigate, and prosecute corruption and advance related institutional reforms. The program aims to improve the investigation of corruption and financial crimes, the functioning of anticorruption institutions, judicial accountability mechanisms, and asset forfeiture and recovery processes. If confirmed, I will work to continue these beneficial assistance programs and provide strong support for niche technical assistance to Latvia to more effectively tackle corruption and prevent the country's financial institutions from serving as platforms for the financing of transnational organized crime and terrorism.

Question. If confirmed, do you commit to engaging with democratically-oriented members of the opposition?

Answer. Yes. If confirmed, I pledge to engage a range of Latvian political parties and politicians to strengthen bilateral ties and promote U.S. interests and objectives in Latvia.

Question. If confirmed, do you commit to meet with civil society members, human rights and other non-governmental organizations in the U.S. and with local human rights NGOs, and other members of civil society in Latvia? What steps will you take to pro-actively address efforts to restrict or penalize NGOs and civil society via legal or regulatory measures?

Answer. Yes. If confirmed, I commit to meet with civil society members and representatives of human rights and other non-governmental organizations in the United States and in Latvia. I will engage Latvian government and parliament officials and regulatory bodies to address concerns regarding any undue restrictions or penalties imposed upon non-government organizations and civil society groups.

Question. If confirmed, do you commit to meet with democratically oriented political opposition figures and parties? What steps will you take to encourage genuine political competition? Will you advocate for access and inclusivity for women, minorities and youth within political parties?

Answer. Yes. If confirmed, I commit to engage a range of Latvian political parties and politicians to strengthen bilateral ties and promote U.S. interests and objectives in Latvia. I will continue U.S. Embassy Riga efforts to promote democracy and good governance initiatives, including free and fair political systems. I will advocate among Latvian government officials, political parties, and civil society groups for access and inclusivity for women, members of minorities, and youth, including by advancing and implementing the objectives articulated in the June 2019 U.S. Strategy on Women, Peace, and Security.

Question. Will you and your embassy team actively engage with Latvia on freedom of the press and address any government efforts designed to control or undermine press freedom through legal, regulatory or other measures? Will you commit to meeting regularly with independent, local press in Latvia?

Answer. Yes. If confirmed, I will engage with Latvian government officials, media groups, and civil society to ensure continued respect for press freedoms. I will also continue U.S. Embassy Riga's established practice of meeting with independent Latvian press groups and bodies.

Latvia is a vibrant democracy with resilient institutions and a free press. If confirmed, I pledge to enhance U.S. and Latvian partnership to strengthen independent media, including working with civil society and non-governmental organizations such as the Baltic Center for Media Excellence.

Question. Will you and your embassy team actively engage with civil society and government counterparts on countering disinformation and propaganda disseminated by foreign state or non-state actors in the country?

Answer. Yes. The United States and Latvia recognize that the Kremlin attempts to undermine transatlantic unity, sow discord, and weaken democratic institutions and governments, including through employing malign influence campaigns to pursue these goals. The United States and Latvia work together closely to identify and expose Russian disinformation and other malign influence tactics not only in Latvia, but also throughout the world. The United States and Latvia concur that a well-informed citizenry is key to the strength of democratic institutions, and work to-

gether on efforts to strengthen civil society, combat corruption, and promote media literacy. One of the best defenses against disinformation is a free, pluralistic, and transparent news media environment, which is why the United States and Latvia work in partnership to strengthen independent media.

If confirmed, I will also continue to support cooperation with and assistance to Latvia and the other Baltic states—among our most knowledgeable and capable Allies on this threat—to combat Russian malign influence across all sectors. I will expand U.S. Embassy cooperation with organizations in Latvia that address malign influence threats—such as the NATO Strategic Communications Center of Excellence and the Baltic Center for Media Excellence. I will also promote exchange programs so that U.S., Latvian, and other experts can better share knowledge, lessons learned, and innovative ideas on how to address these threats.

Question. Will you and your embassy teams actively engage with Latvia on the right of labor groups to organize, including for independent trade unions?

Answer. Freedom of association and the right to collective bargaining are key elements of labor rights. If confirmed, I will actively engage on these issues and encourage adherence to these practices among independent trade unions.

Question. Will you commit to using your position, if confirmed, to defend the human rights and dignity of all people in Latvia, no matter their sexual orientation or gender identity? What challenges do the lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender and queer (LGBTQ) people face in Latvia? What specifically will you commit to do to help LGBTQ people in Latvia?

Answer. Yes. If confirmed, I will commit to defending the human rights and dignity of all people in Latvia, no matter their sexual orientation or gender identity. According to the U.S. Department of State's 2018 Human Rights Report (the latest available), lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, and intersex (LGBTI) persons continue to face widespread intolerance and discrimination in Latvia. U.S. Embassy Riga has prioritized protecting the human rights and fundamental freedoms of LGBTI persons. If confirmed, I pledge to uphold and expand these efforts. I will engage Latvian government and parliament officials, regulatory bodies, and nongovernmental and civil society organizations to uphold basic freedoms, human rights and dignity of all individuals in Latvia, including members of Latvia's LGBTI community.

Question. If a foreign person or government approaches you or a staffer at the embassy with derogatory information on a U.S. political figure, what is your understanding of official State Department policy on how to handle it? In the wake of President Trump's comments welcoming such information, it is important that the State Department have clear guidance for all of its personnel on how to deal with such scenarios. Has a cable with clear guidance on how to handle this situation been sent to all U.S. embassies?

Answer. Pursuant to Foreign Affairs Manual Chapter 12, Section 262—'Security Awareness and Contact Reporting'—U.S. Department of State policy mandates that all employees and contractors report any contact that prompts concern that he or she may be the target of actual or attempted exploitation by a foreign entity. At the embassy, any such contact must be reported as soon as possible to the embassy's Regional Security Officer. Cleared U.S. employees are required to take annual training "EX 250 Annual Counter Intelligence Awareness," which reviews these reporting requirements pursuant to the Foreign Affairs Manual Chapter 12, Section 262. The Department has sent cables to all diplomatic and consular posts with clear guidance about this training and reporting requirement, in addition to Department Notices distributed domestically.

Question. Do you agree that any targeting of or retaliation against career employees based on their perceived political beliefs, prior work on policy, or affiliation with a previous administration, is wholly inappropriate and has no place in the federal government? If confirmed, what will you do to ensure that all employees under your leadership understand that any retaliation, blacklisting, or other prohibited personnel practices will not be tolerated?

Answer. Yes. I agree that any targeting of or retaliation against career employees based on their perceived political beliefs, prior work on policy, or affiliation with a previous administration is wholly inappropriate. If confirmed, I will maintain a policy of no tolerance for retaliation, blacklisting, or other prohibited personnel practices at U.S. Embassy Riga. I will hold U.S. Embassy Riga employees accountable to the highest standards in accordance with applicable law, rules, and regulations on anti-discrimination and prohibited personnel practices, including the Notification and Federal Employee Antidiscrimination and Retaliation Act of 2002, as amended.

Question. Has anyone ever made a formal or informal complaint or allegation of sexual harassment, discrimination (e.g., racial, ethnic, religious, etc.), or inappropriate conduct against you, in a workplace or any other setting? If so, please describe the nature of the complaint or allegation, your response, and any resolution, including any settlements.

Answer. No. I take the issues of sexual harassment, discrimination, and inappropriate conduct with the utmost seriousness and throughout my career, I have immediately addressed any issues raised to me in accordance with the Department of State's policies. To my knowledge, I have never been named as a responsible management official in a formal or informal complaint of harassment or discrimination.

Question. Have you ever addressed concerns or allegations of sexual harassment, discrimination (e.g., racial, ethnic, religious, etc.), or inappropriate conduct made against any employee over whom you had supervisory authority? If so, please describe the outcome and actions taken.

Answer. I take the issues of sexual harassment, discrimination, and inappropriate conduct with the utmost seriousness and throughout my career, I have immediately addressed any issues raised to me in accordance with the Department of State's policies, including encouraging any employee who feels they have been harassed or discriminated against to report such behavior to any supervisor under my management or the Department's Office of Civil Rights.

RESPONSES TO ADDITIONAL QUESTIONS FOR THE RECORD
SUBMITTED TO JOHN LESLIE CARWILE BY SENATOR BENJAMIN L. CARDIN

Question. What are your most meaningful achievements to date in your career to promote human rights and democracy? What has been the impact of your actions?

Answer. From 2002-2006, I worked with the Northern Ireland Policing Board and engaged with political parties and community groups to demonstrate the United States' deep support for community-based policing in Northern Ireland—a critical component of the Good Friday Agreement and necessary to sustain support for the continuing peace process. The Board recognized my efforts when I departed Belfast in 2006. I also regularly engaged with non-governmental community groups in areas affected by paramilitary activities to demonstrate the United States' strong commitment to help communities come to terms with the legacies of the past and to live free from intimidation and violence. As the Deputy Chief of Mission in Kathmandu, Nepal from 2013-2016, I oversaw Embassy efforts to support and protect Tibetan refugees resident in the country, as well as to reduce trafficking in persons, especially vulnerable women and children, and to encourage the government of Nepal to prosecute traffickers and protect and rehabilitate survivors.

Question. What are the most pressing human rights issues in Latvia? What are the most important steps you expect to take—if confirmed—to promote human rights and democracy in Latvia? What do you hope to accomplish through these actions?

Answer. Latvia is a strong partner on advancing shared values and principles on human rights. However, according to the U.S. Department of State's 2018 Human Rights Report (the latest available), Latvia still faces human rights challenges, such as large-scale corruption and widespread intolerance and serious discrimination against lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, and intersex (LGBTI) persons. If confirmed, I will engage Latvian government and parliament officials, regulatory bodies, and nongovernmental and civil society organizations to promote human rights, encourage accountability on corruption, and protect human rights and fundamental freedoms for Latvia's LGBTI community, as well as other marginalized populations.

Question. If confirmed, what are the potential obstacles to addressing the specific human rights issues you have identified in your previous response? What challenges will you face in Latvia in advancing human rights, civil society and democracy in general?

Answer. If confirmed, I will engage Latvian government officials, regulatory bodies, parliamentarians, and nongovernmental and civil society organizations to promote human rights, encourage accountability on corruption, and uphold basic freedoms, human rights, and dignity of all people in Latvia, including Latvia's LGBTI community. A particular challenge highlighted in the U.S. Department of State 2018 Human Rights Report are widespread allegations of corruption in Latvia's judicial system. If confirmed, I pledge to enhance engagement with Latvia's Ministry of Jus-

tice and across other ministries and law enforcement and regulatory agencies to advance critical anticorruption reforms in Latvia's judiciary. More generally, U.S. Embassy Riga has prioritized promoting anticorruption reforms and protecting the human rights and fundamental freedoms of LGBTI persons, and if confirmed, I pledge to support and expand these efforts.

Question. Are you committed to meeting with human rights, civil society and other non-governmental organizations in the U.S. and with local human rights NGOs in Latvia? If confirmed, what steps will you take to pro-actively support the Leahy Law and similar efforts, and ensure that provisions of U.S. security assistance and security cooperation activities reinforce human rights?

Answer. Yes. If confirmed, I will engage with civil society and non-governmental organizations across the United States and in Latvia on a wide array of human rights. I will also ensure vetting procedures for U.S. assistance to Latvian security forces are implemented consistent with U.S. law.

Question. Will you and your embassy team actively engage with Latvia to address cases of key political prisoners or persons otherwise unjustly targeted by Latvia?

Answer. Latvia is a strong partner sharing our values and principles on human rights. There are no reported cases of political prisoners or people unjustly targeted by Latvia. If such reports become known in the future, I will engage Latvian government officials, regulatory bodies, parliamentarians, and nongovernmental and civil society organizations to address them.

Question. Will you engage with Latvia on matters of human rights, civil rights and governance as part of your bilateral mission?

Answer. Yes. If confirmed, I will engage Latvian officials on promoting democracy, respect for rule of law, human rights, the important role of civil society, and good governance practices, measures, and programs.

Question. Do you commit to bring to the committee's attention (and the State Department Inspector General) any change in policy or U.S. actions that you suspect may be influenced by any of the President's business or financial interests, or the business or financial interests of any senior White House staff?

Answer. If confirmed, I commit to comply with all relevant federal ethics laws, regulations, and rules, and to raise any concerns that arise through appropriate and applicable channels.

Question. Do you commit to inform the committee if you have any reason to suspect that a foreign government, head of state, or foreign-controlled entity is taking any action in order to benefit any of the President's business or financial interests, or the interests of senior White House staff?

Answer. If confirmed, I commit to comply with all relevant federal ethics laws, regulations, and rules, and to raise any concerns that arise through appropriate and applicable channels.

Question. Do you or do any members of your immediate family have any financial interests in Latvia?

Answer. My investment portfolio includes funds, which may hold interests in companies with a presence in Latvia, but which are exempt from the conflict of interest laws. My investment portfolio also includes financial interests in individual companies that may maintain a presence in Latvia. I am committed to ensuring that my official actions will not give rise to a conflict of interest, will divest my interests in any companies the State Department Ethics Office deems necessary to avoid a conflict of interest on my part, and will remain vigilant with regard to my ethics obligations.

Question. Research from private industry demonstrates that, when managed well, diversity makes business teams better both in terms of creativity and in terms of productivity. What will you do to promote, mentor and support your staff that come from diverse backgrounds and underrepresented groups in the Foreign Service?

Answer. I fully support a diverse workforce. Diversity advances and illustrates American values and improves work environments by facilitating new perspectives, and visions. Increasing diversity fosters an inclusive workplace and promotes exchange of new ideas and innovating thinking. I advocate for workplaces that reflect the rich diversity of the United States. If confirmed, I will promote a workplace that encourages tolerance, respect, collaboration, and inclusion.

Question. What steps will you take to ensure each of the supervisors at the Embassy are fostering an environment that is diverse and inclusive?

Answer. Diversity and inclusion must be a focus area for Embassy planning and leadership. If confirmed, I will foster a positive work environment by instituting diversity and inclusion as priority objectives in Embassy strategy and planning documents. I will also promote diversity and inclusion as focal points in my first meetings with Embassy leadership. If confirmed, I will underscore that our policies and outcomes are improved by drawing on inclusive, diverse teams with a breadth of experiences and perspectives. I will also communicate strongly the Department's EEO policies in my mission and ensure they are followed.

