

**STRENGTHENING AMERICAN DIPLOMACY:
REVIEWING THE STATE DEPARTMENT'S BUDGET,
OPERATIONS AND POLICY PRIORITIES**

HEARING
BEFORE THE
COMMITTEE ON FOREIGN AFFAIRS
HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
ONE HUNDRED FIFTEENTH CONGRESS
SECOND SESSION

MAY 23, 2018

Serial No. 115–140

Printed for the use of the Committee on Foreign Affairs



Available: <http://www.foreignaffairs.house.gov/>, <http://docs.house.gov>,
or <http://www.gpo.gov/fdsys/>

U.S. GOVERNMENT PUBLISHING OFFICE

30–175PDF

WASHINGTON : 2018

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WEDNESDAY, MAY 23, 2018

HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES,
COMMITTEE ON FOREIGN AFFAIRS,
Washington, DC.

The committee met, pursuant to notice, at 9:00 a.m., in room 2172 Rayburn House Office Building, Hon. Edward Royce (chairman of the committee) presiding.

Chairman ROYCE. We will call the committee to order.

I'd like to welcome Secretary of State Mike Pompeo and congratulations, Mr. Secretary. Congratulations on your service to the U.S. Army, to your service in the U.S. House of Representatives, as CIA Director, and now, as our Nation's 70th Secretary of State.

The committee looks forward to working with you, in a bipartisan way, to meet our challenges and to seize our opportunities.

We have made important progress on a major security challenge—routing ISIS on the battlefield. This is a big development, one that you've played a role in, and, Mr. Secretary, we must maintain the momentum.

Islamist terrorism will threaten us for years and years to come. Increasing pressure on Iran and checking its hegemonic moves is imperative.

Our partner, Israel, is on the front lines. But Iran's ICBM program is a danger to us—intercontinental means from there to here.

Your Monday speech, Mr. Secretary, outlined a much-needed strategy to match Iran's range of hostile activities. The challenge now is to present a unified front with our allies.

Last budget hearing, I said that our Nation's longstanding commitment to global stability, open markets, alliances, and the rule of law, and human rights has paid off greatly. If we don't lead, others will.

Our formidable military, though, is only one side of the coin. You, Secretary Pompeo, have rightly recognized that diplomacy must lead our foreign policy.

American diplomats serve on the front lines. We need them well-trained. I'm encouraged by the department's interest in strengthening the Foreign Service Institute.

And we need sufficient funding to combat wildlife and drug trafficking, to build open markets, to save lives during natural disasters, and to do the many other things our aid accounts support.

The appropriations process will adequately fund diplomacy and development, I believe. The National Endowment for Democracy, in particular, should be strongly supported.

Let's face it. Democracy is on the ropes worldwide. Supporting it is a moral and strategic good. NED is backing critical programming in Venezuela, Nigeria, and worldwide.

It is no time to cut this programming. On the challenge of Russia, yes, we should cooperate with Moscow when possible. But we must diligently protect our national security.

The administration has rightly provided lethal arms to Ukraine, which remains under siege by Russian proxies. A far more severe threat is Moscow's information war. This committee has heard that Moscow's goal isn't so much to make Western citizens think this or think that. Russia's goal is to destroy all confidence in objective thought.

By undermining fact-based discussion with lies, our enemies hope to gravely damage Western democracies. The State Department must aggressively counter disinformation through its Global Engagement Center, other means, and with department officials speaking out for the truth.

We wish the administration success negotiating with North Korea. It will be a tall task to strike a viable, effective nuclear agreement.

Ranking Member Engel and I have led efforts to ratchet up the financial pressure on North Korea over many years with the legislation we have passed here in the committee. Keep up that pressure, Mr. Secretary.

It is a big reason why the Kim regime wants to talk with President Trump. And as this process plays out, work closely with Congress. We're stronger together.

And I'll now turn to our ranking member, Mr. Eliot Engel.

Mr. ENGEL. Thank you, Mr. Chairman, and Mr. Secretary, welcome to the Foreign Affairs Committee. We always pride our committee in being the most bipartisan committee in Congress and always say that we believe when we talk about foreign policy, partisanship should stop at the water's edge.

It doesn't mean that we won't have disagreements and some of those we are going to discuss today. But I think that this committee, perhaps more than any other committee in Congress, has worked very effectively to set up bipartisan majorities.

So welcome, Mr. Secretary. You're no stranger here, and we look forward to what you have to say, obviously, today.

After the administration sent its 2017 budget request, which we were very disappointed with, Congress' message was clear. Cutting diplomacy and development by a third was unacceptable.

We sent that message through letters and statements and, finally, with the 2018 funding bill, and let me say once again bipartisan majorities stopped those draconian cuts from going forward.

But this administration has ignored that message, unfortunately, and rejected the will of Congress. The White House wants to cut \$334 million as part of the so-called rescission package.

How short-sighted is this request? The day after we received these proposed cuts including cutting \$¼ billion from our Ebola response, reports surfaced of an Ebola outbreak in the DRC.

The reason we fight pandemic overseas is so we don't have to fight them here at home. The American people, whether in New York or in Kansas, are concerned about things like Ebola because diseases don't respect borders.

We cannot allow another outbreak to go unchecked because the White House considers arbitrary budget cuts to be good politics.

Now, the State Department—and I realize this was all happening before you came, Mr. Secretary, so I am hoping that you can work with us in trying to change these things and to right the wrongs—the State Department has now sent us another budget that would again slash diplomacy and development efforts to promote our security that keep America safe. It's, frankly, insulting that the administration would send us another request like this when we rejected it last year.

So I predict that Congress will reject this budget just as we did last year's. Again, Congress, on a bipartisan basis, rejected the budget.

Fortunately, Congress has the final say on how much we spend on international affairs. But whatever the size of the check Congress writes, it's, obviously, the administration's job to make policy and manage departments and, Mr. Secretary, I worry about what you've inherited at the State Department.

The administration's first priority was an ill-conceived reorganization effort. It cost millions of taxpayer dollars for private consultants but resulted in absolutely nothing beyond a demoralized and depleted State Department.

On your predecessor's watch, the department lost more than 200 Foreign Service officers, many among our most senior diplomats, some of the very experienced diplomats you once called incredibly professional.

The department will soon have only a single official at the rank of career Ambassador, the highest rank of our diplomats. A staggering number of senior positions remain vacant.

Perhaps most troubling are the allegations from whistleblowers who have reported to this committee that the administration has targeted career employees because of their perceived political beliefs.

This is, potentially, a violation of laws governing State Department personnel. It also strikes at the idea that politics should stop at the water's edge—that the way we carry out foreign policy should put American interests first and leave partisan interests and concerns behind. It's how we run this committee.

But that principle has been under attack recently. I think you can draw a line from the moment straight back to the most egregious example, the recent memory of playing politics with a tragedy. I know the Benghazi Select Committee on which you sat, the creation that was set up to tear Hillary Clinton down as the majority leader admitted that was used to impugn the character of one of your predecessors.

Partisanship has no place in the halls of the State Department. I am glad the Inspector General is now looking into those whistle-

blower allegations as Senator Menendez, Mr. Cummings, and I advised.

But the department has not produced the required documents that would allow Congress to conduct effective oversight despite a commitment from the spokesperson to do so.

So I hope, Mr. Secretary, that you'll help to get us those documents and that you'll leave behind any political considerations in the way the department is run under your leadership.

Unfortunately, after 16 months we are feeling the effects of a foreign policy that has marginalized diplomacy and made Americans less safe.

The President has alienated our friends, doubted the value of our alliances, and undermined American credibility around the world.

The result? A recent Gallup poll put America's global approval rating at an historical low of 30 percent, nearly 20 percent lower than the previous year.

At the rate we are breaking our word and unwinding our country's commitments, I imagine we will see that number dip even further.

The administration's slogan of "America first" it's looking, unfortunately, more like "America last" and "America alone" and "America by itself in the world" where we don't nurture alliances and cultivate new friendships, where we don't put our values at the center of our politics, where we don't help countries become stronger and more stable partners on the global stage.

An America in that world is an America that's less safe. Perhaps the worst example that the administration has blatantly ignored is the ongoing threat to our security, which is Russia's attack on American democracy.

As you said when you served as CIA Director, we are staring another Russian attack in the face. I agree with you. I am worried that the President is just going to let it happen.

I am worried that even if we did want to push back, the State Department is so hobbled and hallowed out that we won't be able to. I am worried that the administration is giving Russia a pass because Putin supported President Trump over Hillary Clinton.

If we allow foreign interference in our elections so long as it supports our political objectives, then we have put party before country and put our democracy in crisis. I would be just as outraged if the Russians helped Hillary Clinton. I think the Russians should stay out of our democracy.

There are so many issues I could get into but I want all our members to have a chance to ask questions today. There are tough questions, Mr. Secretary, but I look forward to working with you and I know that your service here in the House will do you well in working together with the House to effectuate a better foreign policy for our country.