Question. How do you believe political corruption impacts democratic governance and the rule of law generally, and in Latvia specifically?

Answer. Latvia is a vibrant democracy with resilient institutions, established respect for rule of law, and a free press. The government has effective mechanisms to investigate and punish abuse and corruption. Latvian law provides criminal penalties for corruption. Nonetheless, corruption remains an endemic problem, which has led to a widespread perception that high-level officials are seen as enjoying impunity from corruption. U.S. concerns regarding corruption in Latvia were exhibited perhaps most clearly in former U.S. Ambassador to Latvia Nancy Pettit's December 9, 2018 Op-Ed in Latvian media entitled "Let's Talk About Corruption," which included not only our specific concerns about corruption and money laundering in Latvia, but provided specific recommendations on how to address shortfalls in Latvia's judicial, law enforcement, banking, and political sectors. If confirmed, I will prioritize engagement with Latvian officials on promoting anticorruption reforms, measures, and programs.

The Department's Bureau of International Narcotics and Law Enforcement Affairs (INL) includes Latvia in a regional anti-corruption program designed to build resilience to Russian malign influence among justice sector partners by strengthening their capacity to identify, investigate, and prosecute corruption and advance related institutional reforms. Including work through the Department of Justice's Office for Prosecutorial Development and Training (OPDAT), the program aims to improve the investigation of corruption and financial crimes, the functioning of anticorruption institutions, judicial accountability mechanisms, and asset forfeiture and recovery processes. If confirmed, I will continue to promote the inclusion of Latvia in this important program.

Question. What is your assessment of corruption trends in Latvia and efforts to address and reduce it by that government?

Answer. The government of Latvia is making impressive strides advancing important anticorruption reforms and legislation, including related to Latvia's banking sector. Nonetheless, corruption remains an endemic problem, meaning continued implementation and further structural changes are required to sustain progress. U.S. concerns were exhibited clearly in former U.S. Ambassador to Latvia Nancy Pettit's December 9, 2018 Op-Ed in Latvian media entitled 'Let's Talk About Corruption,' which included not only our specific concerns about corruption and money laundering in Latvia, but provided specific recommendations on how to address shortfalls in Latvia's judicial, law enforcement, banking, and political sectors.

The current Latvian government—led by Prime Minister Krisjanis Karins—has clearly prioritized addressing money laundering, an important step. His cabinet has introduced and secured passage of legislation that downsizes Latvia's non-resident banking sector, strengthens anti-money laundering authorities and capabilities, and reforms supervisory and regulatory authorities. These are all important and strong positive steps. Nonetheless, significant work remains to be done. If confirmed, I will continue to engage Latvian government, parliament, judicial, regulatory, and civil society officials on this important issue to ensure the country reduces corruption.

Question. If confirmed, what steps will you take to strengthen good governance and anticorruption programming in Latvia?

Answer. In cooperation with U.S. Embassy Riga, the U.S. Departments of State and Treasury have engaged extensively over the past several years to encourage the government of Latvia to reform and enhance its legislative authorities, regulatory controls, judiciary, and transparency in order to combat corruption and money laundering threats. The U.S. Embassy and U.S. departments and agencies have also facilitated assistance, training, and seminars to improve Latvian government and regulator capabilities and knowledge on anticorruption and anti-money laundering.

If confirmed, I will continue these programs and U.S. Embassy Riga's engagement with officials in the Latvian government, parliament, regulatory bodies, and civil society to support good governance and anticorruption practices and principles. Through exchanges such as the International Visitor Leadership Program and other public diplomacy programs, I will also deepen and expand our engagement with Lat-

via on ways to promote transparency and respect for rule of law. I will provide my strong support for technical assistance to Latvia to more effectively tackle corruption and prevent the country's financial institutions from serving as platforms for the financing of transnational organized crime and terrorism.

Question. How do you assess the development of Latvia's security capabilities in the context of the long-term security challenges it faces in the region? Does Latvia have what it needs to defend against Russian disinformation and propaganda?

Answer. Latvia is a stalwart Ally and close friend of the United States. We cooperate closely on regional and global security issues. The Latvian government has made clear that it views NATO Article 5 as the bedrock of its security. Latvia is one of a handful of Allies that meets its NATO Wales Defense spending pledge. Since 2018, it has spent two percent of its GDP on defense; over twenty percent of its spending is focused on major new equipment, research, and development.

The United States and Latvia recognize that the Kremlin attempts to undermine transatlantic unity, sow discord, and weaken democratic institutions and governments, including through employing malign influence campaigns to pursue these goals. We work together closely to identify and expose Russian disinformation and other malign influence tactics not only in Latvia, but also throughout the world. The United States supports regional efforts to counter Russian propaganda and disinformation with objective, fact-based media, including Russian language content. The United States and Latvia concur that a well-informed citizenry is key to the strength of democratic institutions, and work together on efforts to strengthen civil society, combat corruption, and promote media literacy.

If confirmed, I will continue to support cooperation with and assistance to Latvia and the Baltic states—among our most knowledgeable and capable Allies on this threat—to combat Russian malign influence.

Question. As Ambassador, will you support the development of NATO activities in Latvia and encourage stronger partnerships to secure its territorial integrity?

Answer. Yes. Approximately 1,400 multinational forces are deployed to Latvia under the Canada-led NATO enhanced Forward Presence (eFP) battle group, which strengthens NATO deterrence and defense in Latvia. Other countries contributing to the battle group including Albania, Czech Republic, Italy, Montenegro, Poland, Slovakia, Slovenia, and Spain. The United States, which leads the eFP battle group in Poland, is a strong supporter of NATO's deterrence and defense efforts on the Alliance's eastern flank. The United States further supports regional security by conducting military training and exercises on a periodic basis in Latvia and the other Baltic states.

The United States also supports the work of the NATO-accredited Strategic Communications Center of Excellence, which has produced notable analysis on disinformation and hybrid warfare. U.S. outreach programs highlight the positive role NATO and the United States play in Latvia. In the Soldiers in Arms program, a Latvian-American staff member from the Embassy, who is also a member of the Latvian National Guard, travels to schools around Latvia with a U.S. or other NATO service member to dispel negative myths about NATO and educate students about what NATO does and how Latvia benefits.

If confirmed, I pledge to maintain and expand U.S. support to these relationships, institutions, and programs.

Question. Given Latvia's already heavy dependence on Russian gas, do you see the Russian-led Nord Stream 2 pipeline as problematic for Latvia and the greater Baltic Sea area's energy security?

Answer. Latvia shares our view that Nord Stream 2 would undermine Europe's energy security, including by providing Russia with another tool for the political coercion of European countries, especially Ukraine. Latvia has been outspoken in its opposition to the project.

If confirmed, I look forward to continuing our cooperation with Latvian officials in opposition to this project.

Question. How would you propose to work with the Latvians to encourage their energy independence?

Answer. Although Latvia still depends upon Russia for much of its natural gas, Latvia has taken steps to increase its energy security, including by developing its energy infrastructure as well as diversifying its energy supplies. The government continues to work towards completion of unbundling its gas sector to comply with the EU's Third Energy Package. Latvia is also taking steps to improve pipeline access to receive non-Russian gas from other sources.

The United States supports these efforts and works with the government of Latvia, the EU Commission, and other stakeholders to encourage progress on Baltic energy security and diversification. If confirmed, I will continue the Embassy's strong efforts to raise the profile of this important issue and promote a regional approach to bolstering energy security.

RESPONSES TO ADDITIONAL QUESTIONS FOR THE RECORD
SUBMITTED TO JOHN LESLIE CARWILE BY SENATOR JEANNE SHAHEEN

Question. To what extent does Latvia's energy dependence pose a threat to its or the EU's security? In your view, what are the most effective ways to address energy diversification for Latvia and the region?

Answer. Although Latvia still depends upon Russia for much of its natural gas, Latvia has taken steps to increase its energy security, including by developing its energy infrastructure as well as diversifying its energy supplies. The government continues to work towards completion of unbundling its gas sector to comply with the EU's Third Energy Package. Latvia is also taking steps to improve pipeline access to receive non-Russian gas from other sources.

The United States supports these efforts and works with the government of Latvia, the EU Commission, and other stakeholders to encourage progress on Baltic energy security and diversification. If confirmed, I will continue the Embassy's strong efforts to raise the profile of this important issue and promote a regional approach to bolstering energy security.

Question. As discussed in your hearing, few countries have Latvia's depth of experience dealing with Russian influence, disinformation and more aggressive measures. As Ambassador, how would you approach leveraging the Latvian experience to benefit U.S. efforts to address Russian interference in our own elections and media environment?

Answer. The United States and Latvia recognize that the Kremlin attempts to undermine transatlantic unity, sow discord, and weaken democratic institutions and governments, including through employing malign influence campaigns to pursue these goals. The United States and Latvia work together closely to identify and expose Russian disinformation and other malign influence tactics not only in Latvia, but also throughout the world. The United States and Latvia concur that a well-informed citizenry is key to the strength of democratic institutions, and work together on efforts to strengthen civil society, combat corruption, and promote media literacy. One of the best defenses against disinformation is a free, pluralistic, and transparent news media environment, which is why the United States and Latvia work together to strengthen independent media.

If confirmed, I will continue to support cooperation with and assistance to Latvia and the Baltic states—among our most knowledgeable and capable Allies on this threat—to combat Russian malign influence across all sectors. I will expand U.S. Embassy cooperation with organizations in Latvia that address malign influence threats—such as the NATO Strategic Communications Center of Excellence and the Baltic Center for Media Excellence. I will also promote exchange programs so that U.S., Latvian, and other experts are able to better share knowledge, lessons learned, and innovative ideas on how to address these threats.

Question. In February 2018, the U.S. Treasury Department sanctioned ABLV Bank, then the third-largest bank in Latvia, accusing it of institutionalized money laundering, bribery and facilitating transactions violating sanctions against North Korea. How would you assess Latvian government oversight of its banking sector with respect to transparency and foreign account holders, especially in Russia and the former Soviet Union? In your view, how does banking sector and anti-money laundering reform impact U.S. priorities in Latvia? What assistance is the U.S. Embassy in Riga already providing and what more should be done?

Answer. As a regional financial center with a large number of commercial banks and a sizeable non-resident deposit base, Latvia remains vulnerable to money laundering and terrorist financing. Latvia has indeed been home to several significant money laundering scandals over the past several years. U.S. concerns about money laundering in Latvia and its impact on U.S.-Latvian priorities were illustrated clearly in former U.S. Ambassador to Latvia Nancy Pettit's December 9, 2018 Op-Ed in Latvian media entitled "Let's Talk About Corruption," which included not only specific concerns about corruption and money laundering in Latvia, but provided specific recommendations on how to address shortfalls in Latvia's judicial, law enforcement, banking, and political sectors.

The current Latvian government—led by Prime Minister Krisjanis Karins—has clearly prioritized addressing money laundering. His cabinet has introduced and secured passage of legislation that downsizes Latvia's non-resident banking sector, strengthens anti-money laundering authorities and capabilities, and reforms supervisory and regulatory authorities. These are all important and strong positive steps. Nonetheless, significant gaps remain. In cooperation with U.S. Embassy Riga, the U.S. Departments of State and Treasury have engaged extensively over the past several years to encourage the government of Latvia to reform and enhance its legislative authorities, regulatory controls, judiciary, and transparency in order to combat this critical vulnerability. The U.S. Embassy and U.S. departments and agencies have also facilitated assistance, training, and seminars to improve Latvian government and regulator capabilities and knowledge on anticorruption and anti-money laundering. For instance, the Department of State's Bureau of International Narcotics and Law Enforcement Affairs (INL) includes Latvia in a regional anti-corruption program designed to strengthen its capacity to identify, investigate, and prosecute corruption and advance related institutional reforms. If confirmed, I will continue to support this close partnership and engage government officials, private sector contacts, and civil society representatives on this critical international security issue.

RESPONSES TO ADDITIONAL QUESTIONS FOR THE RECORD
SUBMITTED TO ERIN ELIZABETH MCKEE BY SENATOR ROBERT MENENDEZ

Question. What are the most important actions you have taken in your career to date to support democracy and human rights? What has been the impact of your actions?

Answer. The promotion of human rights and democracy has been central throughout my career. Since 1995, I have had the privilege of serving and representing the United States in eight overseas assignments, as well as here in Washington, D.C., with the U.S. Agency for International Development. It has been my honor to serve the American people and advance our country's interests, promote our values and principles, and offer host-country nations a model for hope, security, and prosperity across a variety of diverse contexts. I am currently serving as the USAID Mission Director to Indonesia and ASEAN, which I resumed after filling the role of Acting Deputy Chief of Mission of Embassy Jakarta last year.Throughout my tenure in the Foreign Service, I have successfully led our interagency and mission partners to strategically plan and—more importantly—successfully execute our development and security assistance budgets. With multiple host-country partners, I have deepened cooperation on human rights and democracy issues, and on countering violent extremism, trafficking in persons, anti-corruption, maritime security and law enforcement, and people-to-people exchanges. In many places where I have served, rule of law has been key to promoting human rights and democracy as well as to increasing sustainable economic growth, trade and investment. If confirmed, I will use my technical background and development expertise to guide my Country Team as they work on issues affecting Papua New Guinea, the Solomon Islands, and Vanuatu, and to tackle economic inequality, poor governance, and underdeveloped capacity, while furthering American partnerships.

Question. What issues are the most pressing challenges to democracy or democratic development in Papua New Guinea? These challenges might include obstacles to participatory and accountable governance and institutions, rule of law, authentic political competition, civil society, human rights and press freedom. Please be as specific as possible.

Answer. Human rights concerns in Papua New Guinea include security force abuses; violence and discrimination against women and girls; and vigilante killings and abuses. Other problems include reports of poor prison conditions; lengthy pretrial detention; infringement of privacy rights, particularly in highland areas; government corruption; abuse and sexual exploitation of children; trafficking in persons; discrimination against persons with disabilities; intertribal violence; and ineffective enforcement of labor laws. Despite minor reforms to the justice system, the government frequently fails to hold accountable officials who commit abuses, whether in the security services or elsewhere in the government. Impunity is pervasive.

In the Solomon Islands, inter-ethnic violence among persons from different islands has been reduced greatly from previous years, but not yet eliminated. Gender-based

violence and discrimination are prevalent. Other problems include lengthy pre-trial detention and government corruption.