Thank you.

Chairman ROYCE. This morning, I am pleased to welcome Secretary of State Mike Pompeo to the committee. Secretary Pompeo previously served as Director of the Central Intelligence Agency and as a Member of Congress representing the people of the Fourth District of Kansas.

Among his committee assignments, he served as a member of the Intelligence Committee. He also served in the U.S. Army and is a graduate of both West Point and Harvard Law School, and we appreciate the Secretary being with us today.

Without objection, the witness' full prepared statement will be made part of the record. Members will have 5 calendar days to submit any statements or questions or any extraneous material that they might have for the record.

The goal today is to get to all of our members. To make that goal, I'll ask members to be aware of their allotted 5 minutes. That's for your question and that's for the Secretary's answers to your questions.

We do have questions for the record, and speaking of that, I have a question for the record that I'd like to submit on behalf of Mr. Donovan, without objection, addressing the State Department's role in combating the opioid crisis that is ravaging communities across America.

So we will begin now with Secretary Pompeo's testimony.

Mr. Secretary.

STATEMENT OF THE HONORABLE MIKE POMPEO, SECRETARY OF STATE, U.S. DEPARTMENT OF STATE

Secretary POMPEO. Thank you. Thank you, Chairman Royce. Thank you, Ranking Member Engel. It's good to see you both again, and thank you, distinguished members of the committee, that I had the privilege to serve with. It is great to be back, and I appreciate the opportunity to discuss the 2019 budget request—

Chairman ROYCE. And, Mr. Secretary, maybe if we straighten the microphone it'll be—

Secretary POMPEO. Yes. How's that? Is that good enough?

Chairman ROYCE. Perfect.

Secretary POMPEO. All right. Very good.

Thanks. I want to talk about both the State Department and USAID's budgets this morning. In order to achieve the objectives laid out in the national security strategy we have a plan and you'll hear a great deal about it today.

The proposed request reflects our obligation to use taxpayer dollars wisely and effectively. Our request also makes clear the United States must exert a proportional financial commitment in the pursuit of goals shared by the entire international community.

It's time for other nations, especially those with high GDPs, to assume greater responsibilities and devote greater resources toward our common objectives. Whether it's crushing terrorists, stopping Iran's malign behavior, strengthening the NATO Alliance, eradicating infectious diseases, and so much more, we expect good help—good financial support from our partners and allies.

President Trump is committed to diplomacy as the primary means of achieving the United States foreign policy objectives. So am I.

We must maintain America's historic role as a truly global power whose first instinct and overwhelming preference is to use diplomacy to solve global challenges. We are already seeing this in the preparations for our historic meeting with North Korea, still scheduled for June 12th.

We have a generational opportunity to resolve a major national security challenge. Our eyes are wide open to the lessons of history but we are optimistic that we can achieve an outcome that would be great for the world.

Our posture will not change until we see credible steps taken toward the complete, verifiable, and irreversible denuclearization of the Korean Peninsula.

On Monday, I unveiled a new direction for the President's Iran strategy. We will apply unprecedented financial pressure, coordinate with our DoD colleagues on deterrence efforts, support the Iranian people—perhaps more importantly—and hold out the prospect for a new deal with Iran. It simply needs to change its behavior.

We seek to work with as many partners, friends, allies as possible to achieve the common objective of stopping all of Iran's nuclear and non-nuclear threats.

The President's highest priority is keeping the American people safe. This request for \$7.3 billion in security assistance will help protect Americans at home and overseas and I look forward to talking more about that today.

The State Department will continue to lead the international efforts to denuclearize North Korea and prevent other actors from unlawfully acquiring weapons of mass destruction as their means of delivery, while strengthening the capacity of partner nations to do so as well. Countering proliferation is at the top of President Trump's national security agenda.

The budget request also calls for \$5.7 billion support for coalition efforts to continue to defeat ISIS and other transnational terrorist and criminal groups that threaten Americans everywhere.

The State Department and USAID will sustain programs that address the conditions on the ground that give rise to those threats and we will diligently work to attract additional donors to support these very same efforts.

America's prosperity and national security depend on a strong and growing American economy. This budget request seeks \$2.2 billion to help stimulate American economic growth by expanding markets for U.S. investment and ensuring that partner countries can fully participate in the global economy.

America's message, a noble one, must be shared with the world at all times.

Chairman Royce, you mentioned the Global Engagement Center. We will work with the \$55 million-plus available to cover both its original mission—counter extremism—plus countering state-sponsored disinformation campaigns.

We will not tolerate Russian interference in our 2018 elections. Much work has been done. There is more to do. Rest assured that we will take the appropriate counter measures in response to the continued Russian efforts.

Finally, let me also update you on what's happening inside the State Department. Our workforce is the most important asset. Since become Secretary of State, now 3 weeks and a couple days ago, one of my highest priorities has been ensuring the finest diplomatic corps in the world is fully prepared and empowered to do its work in every corner.

I am unleashing teams to do what they do best on behalf of the American people. Last week, I held my first town hall in which I laid out my vision and committed to working as one team with all of our personnel.

In 3 weeks, they've give me great support. I have taken their counsel and I have relied on their expertise greatly. There are many challenges that remain.

Among my first acts was to begin to put the team back on the field. We lifted the hiring freeze on eligible family members—indeed, broadened that to lifting the hiring freeze for the entire Foreign and Civil Service.

All Foreign Service and Civil Service hiring will be consistent with funding levels but the freeze is no longer. To help the team get on the field, I also know that we have got work to do on some of our systems' IT at the front.

I know our professionals need that assistance to perform their work efficiently.

And with that, Mr. Chairman, I am happy to conclude my statement, as it's been submitted for the record. I am happy to take questions from you and the committee.

[The prepared statement of Secretary Pompeo follows:]

**SECRETARY OF STATE MIKE POMPEO
STATEMENT TO THE HOUSE FOREIGN AFFAIRS COMMITTEE
ON THE FISCAL YEAR 2019 BUDGET
MAY 23, 2018**

Chairman Royce, Ranking Member Engel, and distinguished members of the Committee:

I appreciate the opportunity to discuss the Administration's FY 2019 budget request for the State Department and USAID.

Last December the Trump Administration released the National Security Strategy. The four pillars of the strategy are protecting the American people, the homeland, and our way of life; promoting American prosperity; preserving peace through strength; and advancing American influence.

In order to achieve these national security objectives, the Administration has submitted our FY 2019 budget request of \$39.3 billion for the State Department and USAID. The proposed request reflects our obligation to use taxpayer dollars wisely and effectively.

Our request also makes clear the United States must exert a proportional financial commitment in the pursuit of goals shared by the international community. It is time for other nations – especially those with high GDP – to assume greater responsibilities and devote greater resources toward common objectives, whether it's crushing terrorists, stopping Iran's malign behavior, strengthening the NATO alliance, eradicating infectious diseases, and so much more. We expect greater burden sharing for our allies and partners.

The President is committed to diplomacy as the primary means of achieving the United States' foreign policy objectives, which are further detailed in our State/USAID Joint Strategic Plan. We will use every dollar to deliver on our duty to serve the American people and the enduring foreign policy victories that are within sight.

Our top national security priority has been the de-nuclearization of North Korea. The maximum pressure campaign of diplomatic and economic sanctions is bearing fruit with the historic meeting set to take place on June 12th. This campaign has been undertaken in concert with an unprecedented number of allies and partners. Our posture will not change until we see credible steps taken toward the complete, verifiable, and irreversible de-nuclearization of the Korean peninsula. We are clear-eyed about the regime's history. It's time to solve this once and for all. A bad deal is not an option. The American people are counting on us to get this right. If the right deal is not on the table, we will respectfully walk away.

On May 21st I unveiled a new direction for the President's Iran strategy. We will apply financial pressure, coordinate with our DOD colleagues on deterrence efforts, support the Iranian people, and hold out the prospect of a new deal for Iran – if it changes its behavior. We seek to work with as many partners, friends, and allies as possible to achieve the common objective of stopping all of Iran's nuclear and non-nuclear threats.

The progress against ISIS has been predominantly accomplished through military action. But there is a very important role for diplomacy and assistance in ensuring the permanent defeat of ISIS. We must continue robust stabilization activities with our Coalition partners in order to prevent ISIS from resurfacing. We are also countering ISIS's attempts to gain safe havens in areas such as Afghanistan, the Philippines, and Africa. In addition to providing targeted security sector assistance funding, we are working with our allies and partners to stop foreign fighter travel, cut off sources of revenue, attack ISIS online, share intelligence, and prosecute those who come off the battlefield.

We know Russia poses a challenge to our strategic interests and the security of our allies. This is evident from the chemical weapons attack in the UK, for which we imposed consequences in concert with several partners and allies. We've been clear with Russia it must honor its commitments under the Minsk Accords if peace is to prevail in Ukraine. As a guarantor of the Assad regime, Russia has a responsibility to be a constructive actor for stability and peace in Syria, which includes stopping the regime's use of chemical weapons. We are holding Russia accountable to its commitment to the Geneva process.