Discrimination and violence against women remain the most prominent human rights issues in Vanuatu. Other problems include excessive use of force by police, poor prison conditions, arbitrary or unlawful arrests, an extremely slow judicial process, and government corruption. Authorities failed at times to maintain effective control over the security forces.

As part of the Indo-Pacific Transparency Initiative, and in partnership with like-minded governments, the United States is prioritizing fiscal transparency and anti-corruption, democracy assistance, youth and emerging leader development, media and internet freedom, and fundamental freedoms and human rights.

If confirmed, I will continue to engage government counterparts regularly on human rights, democracy, and governance issues. I will promote efforts to counter corruption, empower citizens and civil society, strengthen institutional capacity, and strengthen respect for the rule of law.

Question. How will you utilize U.S. government assistance resources at your disposal, including the Democracy Commission Small Grants program and other sources of State Department and USAID funding, to support democracy and governance, and what will you prioritize in processes to administer such assistance?

Answer. Our vision for a free and open Indo-Pacific seeks to ensure the freedom of the seas and skies, promote market economics, support good governance, and insulate sovereign nations from external pressure. The mission objectives of Embassy Port Moresby are already aligned with this strategy: empowering women in political and economic life, strengthening democratic institutions, and promoting inclusive and transparent economic growth. If confirmed, these are the key tenets I will seek to advance in Papua New Guinea, the Solomon Islands, and Vanuatu through U.S. government assistance.

Question. If confirmed, do you commit to meet with civil society members, human rights and other non-governmental organizations in the U.S. and with local human rights NGOs, and other members of civil society in Papua New Guinea?

Answer. Papua New Guinea, the Solomon Islands, and Vanuatu are all multiparty parliamentary democracies. The United States values the voice and opinions of civil society and has a long history of engaging leaders both inside and outside the government. Civil society organizations have a critical role to play in supporting efforts to ensure a healthy democracy. If confirmed, I look forward to meeting with civil society members to hear about their goals and objectives and to learn how we might work together in areas of common concern and share best practices. Just as certain groups are underrepresented in the U.S. political system, in Papua New Guinea, the Solomon Islands, and Vanuatu women, indigenous peoples and minority groups are generally underrepresented in political bodies relative to their proportion of the population. If confirmed, I would seek opportunities to share our own experiences in encouraging greater inclusivity, possibly through U.S. government-sponsored programs.

Question. If confirmed, will you advocate for access and inclusivity for women, minorities and youth within political parties?

Answer. Papua New Guinea, the Solomon Islands, and Vanuatu are all multiparty parliamentary democracies. With no female representation in the Papua New Guinea Parliament, encouraging women's political participation is a priority. In advance of the 2017 Parliamentary elections, Embassy Port Moresby incorporated messaging on the importance of women's political participation into all of its public activities. If confirmed, I intend to develop cordial relationships with members of all political parties in order to better understand their positions on issues of importance to us and to them, and to explain U.S. positions and their merits. I view this advocacy role as a key element of my position as Ambassador.

Question. Will you and your embassy teams actively engage with Papua New Guinea on the right of labor groups to organize, including for independent trade unions?

Answer. Yes, if confirmed, my Embassy team and I will actively engage with the governments of Papua New Guinea, the Solomon Islands, and Vanuatu, as well as employers and civil society, to promote internationally recognized worker rights, including freedom of association. Independent trade unions are one of the fundamental building blocks for any democratic society and are important partners for the State Department in many countries. Moreover, ensuring U.S. trade partners respect internationally recognized worker rights and adhere to high labor standards

promotes a level playing field for U.S. workers and helps create stronger trading partners for the United States.

Question. Will you commit to using your position, if confirmed, to defend the human rights and dignity of all people in Papua New Guinea, no matter their sexual orientation or gender identity? What challenges do the lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender and queer (LGBTQ) people face in Papua New Guinea? What specifically will you commit to do to help LGBTQ people in Papua New Guinea?

Answer. In Papua New Guinea, consensual same-sex sexual relations and acts of "gross indecency between males are illegal. The maximum penalty for same-sex sexual relations is 14 years' imprisonment; for acts of gross indecency between male persons (a misdemeanor), it is three years. There were no reports of prosecutions directed at lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, and intersex persons under these provisions during the year. There were reports of societal violence and discrimination against such persons, and they were vulnerable to societal stigmatization, which may have led to underreporting.

In the Solomon Islands, "sodomy" is illegal, as are "indecent practices between persons of the same sex." The maximum penalty for the former is 14 years' imprisonment and for the latter five years. There were no reports of arrests or prosecutions directed at lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, or intersex persons under these provisions during the year, and authorities generally did not enforce these laws. There are no specific antidiscrimination laws based on sexual orientation and gender identity. There were no reports of violence or discrimination against persons based on sexual orientation or gender identity, although stigma may hinder some from reporting.

In Vanuatu, there are no laws criminalizing sexual orientation or same-sex sexual conduct, but there were reports of discrimination and violence against lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, or intersex (LGBTI) persons. LGBTI groups operated freely, but there are no antidiscrimination laws to protect them. One positive sign for freedom of association is that in May 2017, the country's first LGBTI advocacy group officially registered as an NGO.

If confirmed, my team and I will work supportively with all three governments, non-governmental organizations and other members of civil society to protect LGBTI persons from violence, criminalization, and other human rights abuses.

Question. Do you commit to respond promptly to all requests for information by Members of this committee?

Answer. Yes, I commit to respond promptly to all requests for information by Members of this committee.

Question. Do you commit to appear before this committee upon request?

Answer. Yes, I commit to appear before this committee upon request.

Question. If you become aware of any suspected waste, fraud, or abuse in the Department, do you commit to report it to the Inspector General?

Answer. I commit to comply with all relevant federal laws, regulations, and rules, and to raise concerns that I may have through appropriate channels, including required reporting to the Office of the Inspector General.

Question. Has anyone ever made a formal or informal complaint or allegation of sexual harassment, discrimination (e.g., racial, ethnic, religious, etc.), or inappropriate conduct against you, in a workplace or any other setting? If so, please describe the nature of the complaint or allegation, your response, and any resolution, including any settlements.

Answer. No, I am not aware of any formal or informal complaint or allegation of sexual harassment, discrimination (e.g., racial, ethnic, religious, etc.), or inappropriate conduct against me, in a workplace or any other setting. If confirmed, I will make taking care of my team and fostering a high-performing, healthy, and secure workplace a priority, with zero tolerance for misconduct, including sexual harassment.

Question. Have you ever addressed concerns or allegations of sexual harassment, discrimination (e.g., racial, ethnic, religious, etc.), or inappropriate conduct made against any employee over whom you had supervisory authority? If so, please describe the outcome and actions taken.

Answer. If confirmed, I will make taking care of my team and fostering a high-performing, healthy, and secure workplace a priority, with zero tolerance for misconduct, including sexual harassment. Specific allegations of sexual harassment, discrimination, and inappropriate conduct are confidential, and in such cir-

cumstances I have immediately addressed any issues raised to me in accordance with the Department of State's policies, including encouraging any employee who feels they have been harassed or discriminated against to report such behavior to any supervisor under my management or the Department's Office of Civil Rights.

Question. Do you agree that any targeting of or retaliation against career employees based on their perceived political beliefs, prior work on policy, or affiliation with a previous administration, is wholly inappropriate and has no place in the federal government? If confirmed, what will you do to ensure that all employees under your leadership understand that any retaliation, blacklisting, or other prohibited personnel practices will not be tolerated?

Answer. Yes, I agree that any targeting of or retaliation against career employees based on their perceived political beliefs, prior work on policy, or affiliation with a previous administration, is wholly inappropriate and has no place in the federal government. As a career member of the Senior Foreign Service and a 24-year veteran of the federal government, I am keenly aware and respectful of employee rights, including regarding protected activities. In addition to ensuring compliance with mandatory training on prohibited personnel practices and discrimination, if confirmed, I will prioritize taking care of my team and fostering healthy and secure workplace a priority, with zero tolerance for discrimination, harassment, retaliation, or other misconduct.

RESPONSES TO ADDITIONAL QUESTIONS FOR THE RECORD
SUBMITTED TO ERIN ELIZABETH MCKEE BY SENATOR BENJAMIN L. CARDIN

Question. What are your most meaningful achievements to date in your career to promote human rights and democracy? What has been the impact of your actions?

Answer. The promotion of human rights and democracy has been central throughout my career. Since 1995, I have had the privilege of serving and representing the United States in eight overseas assignments, as well as here in Washington, D.C., with the U.S. Agency for International Development. It has been my honor to serve the American people and advance our country's interests, promote our values and principles, and offer host-country nations a model for hope, security, and prosperity across a variety of diverse contexts. I am currently serving as the USAID Mission Director to Indonesia and ASEAN, which I resumed after filling the role of Acting Deputy Chief of Mission of Embassy Jakarta last year.

Throughout my tenure in the Foreign Service, I have successfully led our interagency and mission partners to strategically plan and—more importantly—successfully execute our development and security assistance budgets. With multiple host-country partners, I have deepened cooperation on fundamental human rights and democracy issues, including countering violent extremism, trafficking in persons, anti-corruption, maritime security and law enforcement, and people-to-people exchanges. In many places where I have served, reform and rule of law have been key to promoting human rights and democracy as well as to increasing sustainable economic growth, trade and investment. If confirmed, I will use my technical background and development expertise to guide my Country Team as they work on issues affecting Papua New Guinea, the Solomon Islands, and Vanuatu, and to tackle economic inequality, poor governance, and underdeveloped capacity, while furthering American partnerships.

Question. What are the most pressing human rights issues in Papua New Guinea, the Solomon Islands, and Vanuatu? What are the most important steps you expect to take—if confirmed—to promote human rights and democracy in Papua New Guinea, the Solomon Islands, and Vanuatu? What do you hope to accomplish through these actions?

Answer. Human rights concerns in Papua New Guinea include security force abuses; violence and discrimination against women and girls; and vigilante killings and abuses. Other problems include reports of poor prison conditions; lengthy pretrial detention; infringement of privacy rights, particularly in highland areas; government corruption; abuse and sexual exploitation of children; trafficking in persons; discrimination against persons with disabilities; intertribal violence; and ineffective enforcement of labor laws. Despite minor reforms to the justice system, the government frequently fails to hold accountable officials who commit abuses, whether in the security services or elsewhere in the government. Impunity is pervasive.

In the Solomon Islands, inter-ethnic violence among persons from different islands has been reduced greatly from previous years, but not yet eliminated. Gender-based

violence and discrimination are prevalent. Other problems include lengthy pre-trial detention and government corruption.

Discrimination and violence against women remain the most prominent human rights issues in Vanuatu. Other problems include excessive use of force by police, poor prison conditions, arbitrary arrests without warrants, an extremely slow judicial process, and government corruption. Authorities have failed at times to maintain effective control over the security forces.

As part of the Indo-Pacific Transparency Initiative, and in partnership with like-minded governments, the United States is prioritizing fiscal transparency and anti-corruption, democracy assistance, youth and emerging leader development, media and internet freedom, and fundamental freedoms and human rights.

If confirmed, I will continue to engage government counterparts regularly on human rights, democracy, and governance issues. I will promote efforts to counter corruption, empower citizens and civil society, strengthen institutional capacity, and strengthen respect for the rule of law.

Question. If confirmed, what are the potential obstacles to addressing the specific human rights issues you have identified in your previous response? What challenges will you face in Papua New Guinea, the Solomon Islands, and Vanuatu in advancing human rights, civil society and democracy in general?

Answer. Corruption at all levels and in all organs of government is a serious problem due to weak public institutions and governance, lack of transparency, politicization of the bureaucracy, and misuse of public resources by officials. Many government agencies lack adequate resources to fulfill their mandate, including the police, anticorruption agencies, and human rights bodies. These limitations, and others, will continue to be a barrier to progress on human rights in the region.

Papua New Guinea is both a source and destination country for men, women, and children subjected to sex trafficking, domestic servitude, and other forms of forced labor in logging and mining camps and on board fishing vessels. Papua New Guinea has been ranked Tier 3 in the past two Trafficking in Persons Reports—meaning that the government of Papua New Guinea is not making significant efforts to meet the minimum standards for the elimination of trafficking in the Trafficking Victims Protection Act. If confirmed, I will work to maintain pressure on the government of Papua New Guinea to address serious concerns about trafficking in persons.

Enhancing economic opportunities for women is a key priority of the United States, as reflected in the White House-led Women's Global Development and Prosperity (W-GDP) Initiative. The plight of women in Papua New Guinea is among the worst in the world. Women continue to face severe inequalities in all aspects of social, cultural, economic, and political life, and far too many women are subject to gender-based violence. If confirmed, I will strongly support equality for women and girls and promote its incorporation into all of the Embassy's work.

Question. Are you committed to meeting with human rights, civil society and other non-governmental organizations in the U.S. and with local human rights NGOs in Papua New Guinea, the Solomon Islands, and Vanuatu? If confirmed, what steps will you take to pro-actively support the Leahy Law and similar efforts, and ensure that provisions of U.S. security assistance and security cooperation activities reinforce human rights?

Answer. Yes. I am committed to meeting with human rights, civil society, and other non-governmental organizations in Papua New Guinea, the Solomon Islands, and Vanuatu. Obtaining the views of civil society is essential in understanding the country conditions, including in support of democratic institutions and respect for human rights, and plays a key role in informing and advancing U.S. foreign policy. Supporting a rules-based and transparent order that advances democratic governance and empowers civil society is a key goal of the Administration and is enshrined in our vision for a free and open Indo-Pacific. If confirmed, I will continue the embassy's strong engagement with civil society.

Advancing security force accountability and respect for human rights is a central tenet of United States diplomacy, the Indo-Pacific Transparency Initiative, and our laws governing security assistance. If confirmed, I will ensure that the Leahy Law continues to be robustly implemented in the region and that no U.S. security assistance is provided to any security force unit where there is credible information that the unit committed a gross violation of human rights.

Question. Will you and your embassy team actively engage with Papua New Guinea, the Solomon Islands, and Vanuatu to address cases of key political prisoners or persons otherwise unjustly targeted by Papua New Guinea, the Solomon Islands, and Vanuatu?

Answer. There were no reports of political prisoners or detainees in Papua New Guinea, the Solomon Islands, and Vanuatu in 2018. If confirmed, I will continue to promote the right of everyone to exercise their human rights and fundamental freedoms in the region without fear of reprisal by the government.

Question. Will you engage with Papua New Guinea, the Solomon Islands, and Vanuatu on matters of human rights, civil rights and governance as part of your bilateral mission?

Answer. Yes. If confirmed, I will work with Papua New Guinea, the Solomon Islands, and Vanuatu authorities to engage on matters of human rights, fundamental freedoms, and governance. I will also seek to exchange best practices between our governments. Good governance is a core pillar of the U.S. vision for a free and open Indo-Pacific. As part of the Indo-Pacific Transparency Initiative, the United States, with allies and partners, will promote just, transparent, and responsive governance through anti-corruption efforts while encouraging strong civil society and honest business practices. We will also continue to work with regional institutions, including the Pacific Islands Forum and APEC, to advance these shared goals and principles.

We are committed to working with all Indo-Pacific nations to create the conditions needed to instill greater attention to the importance of democracy, transparency, and good governance throughout the region. Good governance is a core pillar of the American experience and the U.S. vision for a free and open Indo-Pacific. The United States is committed to working with Indo-Pacific nations, including Papua New Guinea, the Solomon Islands, and Vanuatu, to create the conditions needed to unlock greater private investment, combat corruption, and secure nations' autonomy from malign foreign influence. We will continue to promote transparency, openness, rule of law, and the protection of human rights and fundamental freedoms.

Question. Do you commit to bring to the committee's attention (and the State Department Inspector General) any change in policy or U.S. actions that you suspect may be influenced by any of the President's business or financial interests, or the business or financial interests of any senior White House staff?

Answer. I commit to comply with all relevant federal ethics laws, regulations, and rules, and to raise concerns that I may have through appropriate channels.

Question. Do you commit to inform the committee if you have any reason to suspect that a foreign government, head of state, or foreign-controlled entity is taking any action in order to benefit any of the President's business or financial interests, or the interests of senior White House staff?

Answer. I commit to comply with all relevant federal ethics laws, regulations, and rules, and to raise concerns that I may have through appropriate channels.

Question. Do you or do any members of your immediate family have any financial interests in Papua New Guinea, the Solomon Islands, or Vanuatu?

Answer. My investment portfolio includes mutual funds that may have or acquire investments in companies in Papua New Guinea, the Solomon Islands, or Vanuatu; however, these funds are exempt from the conflict of interest rules and have been reviewed by the State Department Ethics Office. I am committed to ensuring that my official actions will not give rise to a conflict of interest. I will divest my interests in any investments the State Department Ethics Office deems necessary in the future to avoid a conflict of interest, and will remain vigilant with regard to my ethics obligations.

Question. Research from private industry demonstrates that, when managed well, diversity makes business teams better both in terms of creativity and in terms of productivity. What will you do to promote, mentor and support your staff that come from diverse backgrounds and underrepresented groups in the Foreign Service?

Answer. As Secretary Pompeo has said, we aim to recognize the diversity of our employees' rich experiences, talent, knowledge, and personal characteristics. Fostering a culture of inclusion is about creating a workplace environment in which everyone is treated with dignity and respect, where each individual is valued and empowered to thrive. If confirmed, I will draw on the Department's resources for employees, including those related to work life wellness, resilience, and employee affinity groups. As the Secretary noted when he introduced the Department's Professional Ethos Statement on April 26, respect, responsibility, and accountability are the foundation of everything we do because our greatest resource is our people.

Question. What steps will you take to ensure each of the supervisors at the Embassy are fostering an environment that is diverse and inclusive?

Answer. If confirmed, I intend to create a content and productive mission by focusing on the safety, security, and personal fulfillment of my staff, by remaining actively engaged, by extending opportunities in and out of the mission, and by listening to their needs.

As Secretary Pompeo has said, all employees should feel they work in a professional, supportive, and teamwork-oriented community where everyone can contribute to the mission, regardless of position, rank, grade, or employment status. Ours is a workplace of civility and respect. In every position that I have served, I ensured that the highest standards for accountability and integrity were set-and met. If confirmed, I will make taking care of my team and fostering a high-performing, healthy, and secure workplace a priority, with zero tolerance for misconduct, including sexual harassment.

Question. How do you believe political corruption impacts democratic governance and the rule of law generally, and in Papua New Guinea, the Solomon Islands, and Vanuatu specifically?

Answer. A key tenet of the Indo-Pacific Strategy is to support good governance, including anti-corruption measures. In November 2018, Vice President Pence announced the Indo-Pacific Transparency Initiative in Papua New Guinea. It dedicates $400 million over two years to empower the Indo-Pacific region's citizens, help combat corruption, and strengthen nations' sovereignty in order to achieve the goals of sound, just, and responsive governance.

We are doing so, in partnership with like-minded governments, by prioritizing fiscal transparency and anti-corruption, democracy assistance, youth and emerging leader development, media and internet freedom, and fundamental freedoms and human rights.

In September 2018, USAID initiated a three-year project to advance citizen-responsive democratic governance in Pacific Island countries, empower traditionally marginalized stakeholders, promote transparency and accountability in elections and government, and, where appropriate, promote regional cooperation to share best practices across the region.

Question. What is your assessment of corruption trends in Papua New Guinea, the Solomon Islands, and Vanuatu and efforts to address and reduce it by those governments?

Answer. Embassy Port Moresby regularly engages PNG government officials on the importance of sound, just, and responsive governance characterized by transparent and rules-based systems, inclusion in decision-making by civil society partners and marginalized communities, and strong institutions. The embassy has been a strong force behind PNG joining the Extractive Industries Transparency Initiative (EITI), which aims to decrease corruption by making revenues and expenditures in the extractive sector public information. We also support the participation of the Solomon Islands in the EITI.

We work with the Solomon Islands through regional institutions that promote good governance, respect for international law, and collaboration with international partners. One such organization, the Pacific Islands Forum Fisheries Agency (FFA), maintains its headquarters in Honiara, the capital of the Solomon Islands, and presents an opportunity for the Solomon Islands government to demonstrate good governance and capable institutional capacity. The United States' overarching goal is a strong partnership with Vanuatu based on mutual respect, shared values, and shared concerns on global issues, including good governance, and transparent and democratic institutions.

Question. If confirmed, what steps will you take to strengthen good governance and anticorruption programming in Papua New Guinea, the Solomon Islands, and Vanuatu?

Answer. In November 2018, Vice President Pence announced the Indo-Pacific Transparency Initiative in Papua New Guinea. It dedicates $400 million over two years to empower the Indo-Pacific region's citizens, help combat corruption, and strengthen nations' sovereignty in order to achieve the goals of sound, just, and responsive governance.

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and government, and, where appropriate, promote regional cooperation to share best practices across the region.

RESPONSES TO ADDITIONAL QUESTIONS FOR THE RECORD
SUBMITTED TO ANTHONY F. GODFREY BY SENATOR ROBERT MENENDEZ

Question. What is the current U.S. position on Serbia-Kosovo negotiations? What is the U.S. position on land swaps specifically as part of a future agreement?

Answer. The United States continues to strongly support the European Union-facilitated Dialogue between Kosovo and Serbia. The goal of this process is a comprehensive normalization agreement that paves the way for both countries' further Euro-Atlantic integration. Ideally, the agreement will focus on mutual recognition. The United States is ready to help the parties in any way as they engage in negotiations. Both Belgrade and Pristina must demonstrate flexibility and a spirit of compromise in order to secure a deal, which would advance stability, security, and prosperity in the Western Balkan region.

The United States will seriously consider an agreement that is locally owned, durable, implementable, and contributes to regional stability. The United States is not advocating for any particular solution. However, the status quo is unsustainable, inherently unstable, and enables external malign influence to prevent the countries of the region from pursuing their stated desire of further integration with Euro-Atlantic institutions.

Question. How would you assess (1) the prospects of land swaps happening and (2) the impact of land swaps, both within the two countries and regionally?

Answer. While the United States has continuously supported the EU-facilitated Dialogue, and stands ready to support the parties in any way that would be helpful, the United States has not been at the negotiating table and has seen no formal, specific proposals regarding border adjustments between the countries.

The United States is not advocating for any specific solution to normalize relations between Kosovo and Serbia, beyond our support for a comprehensive agreement, ideally centered on mutual recognition. We expect that a comprehensive agreement would be multidimensional, involving political, economic, and security aspects. To be successful, a deal must be acceptable to the people of both countries and implementable on the ground.

Sovereign countries can decide to adjust their borders by mutual consent. We recognize that border adjustments in any region or context involve complex political, economic, social, and security issues. Changing borders in the Western Balkans poses serious potential concerns. However, the status quo is inherently unstable, and poses numerous risks to stability. Kosovo and Serbia may decide that agreed border adjustments are a part of a comprehensive normalization agreement. If they do, the United States will look seriously at any proposal and make clear any concerns that we may have.

Question. What is the level and nature of Ambassador Richard Grennell's involvement in the Serbia-Kosovo negotiations? Please list the meetings that he has had with leadership from Serbia and Kosovo over the past year. In your response, please do not refer us to the U.S. Embassy in Berlin.

Answer. The United States supports the EU-facilitated Dialogue between Kosovo and Serbia, but is not a party to the negotiations. Ambassador Grenell and his team met with Kosovo President Thaci in December 2018, at Thaci's request, when he was in Berlin to see German officials. Grenell, the Deputy Chief of Mission, and Embassy Berlin political officers also met with the President of Kosovo, the Prime Minister of Kosovo, and the Foreign Minister of Kosovo, at their request, at the U.S. Embassy when they were in Berlin in April 2019, for a Balkans Summit meeting hosted by German Chancellor Merkel and French President Macron.

In all of these meetings, Ambassador Grenell and U.S. Embassy staff reiterated President Trump's message of support for a comprehensive normalization agreement between Kosovo and Serbia, and encouraged the Kosovo officials to drop the sanctions they had placed on Serbia, as per official U.S. policy. Ambassador Grenell also encouraged the Kosovo officials to understand that dropping the sanctions could revive constructive Dialogue negotiations between the parties.

Question. Has President Trump personally engaged in the Serbia-Kosovo negotiations since his December 2018 letters to President Vucic and President Thaci? If

yes, please describe the nature of that engagement. In your response, please do not refer us to the White House.

Answer. Beyond his December 2018 letters, President Trump also made clear in statements to both Kosovo and Serbia, on the occasion of their respective National Days, that the United States supports a comprehensive normalization agreement centered on mutual recognition. President Trump and the Administration continue to support a comprehensive agreement between Serbia and Kosovo and will remain actively engaged with the parties and our European partners. If confirmed, I plan to work closely with the White House and government agencies to support such an agreement.

Question. I am deeply disturbed by the recent delivery of armored reconnaissance vehicles from Russia to Serbia. How many vehicles did Serbia receive in this shipment? By what route were the vehicles transported to Serbia? How much did Serbia pay for the vehicles, and how much money did the Russian government contribute towards the purchase?

Answer. The government of Serbia acknowledged that on July 19, 2019, it received 10 BRDM-2MS wheeled armored vehicles from Russia—an upgraded variant of a vehicle long in Serbia's inventory. Press reports indicate that these items were delivered by air via Hungarian airspace. The Serbian government has not released any information about costs or payments for transports and upgrades, but the vehicles were reportedly donated as part of a larger deal with Russia for MiG-29s and T-72 main battle tanks, announced in 2016.

I am not able to pre-judge whether or not this or any specific transaction would result in sanctions under Section 231 of the Countering America's Adversaries Through Sanctions Act (CAATSA) prior to the Secretary of State's determination. However, as the Department has said publicly, the Secretary of State will consider the totality of the facts and circumstances surrounding the transaction and weigh various factors on a case-by-case basis in determining whether a transaction is "significant" for purposes of CAATSA.

If confirmed as Ambassador, I will continue to emphasize to the government of Serbia the heightened risk of sanctions associated with procuring Russian equipment and the vulnerabilities created by its dependence on Russia.

Question. Please provide a list of military equipment Russia has delivered to Serbia since January 2017, as well as a list of Serbia's signed contracts for future deliveries of military equipment and expected dates of delivery. Answer can be provided in classified format if necessary.

Answer. Press reports indicate that Russia has agreed to supply Serbia with additional military equipment, but reports differ on the numbers and types. Equipment recently reported in the press includes 20 additional BRDM-2MS armored wheeled vehicles, 30 used T-72 main battle tanks, and Pantsir-S1 air defense systems.

In July 2019, Serbia acknowledged receiving a donation from Russia of 10 BRDM-2MS wheeled armored vehicles, an upgraded variant of a vehicle already in Serbia's inventory. The same month, Serbia's Ministry of Defense reported that Serbia had received a total of 45,000 euros worth of unspecified military assistance from Russia. Serbian Defense Minister Aleksandar Vulin has also indicated that Serbia expects to take delivery of three purchased Mi-17 transport and four Mi-35 attack helicopters from Russia by the end of 2019 or the beginning of 2020. Russia donated six used, non-flight worthy MiG-29 fighter aircraft to Serbia in October 2017. The Serbian Air Force formally took delivery of the refurbished aircraft in two separate tranches in August and October 2018. While Serbia has long maintained these aircraft in its inventory, it is paying Russia approximately $205 million for the refurbishment and upgrade of the six donated airframes.

If confirmed as Ambassador, I will continue to emphasize to the government of Serbia the heightened risk of sanctions associated with procuring Russian equipment and the vulnerabilities created by its dependence on Russia.

Question. Please provide an accounting of the number of military exercises the U.S. has conducted with Serbia since January 2017 and an accounting of the number of military exercises Russia has conducted with Serbia since January 2017.

Answer. Serbia regularly participates in major bilateral and multilateral exercises organized both by U.S. European Command and the Ohio National Guard, Serbia's National Guard State Partner. Since January 2017, Serbia has participated in 17 exercises, ten of which were led by USEUCOM and seven by the Ohio National Guard. Significantly, during this period Serbia hosted NATO's largest Euro-Atlantic Disaster Response Coordination Center (EADRCC) exercise to date, involving approximately 2,000 participants from thirty NATO Allied and partner nations.

Since 2017, Serbia has participated in ten exercises with Russia: most significantly 2017's ZAPAD-2017, and three times each in three separate annual exercises: Brotherhood of Aviators of Russia and Serbia (BARS), Slavic Brotherhood, and the Russian International Tank Biathlon.

Question. I remain concerned about the true nature of the "Russian-Serbian Humanitarian Center" in Nis and Russia's attempts to get diplomatic status for the Center and its employees, which would preclude inspection of the Center's activities. Please provide an assessment of Russian intelligence personnel presence at the 'Russian-Serbian Humanitarian Center.' Answer can be provided in classified format if necessary.

Answer. Russia maintains a joint Humanitarian Center in the southern Serbian city of Nis and has repeatedly pressed to have the facility granted diplomatic status. Many fear that this could give Moscow a foothold for further subversive activities in the region. The United States and our European Allies have expressed our concerns regarding Moscow's request to the Serbian government on a number of occasions. Thus far the Serbian government has not granted the facility diplomatic status. If confirmed, I will continue to engage with Serbia's leaders to express our serious concerns about the ways in which the facility might be misused.

Question. How many American Corners are in Serbia, and in which cities do they exist? Please describe in detail your plans to expand the American Corners' work to discuss U.S. policies and promote connections between the U.S. and the people of Serbia.

Answer. Since 2003, Mission Serbia has established eight American Corners: in Belgrade, Novi Sad, Nis, Kragujevac, Subotica, Novi Pazar, Vranje and Bujanovac. Visited by roughly 9,000 Serbians each month, these American Corners are an essential outreach and engagement tool. They offer the Serbian public a welcoming place to learn and practice English; exchange ideas; discuss and debate issues important to both our countries; and explore American history, culture, and society. They contribute to greater awareness of U.S. policies, and strengthen the critical thinking and media literacy skills of program participants, particularly among Serbia's youth population.

If confirmed, I will continue the work the team at Embassy Belgrade has begun to more closely tie American Corner programming into our Integrated Country Strategy goals. This includes promoting economic vitality, rule of law, and stable democratic institutions. I will continue to focus on youth engagement to promote robust political participation, media literacy, small business development, and civil society expansion.

Question. What are the most important actions you have taken in your career to date to support democracy and human rights? What has been the impact of your actions?

Answer. Promoting respect for human rights is a priority for the Trump Administration and it would be a central focus of my work in Serbia, if I am confirmed. From my first assignment as Human Rights Officer in Belarus, through assignments in Chechnya, Croatia, Armenia, Turkey, Iraq, and Russia, I have made human rights work a high priority.

In Belarus, my work to highlight the abuses of the government won consistent praise from human rights advocates. In Croatia, our team helped authorities carry out free and fair elections, paving the way for NATO and EU membership. In Armenia, my team's work to improve protections for victims of trafficking produced concrete results. In Iraq, my consistent work with the fledgling Central Elections Commission helped pave the way for parliamentary elections, which won praise from international observers. In Moscow, despite an adversarial environment, my teams brought international attention to a deteriorating human rights environment, and in particular to the erosion of respect for the right of all individuals to practice the religion or belief of their choice.

Question. What issues are the most pressing challenges to democracy or democratic development in Serbia? These challenges might include obstacles to participatory and accountable governance and institutions, rule of law, authentic political competition, civil society, human rights and press freedom. Please be as specific as possible.

Answer. As the 2018 Serbia Human Rights Report noted, government corruption, violence against journalists, undue government interference with the press, and violence against LGBTI individuals are among the most serious human rights concerns in Serbia. Additionally, police brutality and intimidation, harsh prison conditions, domestic and social violence, and discrimination against persons belonging to reli-

gious and ethnic minorities remain serious challenges in Serbia. Finally, Serbia must make progress in resolving historical war crimes cases.

If confirmed, I will press the government of Serbia to address these problems at all levels. Robust engagement with civil society organizations can provide important perspectives on the reforms needed to address these challenges in Serbia. If confirmed, I will work with my team to encourage Serbia's government to engage with civil society and to accelerate the passage and full implementation of proposed reforms, through democratic processes, in line with Serbia's EU accession process. I will continue to use U.S. assistance programs in Serbia to support democratic institutions, address human rights issues, and promote justice and accountability, including through support to civil society organizations working on issues such as anti-corruption, government transparency, media freedom, safety of journalists, and access to the justice system, as well as a range of protection and advocacy issues for members of minority communities.

Question. What steps will you take—if confirmed—to support democracy in Serbia? What do you hope to accomplish through these actions? What are the potential impediments to addressing the specific obstacles you have identified?

Answer. One of the major obstacles to addressing human rights challenges in Serbia is the deteriorating media environment. A free and independent media is critical for any democratic society. Despite a constitution that guarantees freedom of expression, including for members of the press, media freedom in Serbia continues to be undermined by threats and attacks on journalists, lawsuits and criminal charges against journalists or the threat thereof, lack of transparency in media ownership, the opaque process for awarding government media grants, and editorial pressure from politicians and politically connected media owners. These factors contribute to significant self-censorship by journalists and media outlets. The Serbian public deserves information from independent sources in order to empower and support civil society voices seeking to hold Serbia's leaders to account. If confirmed, I will speak out about these issues whenever we see problems and continue to press for true media freedom and media plurality in Serbia.

Question. How will you utilize U.S. government assistance resources at your disposal, including the Democracy Commission Small Grants program and other sources of State Department and USAID funding, to support democracy and governance, and what will you prioritize in processes to administer such assistance?

Answer. With the generous support of the U.S. Congress and the American taxpayer, Embassy Belgrade has used Assistance to Eastern Europe and Central Asia (AEECA) funding to support democracy and governance in Serbia, including through USAID programs and, on a smaller scale, through Democracy Commission small grants. For example, USAID is undertaking a new program in Serbia, which aims to improve political processes by working with the government, political parties, and civil society to strengthen key democratic institutions. If confirmed, I will continue to look for ways we can help Serbia work toward a fully democratic, open, and transparent political environment.

Corruption poses a particularly serious threat to Serbia's democracy and governance, and many of our assistance program focus on anti-corruption as a key element of our mission goals. For example, U.S. assistance supports Serbia's recently formed specialized anti-corruption and economic crimes prosecutorial and police departments. Over the past year, Serbia has made some progress in prosecuting corruption cases involving police and municipal officials, but much work remains, particularly in tackling high-level corruption and money laundering.

If confirmed, I will lead Mission Serbia in continuing to emphasize the need for law enforcement, prosecutorial, and judicial institutions to work proactively, independently, transparently, and efficiently. I will endeavor to ensure that Serbia's anti-corruption efforts go further than the enforcement actions we have seen today, which have too often focused on low-level officials. Serbia needs to develop the capability, desire, and resolve to investigate and prosecute high-level cases of corruption in order to show would-be violators that they will be held accountable and restore the confidence of all Serbians. Journalists and civic activists have a crucial role to play in promoting government accountability, and we need to ensure their voices are heard. If confirmed, I will continue to address corruption also by supporting the development of Serbia's civil society and a robust independent media sector.

Question. If confirmed, do you commit to engaging with democratically-oriented members of the opposition?

Answer. Serbia's constitution provides for the democratic rights of peaceful assembly and freedom of expression. As such, everyone in Serbia should be able to voice their concerns with the government without fear, including through peaceful pro-

test. A robust opposition is crucial for democracy and I will encourage the ruling party to hold a constructive dialogue with the opposition and find a compromise to end the ongoing boycott of parliament. If confirmed, I will commit to engaging with a wide range of Serbian officials and civil society actors, to include members of the full spectrum of Serbia's opposition parties.

Question. If confirmed, do you commit to meet with civil society members, human rights and other non-governmental organizations in the U.S. and with local human rights NGOs, and other members of civil society in Serbia? What steps will you take to pro-actively address efforts to restrict or penalize NGOs and civil society via legal or regulatory measures?

Answer. If confirmed, I will continue the Embassy's practice of meeting with human rights organizations and other civil society groups, from all communities, on a regular basis and empowering their voices in policy debates. Additionally, I will work with the Embassy team to continue support for human rights NGOs and activists through the Democracy Commission and other programs.

If confirmed, I will encourage the government to pursue a transparent legislative process and consult with civil society on new legislation, as required by Serbian law. Serbian civil society has an impressive history of catalyzing societal change, and it is in our interest to ensure the government sees civil society not as a threat, but as a partner to help advance Serbia's development in the 21st century. The development of both a robust civil society and an independent media in Serbia are essential drivers for EU accession-related reforms in Serbia, as well as a healthy society that is responsive to citizens' needs.

Question. If confirmed, do you commit to meet with democratically oriented political opposition figures and parties? What steps will you take to encourage genuine political competition? Will you advocate for access and inclusivity for women, minorities and youth within political parties?

Answer. If confirmed, I will engage interlocutors across the political spectrum to encourage constructive dialogue between the government and opposition. The aim will be to address serious concerns that citizens have raised, including facilitating democratic debate and improving the electoral system.

Many of the calls for reforms have merit, including calls to ensure free and fair elections, and to strengthen press freedoms. There are both administrative measures and legislative processes through which these concerns should be addressed. If confirmed, I will continue to support efforts to increase the capacities of political parties and civil society to promote broader representation within government. U.S. assistance programs in Serbia to address human rights include grants to civil society organizations that work on a range of protection and advocacy issues for members of minority communities.

Question. Will you and your embassy team actively engage with Serbia on freedom of the press and address any government efforts designed to control or undermine press freedom through legal, regulatory or other measures? Will you commit to meeting regularly with independent, local press in Serbia?

Answer. One of the major obstacles to addressing human rights challenges in Serbia is the deteriorating media environment. A free and independent media is critical for any democratic society. Despite a constitution that guarantees media freedom in Serbia, this right continues to be undermined by threats and attacks on journalists; lawsuits and criminal charges against journalists or the threat thereof; lack of transparency in media ownership; the opaque process for awarding government media grants; and editorial pressure from politicians and politically connected media owners. These factors contribute to significant self-censorship by journalists and media outlets. The Serbian public deserves independent sources of information in order to empower and support civil society voices seeking to hold Serbia's leaders to account.

If confirmed, I will speak out about these issues whenever we see problems and continue to press for true media freedom and media plurality in Serbia. I will continue the Embassy's robust engagement with both individual journalists and Serbia's leading media associations. The Embassy will also continue to be a voice in publicly condemning acts of political suppression and threats of violence against the media, which journalists in Serbia acknowledge is critically important.

Question. Will you and your embassy team actively engage with civil society and government counterparts on countering disinformation and propaganda disseminated by foreign state or non-state actors in the country?

Answer. The United States is committed to helping Serbia advance the reforms needed to continue its Euro-Atlantic integration while countering Russian efforts to

derail this integration. In particular, U.S. foreign assistance helps Serbia improve media freedom, anti-corruption and government transparency, access to the justice system, as well as a range of advocacy issues.

Moscow is looking to expand its malign influence throughout the Western Balkans, including in Serbia. Our assistance also helps to counter vulnerabilities that make Serbia susceptible to Russian malign influence by strengthening judicial institutions; combatting organized crime; reducing avenues for corruption, including in the economic sector; and supporting exchange programs to bolster civic participation and civil society.

We regularly emphasize to Serbian leaders the need for democratic reforms, especially in strengthening the rule of law and media freedom. We also point out the importance of policy choices reflecting western values. This will help Serbia move forward in the EU accession process, as well as to build resilience against malign influence campaigns carried out by actors such as Russia.

Question. Will you and your embassy teams actively engage with Serbia on the right of labor groups to organize, including for independent trade unions?

Answer. If confirmed, I will continue actively engaging Serbia on strengthening labor rights in Serbia. Part of the nearly $1 billion in U.S. assistance to Serbia since 2001 has supported the government's efforts to develop stronger economic institutions, including fair labor laws, effective inspections, a more effective judiciary, a reduction in the grey economy, and introduction of electronic construction permits, which was a factor in Serbia's breakthrough into the top 50 countries on the World Bank's "Doing Business" list.

As the 2018 Serbia Human Rights Report noted, independent trade unions are able to organize and address management in state-owned companies on behalf of their members. There were, however, some allegations of anti-union dismissals and discrimination. We will continue engaging NGOs working to increase labor rights awareness, such as for groups facing employment discrimination.

Question. Will you commit to using your position, if confirmed, to defend the human rights and dignity of all people in Serbia, no matter their sexual orientation or gender identity? What challenges do the lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender and queer (LGBTQ) people face in Serbia? What specifically will you commit to do to help LGBTQ people in Serbia?

Answer. Violence targeting LGBTI individuals is among the most serious human rights concerns in Serbia. As the 2018 Serbia Human Rights Report noted, there were 500,000 LGBTI persons in the country, according to civil society organizations. Credible NGOs noted a lack of significant progress in establishing dialogue, educating the public on LGBTI issues, and addressing hate crimes and bias-motivated violence. In addition, LGBTI persons in Serbia face widespread discrimination in housing, the workplace, and in public life. If confirmed, I would engage the government at all levels on behalf of LGBTI individuals in Serbia. I would ensure that independent oversight bodies designed to protect human rights, such as the Commissioner for the Protection of Equality, are empowered to aggressively pursue their mandates. I would also remind the government that a lack of progress on protecting the rights of LGBTI persons imperils Serbia's EU accession and will make it increasingly difficult for Serbia to attract foreign direct investment. If confirmed, I will commit to upholding the rights of LGBTI individuals in our broader embassy assistance and outreach programs.

Question. If a foreign person or government approaches you or a staffer at the embassy with derogatory information on a U.S. political figure, what is your understanding of official State Department policy on how to handle it? In the wake of President Trump's comments welcoming such information, it is important that the State Department have clear guidance for all of its personnel on how to deal with such scenarios. Has a cable with clear guidance on how to handle this situation been sent to all U.S. embassies?

Answer. Pursuant to Foreign Affairs Manual Chapter 12, Section 262—'Security Awareness and Contact Reporting'—U.S. Department of State policy mandates that all employees and contractors report any contact that prompts concern that he or she may be the target of actual or attempted exploitation by a foreign entity. At the embassy, any such contact must be reported as soon as possible to the embassy's Regional Security Officer. Cleared U.S. employees are required to take annual training "EX 250 Annual Counter Intelligence Awareness," which reviews these reporting requirements pursuant to the Foreign Affairs Manual section Chapter 12, Section 262. The Department has sent cables to all diplomatic and consular posts with clear guidance about this training and reporting requirement, in addition to Department notices distributed domestically.

Question. Do you agree that any targeting of or retaliation against career employees based on their perceived political beliefs, prior work on policy, or affiliation with a previous administration, is wholly inappropriate and has no place in the federal government? If confirmed, what will you do to ensure that all employees under your leadership understand that any retaliation, blacklisting, or other prohibited personnel practices will not be tolerated?

Answer. If confirmed, I will work to prevent any attempts to target or retaliate against career employees on the basis of their perceived political beliefs, prior work on policy, or affiliation with a previous administration. I take allegations of such practices seriously and will ensure they are referred to the Department's Inspector General.

Question. Has anyone ever made a formal or informal complaint or allegation of sexual harassment, discrimination (e.g., racial, ethnic, religious, etc.), or inappropriate conduct against you, in a workplace or any other setting? If so, please describe the nature of the complaint or allegation, your response, and any resolution, including any settlements.

Answer. I take the issues of sexual harassment, discrimination, and inappropriate conduct with the utmost seriousness. Throughout my career, I have immediately addressed any issues raised to me in accordance with the Department of State's policies. During my tenure as Minister-Counselor for Political Affairs at U.S. Embassy Moscow, an employee raised complaints about management decisions made by Embassy leadership, including me, to the Department's Inspector General and the Office of Special Counsel. I cooperated fully in responding to requests for information in this matter and there was no finding that I engaged in any wrongdoing. My understanding is that the matter is now closed. I take workplace conduct issues very seriously and will continue to hold staff to the highest standard.

Question. Have you ever addressed concerns or allegations of sexual harassment, discrimination (e.g., racial, ethnic, religious, etc.), or inappropriate conduct made against any employee over whom you had supervisory authority? If so, please describe the outcome and actions taken.

Answer. I take the issues of sexual harassment, discrimination, and inappropriate conduct with the utmost seriousness and throughout my career, I have immediately addressed any issues raised to me in accordance with the Department of State's policies, including encouraging any employee who feels they have been harassed or discriminated against to report such behavior to any supervisor under my management or the Department's Office of Civil Rights.

RESPONSES TO ADDITIONAL QUESTIONS FOR THE RECORD
SUBMITTED TO ANTHONY F. GODFREY BY SENATOR BENJAMIN L. CARDIN

Question. What are your most meaningful achievements to date in your career to promote human rights and democracy? What has been the impact of your actions?

Answer. Promoting respect for human rights is a priority for the Trump Administration and, if confirmed, it would be a central focus of my work in Serbia. From my first assignment as Human Rights Officer in Belarus, through assignments in Chechnya, Croatia, Armenia, Turkey, Iraq, and Russia, I have made human rights work a high priority.

In Belarus, my work to highlight the abuses of the government won consistent praise from human rights advocates. In Croatia, our team helped authorities carry out free and fair elections, paving the way for NATO and EU membership. In Armenia, my team's work to improve protections for victims of trafficking produced concrete results. In Iraq, my consistent work with the fledgling Central Elections Commission helped pave the way for parliamentary elections which won praise from international observers. In Moscow, despite an adversarial environment, my teams brought international attention to a deteriorating human rights environment, and in particular to the erosion of respect for the right of all individuals to practice the religion or belief of their choice.

Question. What are the most pressing human rights issues in Serbia? What are the most important steps you expect to take—if confirmed—to promote human rights and democracy in Serbia? What do you hope to accomplish through these actions?

Answer. As the 2018 Serbia Human Rights Report noted, government corruption, violence against journalists, undue government interference with the press, and

crimes—including violence—targeting LGBTI individuals are among the most serious human rights concerns in Serbia. Additionally, police brutality and intimidation, harsh prison conditions, domestic and social violence, and discrimination against persons belonging to religious and ethnic minorities remain serious challenges in Serbia. Serbia must also accelerate progress in resolving historical war crimes cases.

If confirmed, I will press the government of Serbia to address these problems at all levels. Robust engagement with civil society organizations can provide important perspectives on the reforms needed to address these challenges in Serbia. If confirmed, my team and I will encourage Serbia's government to engage in dialogue with civil society and to accelerate the adoption and full implementation of proposed reforms, through democratic means, in line with Serbia's EU accession process. I will continue to use U.S. assistance programs in Serbia to support democratic institutions, address human rights issues, and promote justice and accountability, including through support to civil society organizations working on issues such as anti-corruption, government transparency, media freedom, safety of journalists, and access to the justice system, as well as a range of protection and advocacy issues for members of minority communities.

Question. If confirmed, what are the potential obstacles to addressing the specific human rights issues you have identified in your previous response? What challenges will you face in Serbia in advancing human rights, civil society and democracy in general?

Answer. One of the major challenges to addressing human rights challenges in Serbia is the deteriorating media environment. A free and independent media is critical for any democratic society. Despite a constitution that guarantees freedom of expression, including for members of the press, media freedom in Serbia continues to be undermined by threats and attacks on journalists, lawsuits and criminal charges against journalists or the threat thereof, lack of transparency in media ownership, the opaque process for awarding government media grants, and editorial pressure from politicians and politically connected media owners. These factors contribute to significant self-censorship by journalists and media outlets. The Serbian public deserves information from independent sources in order to empower and support civil society voices seeking to hold Serbia's leaders to account. If confirmed, I will speak out about these issues whenever we see problems and continue to press for true media freedom and media plurality in Serbia.

Question. Are you committed to meeting with human rights, civil society and other non-governmental organizations in the U.S. and with local human rights NGOs in Kosovo? If confirmed, what steps will you take to pro-actively support the Leahy Law and similar efforts, and ensure that provisions of U.S. security assistance and security cooperation activities reinforce human rights?

Answer. If confirmed, I will continue the Embassy's practice of meeting with human rights organizations and other civil society groups—from all communities—on a regular basis and empowering their voices in policy debates. The development of a robust civil society in Serbia and a robust, independent media is an essential driver for the EU accession-related reform efforts in Serbia, as well as a healthy society that is responsive to citizens' needs. The Embassy's implementation of the Leahy Law and other vetting programs is robust, drawing on diverse information to ensure that security assistance and cooperation are consistent with U.S. law and in line with U.S. advocacy on human rights issues.

Question. Will you and your embassy team actively engage with Serbia to address cases of key political prisoners or persons otherwise unjustly targeted by Serbia?

Answer. As noted in the 2018 Human Rights Report, there are no reports of political prisoners or detainees in Serbia. If confirmed, I will ensure the Embassy team engages with Serbian officials to address such issues, if they arise.

Question. Will you engage with Serbia on matters of human rights, civil rights and governance as part of your bilateral mission?

Answer. If confirmed, I will continue to encourage Serbia to improve human rights, civil rights, and governance through both political advocacy and programming. Accelerating these efforts is essential to Serbia's progress in its European Union accession process, as well as improving the quality of life for Serbians. If confirmed, I will work to ensure Serbia energetically, sincerely, and comprehensively pursues the reforms to which it has committed under its EU accession plan.

Question. Do you commit to bring to the committee's attention (and the State Department Inspector General) any change in policy or U.S. actions that you suspect

may be influenced by any of the President's business or financial interests, or the business or financial interests of any senior White House staff?

Answer. I commit to comply with all relevant federal ethics laws, regulations, and rules, and to raise concerns that I may have through appropriate channels.

Question. Do you commit to inform the committee if you have any reason to suspect that a foreign government, head of state, or foreign-controlled entity is taking any action in order to benefit any of the President's business or financial interests, or the interests of senior White House staff?

Answer. I commit to comply with all relevant federal ethics laws, regulations, and rules, and to raise concerns that I may have through appropriate channels.

Question. Do you or do any members of your immediate family have any financial interests in Serbia?

Answer. My investment portfolio includes diversified mutual funds, which may hold interests in companies with a presence in Serbia, but which are exempt from the conflict of interest laws. I am committed to ensuring that my official actions will not give rise to a conflict of interest and will remain vigilant with regard to my ethics obligations.

Question. Research from private industry demonstrates that, when managed well, diversity makes business teams better both in terms of creativity and in terms of productivity. What will you do to promote, mentor and support your staff that come from diverse backgrounds and underrepresented groups in the Foreign Service?

Answer. I am committed to leading a workforce that reflects the diverse people and values that we represent in the United States, as I have done throughout my career. Diversity is and will remain a top Department priority. As the face of America overseas, the people in our embassy should represent our country's richness and diversity-it demonstrates our commitment to inclusion as well as acceptance and respect for all people.

If confirmed, as Ambassador in Belgrade, I will invest in a skilled, diverse workforce ready to lead. This includes recruiting a diverse workforce. If confirmed I will encourage the Embassy Human Resources team and post's hiring supervisors to recruit equitably from a diverse, qualified group of potential applicants.

Mentoring is paramount in changing and encouraging behaviors. If confirmed I will strive to serve as a role model demonstrating the Department's expectations regarding diversity and inclusion, and I will expect the same from all of post's supervisors.

The Department has invested in important diversity and leadership training programs in support of the ethos of the State Department. If confirmed, I will ensure that all post employees receive this training and exemplify this ethos.

Question. What steps will you take to ensure each of the supervisors at the Embassy are fostering an environment that is diverse and inclusive?

Answer. Inclusion and diversity cannot exist unless the entire team is committed. If confirmed, I will work to ensure structures and strategies—including but not limited to training—equip leaders with the knowledge and ability to manage diversity, be accountable, measure results, and engender a culture of inclusion. I will work to ensure that all employees at Embassy Belgrade model the State Department's ethos in word and deed. Embassy events will include open forums for discussion on various aspects of inclusion, such as engaging underrepresented groups and various religious institutions, as appropriate.

Question. How do you believe political corruption impacts democratic governance and the rule of law generally, and in Serbia specifically?

Answer. Despite some progress, corruption remains the most significant rule of law issue in Serbia, hampering its democratic and economic development, spurring emigration, and impeding access to justice. Not only does corruption limit the willingness of investors to commit funding to the country, it also weakens public confidence in Serbia's judicial institutions and democracy.

Corruption—and related threats, such as money laundering—make Serbia vulnerable to malign external actors who aim to undermine Serbia's independence and democratic institutions.

If Serbia does not make progress in its efforts to combat corruption, it risks undermining forward movement across the range of rule-of-law reforms and in its EU accession process.

Question. What is your assessment of corruption trends in Serbia and efforts to address and reduce it by that government?

Answer. There are widespread perceptions in Serbia that the law is not implemented consistently or systematically and high-level officials engage in corrupt practices with impunity. While some progress has been made in the government's fight against corruption, including the establishment of specialized anti-corruption and economic crimes prosecutorial units, as well as corresponding judicial and police units that focus on corruption and financial crimes, evidence of senior-level government corruption persists. We are assisting the government of Serbia in improving its legal framework for fighting corruption and in preventing corruption through transparency at all levels of government, but government anti-corruption entities such as the Anti-Corruption Agency lack personnel and are not adequately integrated into judicial entities. If confirmed, I will lead my team in addressing the government's shortcomings to more effectively combat corruption, including through targeted technical assistance.

Question. If confirmed, what steps will you take to strengthen good governance and anticorruption programming in Serbia?

Answer. U.S. assistance supports Serbia's recently formed specialized anti-corruption and economic crimes prosecutorial and police departments. Over the past year Serbia has made some progress in prosecuting corruption cases involving police and municipal officials, however much work remains, particularly in tackling high-level corruption and money laundering.

If confirmed, I will lead Mission Serbia in continuing to emphasize the need for law enforcement and prosecutorial and judicial institutions to work proactively, independently, transparently, and efficiently. Journalists and civic activists have a crucial role to play in promoting government accountability, and if confirmed, I will continue to address corruption by supporting the development of Serbia's civil society and a robust independent media sector.

Question. Twenty years ago, the three Bytyqi brothers—all American citizens—were murdered while in the custody of Serbian Interior Ministry officials. Earlier Serbian promises, including by President Aleksandar Vucic, have not been fulfilled and, indeed, have been replaced by increasingly belligerent responses to a reasonable request for justice:

- If confirmed as ambassador, will you use every opportunity to raise this case with Serbian officials at the most senior level, and to express publicly our demand for justice irrespective of any other issue in our bilateral relationship?

Answer. The United States remains seriously concerned about the lack of progress made by Serbian officials in this case. If confirmed, I will not waver in seeking justice and accountability for the murder of Ylli, Agron, and Mehmet Bytyqi. I am committed to pressing the Serbian government to complete a thorough investigation and ensure that all who were involved in these crimes are brought to justice, regardless of rank or position.

If confirmed, I will also continue to emphasize the longstanding U.S. position that Serbia must credibly investigate and prosecute remaining cases related to the conflicts in the Balkans and cooperate with neighboring countries and the United Nations to ensure justice for the victims.

Question. A ruling Serbian Progressive Party member of the Serbian parliament recently tweeted the following: "I want to congratulate the Serbian people on the day of the liberation of Srebrenica. Thanks to General Ratko Mladic on the brilliantly conducted military operation." The United States and the international community consider that "liberation" to have been a genocide, the massacre of about 8,000 men and boys in July 1995. Serbian Defense Minister Aleksandar Vulin also recently said that "the Serbian people survived genocide rather than committed it," effectively denying that the Srebrenica genocide took place:

- What will you do as ambassador to counter official Serbian efforts to revise the history of the 1990s, especially given the U.S. role in the Balkans at that time?

Answer. The Department of State remains deeply concerned by any denial of crimes committed during the Balkan conflicts of the 1990s or any refusal to accept historical facts established by international courts. Serbia is a political and economic leader in the Western Balkans. As such, Serbia has the responsibility to foster regional stability, reconciliation, and cooperation. Historical revisionism and veneration of convicted war criminals, such as Ratko Mladic, foster a climate of division and hatred, diminish the suffering of victims, are detrimental to Serbia's relationships with its neighbors, and undermine regional reconciliation. If confirmed, I will champion historical truth and push political and civil society leaders in Serbia to acknowledge the genocide in Srebrenica, to condemn instances of historical revi-

sionism, and to play a responsible role in advancing security, stability, and prosperity for the Western Balkans.

RESPONSES TO ADDITIONAL QUESTIONS FOR THE RECORD
SUBMITTED TO ANTHONY F. GODFREY BY SENATOR JEANNE SHAHEEN

Question. As part of its Belt and Road initiative, China has been investing billions of dollars in Serbia. Russia also continues to hold considerable influence over Serbia. In your view, how can U.S. and EU leaders ensure that Serbia, if it were to become a member of the European Union or eventually NATO, would not be susceptible to Russian and Chinese manipulation? As Ambassador, how would you mitigate that risk?

Answer. The Administration strongly supports Serbia's European path and its stated goal of European Union membership. Serbia is a member in NATO's Partnership for Peace and has a good, cooperative relationship with NATO. However, Serbia has been unambiguous that it does not aspire to join NATO as an Ally.

Qualifying for EU membership would mean that Serbia has made great strides in reconciling its relationship with Kosovo; strengthening the rule of law and media freedoms; and improving transparency, accountability, and good governance. If confirmed, I will emphasize to Serbian leaders the need to undertake these reforms both to advance Serbia's own goal of EU accession, as well as to build resilience and close down avenues to malign influence.

Question. According to the Belgrade Center for Human Rights and other groups, including the State Department, Human Rights in Serbia and Rule of Law is Serbia is not advancing. In fact, as you discussed with my staff, we see daily evidence of the suppression of political opposition and free media by President Vucic. Do you believe the current government shares our values? As Ambassador, how would you prioritize advancing the rule of law and protecting human rights in balance with other goals?

Answer. Serbia stands at a critical inflection point. Its leaders in Belgrade must undertake serious reforms to advance Serbia on its chosen EU path. Essential to the United States' work in Serbia is promoting and defending our shared democratic values, to which Serbia has committed as part of its strategic goal of EU accession. This requires real work to ensure those values are promoted and protected. If confirmed, I will lead my team and apply foreign assistance resources in helping our Serbian partners to strengthen their democratic institutions, protect the rights of members of minority communities, combat corruption, and improve media freedom. We will continue to help build the capacities of law enforcement and prosecutorial and judicial institutions to work proactively, independently, transparently, and efficiently. The Embassy will also continue to speak out clearly against any acts of political suppression or threats of violence against the media. These messages are critically important, and, if confirmed, I will continue to press for true media freedom and media plurality in Serbia.

RESPONSES TO ADDITIONAL QUESTIONS FOR THE RECORD
SUBMITTED TO HERRO MUSTAFA BY SENATOR ROBERT MENENDEZ

Question. I remain deeply concerned about Russia's Turkstream pipeline project, which will undermine Ukraine's role as a gas transit country and increase European and Bulgarian dependence on Russian energy. What is U.S. policy with respect to Turkstream? Following Russia's recent announcement that the second leg of Turkstream will go through Bulgaria, what is your assessment of the construction and completion timeline for the second leg of the project?

Answer. The United States would not support any new gas pipeline in the European Union (EU) that does not increase diversification of sources, routes and supplies. A second line of Turkstream does nothing to advance the EU's commitment to diversify the region's energy supplies and would help to cement Europe's significant dependence on Russian gas. Such a project would also provide Gazprom with the technical capacity to bypass Ukraine for gas transit to Europe. This could significantly harm Ukraine's economy while putting the country at greater risk of Russian aggression.

Construction of the offshore portion of Turkstream was completed last winter and the onshore portion, within Turkey, could be completed by the end of 2019. Bulgaria, Serbia, Hungary, and Austria are all at various stages of coordination and construction to develop associated infrastructure to import and transit gas from the second line of Turkstream. If confirmed, I will strongly advocate against projects that increase European reliance on Russian energy. I will advocate instead for projects that can bring competition, transparency, and greater security to Bulgaria and European energy markets—projects like the Southern Gas Corridor, the Interconnector Greece-Bulgaria (IGB), and the Interconnector Bulgaria-Serbia (IBS).

Question. I am glad that Bulgaria's parliament overrode President Radev's veto of the F-16 purchase and that the F-16 procurement has now been approved. However, I am concerned that Russia may have attempted to interfere with this purchase. What evidence do you have of Russian attempts to interfere with the Bulgarian government's approval of the F-16 purchase, including but not limited to bribery or pressure tactics with MPs or the President's office? Answer can be provided in classified format if necessary.

Answer. Bulgaria's historic decision to purchase U.S.-made F-16s ran counter to Russian interests, as it will reduce Bulgarian dependence on Russian military equipment and deepen Bulgaria's defense ties to the United States. In doing so, Bulgaria reaffirmed its decision to join the Western, Transatlantic community in 1989. Russia has meddled in the internal affairs of states across Europe, and while I have no specific information regarding Russian meddling with respect to the F-16 purchase decision, if confirmed, I will prioritize working with Bulgarian counterparts to identify and address Russian malign influence.

Question. Who does the State Department assess is responsible for the late June cyberattack on Bulgaria's National Revenue Agency? How would State assess whether the cyberattack was related to the F-16 approval process? Answer can be provided in classified format if necessary.

Answer. The investigation by local authorities into this cyberattack is ongoing. The investigation is leading to a local private company, TAD Group, and authorities have arrested three individuals from this company who are being charged with cyber terrorism.

Question. Please list all ongoing and planned FMF programs with Bulgaria. What is Bulgaria's status with regard to the European Recapitalization Incentive Program (ERIP)? If confirmed, how will you incorporate anti-corruption measures into conversations with Bulgaria regarding FMF and ERIP?

Answer. Foreign Military Financing (FMF) fills a critical role in Bulgaria's defense modernization plans. Between Fiscal Years 2016-2019, the Department will provide over $100 million in Foreign Military Financing (FMF) to build national territorial defense and maritime security capabilities to deter Russian aggression, support modernization programs, and divest from Russian legacy equipment. Bulgaria will receive FMF bilaterally in FY 2019, and through regional programs such as the European Recapitalization Incentive Program (ERIP), Countering Russian Influence Fund (CRIF), and through the Black Sea Maritime Domain Awareness Program that will include Ukraine, Georgia, and Romania.Specific programs (some pending Congressional notification) include development of Land Forces' intelligence-sharing and secure communications for multinational operations and training in support of U.S. and NATO-led deployment missions; maritime security programs such as counter mine measures, underwater vehicles, and regional detection, information sharing and response capabilities; F-16 procurement and divestiture of Russian aircraft; and cyber-defense training and assessment. FY 2019 programs are still under development pending final allocation levels.Bulgaria is a part of ERIP and will receive up to $60 million of FY 2018-OCO FMF to support the divestiture of largely inoperable Russian MiG-29s. Bulgaria appropriated $1.2 billion toward the procurement of F-16s and this FY2018-00 FMF helps conclude this vital sale of U.S. fighter aircraft.

Question. I am concerned about Bulgaria's investor citizenship program, which creates security, money laundering, and tax evasion problems in Bulgaria and across the EU. A January 2019 EU Commission report flagged the program's lack of transparency and its weak governance and enforcement mechanisms. What are the most recent efforts by the Treasury Department to engage Bulgaria on its investor citizenship program? Please provide a full list of the recommendations Treasury has given Bulgaria to strengthen transparency and governance around that program and Treasury's assessment of Bulgaria's progress on those recommendations. Please do not simply refer us to Treasury in your response.

Answer. If confirmed, I will work with Bulgaria on fighting corruption and advancing the rule of law, which is key to Bulgaria's continued growth. If confirmed, I pledge to work with the Treasury Department and other relevant departments and agencies to address this and the full range of issues needed to fight corruption, promote the rule of law, and foster transparency and good governance.

Question. I was pleased to see that you highlighted strengthening and deepening the bonds between Bulgaria and the U.S. as a priority if confirmed. How many American Corners are there in Bulgaria, and which cities are they in? Please describe in detail your plans to expand the American Corners' work to discuss U.S. policies and promote connections between the U.S. and the people of Bulgaria.

Answer. There are three American Corners in Bulgaria which are located at public libraries in the country's three largest cities: Sofia, Plovdiv and Varna. We also have a long-established partnership with the University of Veliko Tarnovo, which hosts a space that performs many of the same functions as an official American Corner.

If confirmed, I will work with my Public Affairs Section at Post to visit all the American Corners in Bulgaria and to continue our cultural and educational programming, within our allocated budgets. Programs designed to increase English language proficiency and teach tech skills will help Bulgarian youth to improve their employment prospects and make it easier for potential U.S. investors to find qualified employees. Providing educational advice at our Corners promotes U.S. study abroad programs and academic opportunities for qualified Bulgarian students. Media literacy programs help Bulgarian audiences to identify and refute misinformation. Our Corners will also continue to promote American history and culture and strengthen people-to-people ties between our two nations, making full use of the variety of Americans in-country, including Embassy personnel, Fulbright English teachers, official visitors and the U.S. military. American Corners will also assist in providing alternatives to negative narratives about the United States inspired by Russia, China, and other malign actors.

Question. What are the most important actions you have taken in your career to date to support democracy and human rights? What has been the impact of your actions?

Answer. My most meaningful achievement to promote democracy involved my efforts to establish the first fully representative provincial council in Mosul, Iraq, to include ethnic and religious minorities as well as women. The impact was a political body that gave many segments of society a voice in governance and a vehicle for more vibrant political debate. I am also proud of the work our mission did in India, where I was Political Minister Counselor, to counter violence against women and girls. The Department of State honored one of our nominees with the International Women of Courage award. I was also Human Rights Officer in Greece, responsible for drafting all the Congressionally-mandated reports so I am very familiar to the requirements and am a strong supporter of human rights. I have always met with minority groups throughout my career and have hosted representational events for these groups, including LGBTI individuals. Where appropriate, I use social media to promote human rights and democracy.

Question. What issues are the most pressing challenges to democracy or democratic development in Bulgaria? These challenges might include obstacles to participatory and accountable governance and institutions, rule of law, authentic political competition, civil society, human rights, and press freedom. Please be as specific as possible.

Answer. The 2018 U.S. Country Report on Human Rights Practices in Bulgaria highlighted several ongoing human rights issues of concern, including corruption, inefficiency, and a lack of accountability in the judicial system; mistreatment of migrants and asylum seekers; corruption in all branches of government; violence against ethnic minorities; physical mistreatment of detainees and convicts by officials; and harsh conditions in prisons and detention facilities. If confirmed, I will engage with Bulgarian authorities and civil society and encourage cooperation to address ongoing corruption concerns, promote tolerance and nondiscrimination, and protect media freedoms.

Question. What steps will you take—if confirmed—to support democracy in Bulgaria? What do you hope to accomplish through these actions? What are the potential impediments to addressing the specific obstacles you have identified?

Answer. If confirmed, I will engage with Bulgarian authorities and civil society and encourage cooperation to address ongoing corruption concerns, promote tolerance and nondiscrimination, and protect media freedoms. I will also emphasize that

corruption enables malign actors to undermine Bulgaria's economic prosperity and political stability.

Fighting corruption and advancing the rule of law are key to Bulgaria's continued growth. But rule of law reform is a long-term, multifaceted and challenging process. While Bulgaria has demonstrated a commitment to reform and taken some steps to build a more open, inclusive, and prosperous society, more remains to be done.

Question. How will you utilize U.S. government assistance resources at your disposal, including the Democracy Commission Small Grants program and other sources of State Department and USAID funding, to support democracy and governance, and what will you prioritize in processes to administer such assistance?

Answer. In light of Bulgaria's EU membership, the United States no longer provides bilateral development assistance to Bulgaria. In 2017, the State Department established a Resident Legal Advisor's (RLA) office in Embassy Sofia to focus on anti-corruption in Bulgaria and the region. The RLA advises and trains Bulgarian officials on best practices in preventing and prosecuting high-level corruption. Bulgaria also sends participants to the State Department's International Law Enforcement Academy in Budapest where they receive training on topics related to strengthening the rule of law, and the Embassy has supported progress by engaging civil society and speaking publicly about the importance of reforms. If confirmed, I will work with my team at our Embassy in Sofia to continue engaging with Bulgarian officials at all levels of government to support good governance and anti-corruption programming.

Question. If confirmed, do you commit to engaging with democratically-oriented members of the opposition?

Answer. If confirmed, I will meet with a broad array of democratically-oriented political figures and parties and will advocate for their broad access to and inclusion in political processes.

Question. If confirmed, do you commit to meet with civil society members, human rights and other non-governmental organizations in the U.S. and with local human rights NGOs, and other members of civil society in Bulgaria? What steps will you take to pro-actively address efforts to restrict or penalize NGOs and civil society via legal or regulatory measures?

Answer. If confirmed, I will engage with civil society in Bulgaria, including with human rights and religious groups and other non-governmental organizations, and oppose any efforts to restrict NGOs or civil society through legal or regulatory measures.

Question. If confirmed, do you commit to meet with democratically oriented political opposition figures and parties? What steps will you take to encourage genuine political competition? Will you advocate for access and inclusivity for women, minorities and youth within political parties?

Answer. If confirmed, I will meet with a broad array of democratically-oriented political figures. Most observers found that the May 2019 European Parliament elections were generally free and democratic. Still, there were reports of problems and allegations of vote-buying that merit scrutiny and should be addressed. I will advocate for access and inclusivity for women, minorities, including religious minorities, and youth within political parties.

Question. Will you and your embassy team actively engage with Bulgaria on freedom of the press and address any government efforts designed to control or undermine press freedom through legal, regulatory, or other measures? Will you commit to meeting regularly with independent, local press in Bulgaria?

Answer. If confirmed, my embassy team and I will actively engage with Bulgaria on freedom of the press and will meet regularly with independent, local press. The United States supports media freedom everywhere, as a free press is essential to the functioning of a democracy. If confirmed, I will engage the Bulgarian government on any measures designed to control or undermine press freedom.

Question. Will you and your embassy team actively engage with civil society and government counterparts on countering disinformation and propaganda disseminated by foreign state or non-state actors in the country?

Answer. If confirmed, I will actively engage with civil society and the Bulgarian government to counter disinformation and propaganda disseminated by foreign state or non-state actors in the country.

Question. Will you and your embassy teams actively engage with Bulgaria on the right of labor groups to organize, including for independent trade unions?

Answer. Yes. If confirmed, I will actively support labor rights in Bulgaria and engage with the Bulgarian government on this issue.

Question. Will you commit to using your position, if confirmed, to defend the human rights and dignity of all people in Bulgaria, no matter their sexual orientation or gender identity? What challenges do the lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender and queer (LGBTQ) people face in Bulgaria? What specifically will you commit to do to help LGBTQ people in Bulgaria?

Answer. Yes, if confirmed, I will work to support human rights for all, including by strengthening efforts to address the discrimination LGBTI persons face. I will also continue our Embassy's long-standing public support for the human rights and fundamental freedoms of LGBTI persons. The 2018 U.S. Country Report on Human Rights Practices in Bulgaria noted a number of concerns, including anti-LGBTI hate speech, threats, and assault.

Question. If a foreign person or government approaches you or a staffer at the embassy with derogatory information on a U.S. political figure, what is your understanding of official State Department policy on how to handle it? In the wake of President Trump's comments welcoming such information, it is important that the State Department have clear guidance for all of its personnel on how to deal with such scenarios. Has a cable with clear guidance on how to handle this situation been sent to all U.S. embassies?

Answer. If approached with derogatory information, it is important to make certain that this information immediately reaches the appropriate law enforcement officials and my Front Office in Washington, DC. Pursuant to 12 Foreign Affairs Manual section 262—"Security Awareness and Contact Reporting"—U.S. Department of State policy mandates that all employees and contractors report any contact that prompts concern that he or she may be the target of actual or attempted exploitation by a foreign entity. At the embassy, any such contact must be reported as soon as possible to the embassy's Regional Security Officer. Cleared U.S. employees are required to take annual training "EX 250 Annual Counter Intelligence Awareness," which reviews these reporting requirements pursuant to 12 Foreign Affairs Manual section 262. The Department has sent cables to all diplomatic and consular posts with clear guidance about this training and reporting requirement.

Question. Do you agree that any targeting of or retaliation against career employees based on their perceived political beliefs, prior work on policy, or affiliation with a previous administration, is wholly inappropriate and has no place in the federal government? If confirmed, what will you do to ensure that all employees under your leadership understand that any retaliation, blacklisting, or other prohibited personnel practices will not be tolerated?

Answer. If confirmed, I will work to prevent any attempts to target or retaliate against career employees on the basis of their perceived political beliefs, prior work on policy, or affiliation with a previous administration. I take allegations of such practices seriously and will ensure they are referred to the Department's Inspector General.

Question. Has anyone ever made a formal or informal complaint or allegation of sexual harassment, discrimination (e.g., racial, ethnic, religious, etc.), or inappropriate conduct against you, in a workplace or any other setting? If so, please describe the nature of the complaint or allegation, your response, and any resolution, including any settlements.

Answer. I take all forms of harassment and discrimination in the workplace very seriously and ensure that those who work for me also understand the seriousness of such complaints and allegations. If I become aware of any such concerns, I address the concerns promptly and in accordance with Department policy and regulation. I also ensure that all staff complete the mandatory EEO and harassment training. I have never been named in a formal or informal complaint of harassment or discrimination.

Question. Have you ever addressed concerns or allegations of sexual harassment, discrimination (e.g., racial, ethnic, religious, etc.), or inappropriate conduct made against any employee over whom you had supervisory authority? If so, please describe the outcome and actions taken.

Answer. I take any allegation of discrimination and sexual harassment in the workplace very seriously and ensure that those working for me understand how to address such concerns promptly and appropriately. If I become aware of possible misconduct, I immediately coordinate with the Office of Civil Rights at the State Department (S/OCR) and with the EEO Counselors at post on appropriate next steps.

Additionally, I take the Department's mandatory reporting requirement seriously. In accordance with Department regulations, if I hear, witness, or should have reasonably suspected that discrimination or sexual harassment has occurred, I would report the matter directly to S/OCR.

RESPONSES TO ADDITIONAL QUESTIONS FOR THE RECORD
SUBMITTED TO HERRO MUSTAFA BY SENATOR MARCO RUBIO

Question. Do you concur that Hezbollah-backed terrorists conducted the Burgas attack?

Answer. The State Department concurs that Hizballah conducted the Burgas attack. If confirmed, I will call on the Bulgarian government to complete the trial of the Hizballah members charged in absentia, consistent with its domestic law.

Question. Intelligence services from the U.S., Bulgaria, Australia, Canada, and other nations provided information to the Bulgarian government implicating Hezbollah. Therefore, why do you believe that the Bulgarian government has not yet named Hezbollah in the indictment? Does this concern you?

Answer. Any wavering in the Bulgarian government's resolve to link the attack to Hizballah concerns me. If confirmed, I will call on the Bulgarian government to complete the trial.

Question. Will you convey the U.S. government's deep concerns to Bulgaria's government that it appears that Bulgaria is attempting to conceal Hezbollah's role in the attack? Will you provide regular updates to Congress on your conversations with Bulgaria's government on this topic?

Answer. If confirmed, I will convey these concerns and provide regular updates to Congress on this topic.

RESPONSES TO ADDITIONAL QUESTIONS FOR THE RECORD
SUBMITTED TO HERRO MUSTAFA BY SENATOR BENJAMIN L. CARDIN

Question. What are your most meaningful achievements to date in your career to promote human rights and democracy? What has been the impact of your actions?

Answer. My most meaningful achievement to promote democracy involved my efforts to establish the first fully representative provincial council in Mosul, Iraq, to include ethnic and religious minorities as well as women. The impact was a political body that gave many segments of society a voice in governance and a vehicle for more vibrant political debate. In India, where I was Political Minister Counselor, we countered violence against women and girls. The Department of State honored one of our nominees with the International Women of Courage Award. I was also Human Rights Officer in Greece, responsible for drafting all Congressionally-mandated reports so I am very familiar with the requirements and am a strong supporter of human rights. I have always met with minority groups throughout my career and have hosted representational events for these groups, including LGBTI individuals. Where appropriate, I use social media to advocate for human rights and democracy.

Question. What are the most pressing human rights issues in Bulgaria? What are the most important steps you expect to take—if confirmed—to promote human rights and democracy in Bulgaria?

Answer. The 2018 U.S. Country Report on Human Rights Practices in Bulgaria highlighted several ongoing human rights issues of concern, including corruption, inefficiency, and a lack of accountability in the judicial system; mistreatment of migrants and asylum seekers; corruption in all branches of government; violence against ethnic minorities; physical mistreatment of detainees and convicts by officials; and harsh conditions in prisons and detention facilities. The 2018 U.S. Report on International Religious Freedom for Bulgaria also noted concerns by religious minorities of increases in hate speech and anti-Semitism. If confirmed, I will engage with Bulgarian authorities and civil society and encourage cooperation to address ongoing corruption concerns, promote tolerance and nondiscrimination, and protect media freedoms.

Question. What do you hope to accomplish through these actions?

Answer. If confirmed, I hope that these actions will help strengthen democratic institutions and the rule of law in Bulgaria, while also increasing tolerance and participation for marginalized and minority communities in political, economic, and social life. In addition, by promoting the protection of media freedoms, for example, we can encourage a more vibrant media environment and open, vigorous, pluralistic, and respectful discussion of issues.

Question. If confirmed, what are the potential obstacles to addressing the specific human rights issues you have identified in your previous response?

Answer. If confirmed, I will work closely with the Bulgarian government on rule of law issues and to protect human rights and fundamental freedoms for all. Rule of law reform is a long-term, multifaceted and challenging process. While Bulgaria has taken steps to build an open, inclusive, and prosperous society, more remains to be done. We are concerned about indications in Bulgaria that media outlets are closing or being purchased by conglomerates, reducing the diversity of available views to the public.

Question. What challenges will you face in Bulgaria in advancing human rights, civil society and democracy in general?

Answer. The 2018 U.S. Country Report on Human Rights Practices in Bulgaria highlighted several ongoing concerns regarding human rights, civil society, and democracy. In addition to the challenges referenced in the previous response, I expect challenges on the issues of Roma integration, LGBTI inclusivity, and combatting human trafficking.

Question. Are you committed to meeting with human rights, civil society and other non-governmental organizations in the U.S. and with local human rights NGOs in Bulgaria?

Answer. Yes. If confirmed, I will engage with civil society and non-governmental organizations both in the United States and in Bulgaria on a range of human rights and other issues of mutual interest.

Question. If confirmed, what steps will you take to pro-actively support the Leahy Law and similar efforts, and ensure that provisions of U.S. security assistance and security cooperation activities reinforce human rights?

Answer. I appreciate the importance of the Leahy Law and worked on Leahy vetting extensively when I was the Political Minister Counselor at the U.S. Embassy in New Delhi, India. If confirmed, I will ensure all the required vetting is carried out for any security assistance and security cooperation activities in order to reinforce human rights.

Question. Will you and your embassy team actively engage with Bulgaria to address cases of key political prisoners or persons otherwise unjustly targeted by Bulgaria?

Answer. According to the 2018 Country Report on Human Rights Practices, there were no reports of political prisoners or detainees in Bulgaria. However, if confirmed, I pledge to actively engage with Bulgarian officials, regulatory bodies, non-governmental and civil society organizations to address any such cases should they arise.

Question. Will you engage with Bulgaria on matters of human rights, civil rights and governance as part of your bilateral mission?

Answer. Yes. If confirmed, I will engage Bulgaria on matters of human rights, civil rights and governance as part of my bilateral mission.

Question. Do you commit to bring to the committee's attention (and the State Department Inspector General) any change in policy or U.S. actions that you suspect may be influenced by any of the President's business or financial interests, or the business or financial interests of any senior White House staff?

Answer. If confirmed, I commit to comply with all relevant federal ethics laws, regulations, and rules, and to raise any concerns that I may have through appropriate channels.

Question. Do you commit to inform the committee if you have any reason to suspect that a foreign government, head of state, or foreign-controlled entity is taking any action in order to benefit any of the President's business or financial interests, or the interests of senior White House staff?

Answer. If confirmed, I commit to comply with all relevant federal ethics laws, regulations, and rules, and to raise any concerns that I may have through appropriate channels.

Question. Do you or do any members of your immediate family have any financial interests in Bulgaria?

Answer. No.

Question. Research from private industry demonstrates that, when managed well, diversity makes business teams better both in terms of creativity and in terms of productivity. What will you do to promote, mentor and support your staff that come from diverse backgrounds and underrepresented groups in the Foreign Service?

Answer. Diversity is one of my top leadership principles, and if confirmed, I will continue to promote diversity of views and personnel in the workplace. I will meet regularly one-on-one for professional development sessions with my team and also ensure they have opportunities for professional growth.

Question. What steps will you take to ensure each of the supervisors at the Embassy are fostering an environment that is diverse and inclusive?

Answer. Diversity is one of my top leadership principles and if confirmed, I will highlight diversity in my first mission Town Hall to set the tone up front. I will also ask that all supervisors ensure they account for diversity in the hiring and assignments process. If confirmed, I will also stress to them that inclusivity is critical to our collective success.

Question. How do you believe political corruption impacts democratic governance and the rule of law generally, and in Bulgaria specifically?

Answer. Around the world, corruption saps economic growth, hinders development, destabilizes governments, undermines democracy and provides openings for dangerous criminals and malign actors. The Department of State has made anticorruption a national security priority. According to the 2018 Country Report on Human Rights Practices, the Bulgarian Industrial Association identified corruption as the main factor for low levels of foreign direct investment and Transparency International Bulgaria also stated there had been no significant progress in the country's anticorruption efforts. If confirmed, I will engage the Bulgarian government, at all levels, on anticorruption and to strengthen rule of law in support of Bulgaria's economic prosperity and political stability.

Question. What is your assessment of corruption trends in Bulgaria and efforts to address and reduce it by that government?

Answer. The 2018 U.S. Country Report on Human Rights Practices in Bulgaria noted corruption remained a concern. According to the report, the government did not implement anticorruption laws effectively, and officials in all branches of government reportedly engage in corrupt practices with impunity. Corrupt practices included bribery, conflict of interest, elaborate embezzlement schemes, procurement violations, and influence trading. The recent enactment of a law to combat corruption—the law also established an Anti-Corruption Commission—is a move in the right direction, but effective implementation of the law will continue to be important. The European Commission commended the legislation while also noting that Bulgarian authorities would need to show concrete results. If confirmed, I will seek to continue our work in support of anticorruption efforts to enhance Bulgaria's economic prosperity and political stability.

Question. If confirmed, what steps will you take to strengthen good governance and anticorruption programming in Bulgaria?

Answer. In 2017, the State Department established a Resident Legal Advisor's (RLA) office in Embassy Sofia to focus on anticorruption in Bulgaria and the region. The RLA advises and trains Bulgarian officials on best practices in preventing and prosecuting high-level corruption. Bulgaria also sends participants to the State Department's International Law Enforcement Academy in Budapest where they receive training on topics related to strengthening the rule of law, and the Embassy has supported progress by engaging civil society and speaking publicly about the importance of reforms. If confirmed, I will work with my team at the Embassy in Sofia to continue this type of engagement with Bulgarian officials at all levels of government to support good governance and anticorruption programming. I will also engage with civil society and the press on corruption issues and consider establishing concrete benchmarks for progress.

Question. I am very troubled that a NATO country has, as its Minister of Defense, someone who has proposed targeting Roma for reduction in birth rate, and another cabinet official who has been convicted of hate speech against Roma. How will you engage with a government that includes representatives of an extremist party?

Answer. If confirmed, I will call on Bulgarian government officials to take steps to combat intolerance against Roma and to enable their full participation in civic and economic life. I affirm my commitment to work for dignity and equality for Roma people in Bulgaria.

Question. When you travel outside of Sofia, will you make a point of meeting with Roma in the communities where they live?

Answer.Marginalization of the Roma minority remains among the most pressing human rights concerns in Bulgaria, where municipalities continue the practice of disproportionately targeting illegally-built Roma housing for demolition. If confirmed, I will make a point of meeting with Roma in the communities where they live and I will encourage Bulgaria to take steps to combat intolerance against the Roma and other marginalized groups.

Question. Bulgarian law prohibits campaigning in minority languages. This violates OSCE norms relating to ethnic minorities, free speech, and free elections. Will you encourage Bulgarian officials to re-examine this law?

Answer. The 2018 U.S. Country Report on Human Rights Practices in Bulgaria noted that the law prohibits campaigning in languages other than Bulgarian, and the Office for Democratic Institutions and Human Rights reported that the law limited the ability of ethnic minority groups to understand election rules and to participate effectively in the election process. If confirmed, I pledge to support political inclusion for minorities, as well as free speech and free elections, and I would encourage Bulgarian officials to re-examine the law.

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