China is a rising strategic competitor. We must work constructively with a nation of China's importance, as we are doing on North Korea, but we cannot sacrifice the interests of the American people and our economic competitiveness, relinquish freedom navigation and the law of the sea in the South China Sea and elsewhere, or passively watch as American intellectual property is stolen. We are making clear to China that the protection of human rights is integral to any country that wishes to be regarded as a great nation. Elsewhere in Asia, we are re-affirming and expanding partnerships in the Indo-Pacific region with nations that share our commitment to security, economic freedom, sovereignty, and liberty.

Finally, in our own hemisphere, we are embracing the "Year of the Americas," by re-affirming our commitment to longstanding partnerships grounded in shared interests and values. On Venezuela, we have imposed new economic pressure on the Maduro regime to help steer that country back toward democracy, and we are rallying like-minded regional partners to do the same.

Across the world, we have encouraged nations to assume greater responsibilities for maintaining their own and our shared security and stability. In the face of a resurgent Russia, and in response to our urging, many NATO members are newly meeting their commitments to funding deterrence and defense initiatives. President Trump's call to leaders of Middle East countries in Riyadh, Saudi Arabia, rallied leaders of those nations to more aggressively combat terrorism inside their own borders and to counter violent extremism abroad. And as part of the new South Asia strategy, we have been clear with Pakistan that ensuring reconciliation, peace, and security in Afghanistan in large part depends on Pakistan's willingness to crack down on terrorist safe havens and instigators of terrorist activity in its own country.

Our highest priority is keeping the American people safe. The FY 2019 budget request for \$7.3 billion in security assistance will help protect Americans at home and overseas. The State Department will continue to lead international efforts to denuclearize North Korea, and to prevent Iran and other actors from unlawfully acquiring weapons of mass destruction and their means of delivery, while strengthening the capacity of partner nations to do so as well.

This budget request calls for \$5.7 billion in support for Coalition efforts to defeat ISIS and other transnational terrorist and criminal groups that threaten the American homeland. The State Department and USAID will sustain programs that address the conditions that give rise to these threats, including poor governance, weak institutions, lack of economic opportunity, corruption, and persistent human rights abuses, and attract additional donor nations' support for these efforts.

America's prosperity and national security depends on a strong and growing U.S. economy that can maximize trade and investment opportunities in a free, fair, open and stable international market. This budget request seeks \$2.2 billion to help stimulate American economic growth, expand markets for U.S. investment, and ensure partner countries can fully participate in a global economy.

This budget request includes an important proposal for a new standalone development finance institution (DFI) broadly consistent with H.R. 5105, the Better Utilization of Investments Leading to Development Act of 2018 (BUILD Act of 2018), being considered by this Committee. Like the BUILD Act, the Administration proposal consolidates existing functions now spread across various agencies to improve efficiencies and better mobilize private sector resources. If approved by Congress, the DFI will advance U.S. national security and development objectives by deploying reformed and modernized development finance tools that support, without displacing, the private sector. The Administration shares the goals of this Committee to foster sustainable development in developing countries and provide strong alternatives to state-directed initiatives. With the consolidation we have both the opportunity for greater impact but also the responsibility to create strong interagency coordination with USAID and other development agencies to advance development outcomes, promote self-reliance among partner countries, and advance U.S. interests and values. To this end, the budget requests \$56 million for State and USAID to collaborate and coordinate programming with the DFI and leverage its tools.

Americans benefit from sustained engagement with the rest of the world that serves our interests and those of our allies. This budget upholds our commitments to our allies, including \$3.3 billion in support of the recent, ten-year Memorandum of Understanding between the United States and Israel regarding U.S. military assistance, a 6.5% increase from last year's request. In recognition of our critical strategic partnership and new five-year Memorandum of Understanding with Jordan, the budget also strengthens our high level of support by requesting \$1.275 billion for Jordan in FY 2019.

In light of continuing significant humanitarian needs, largely driven by ongoing conflicts in Syria, Yemen, and elsewhere, the FY 2019 request includes \$6.4 billion for humanitarian assistance, an increase of \$1.1 billion, or 21 percent, from the FY 2018 request. We will use these resources strategically as part of a new approach to relief to increase burden sharing by other donors, improve U.S. government internal humanitarian assistance coordination, and catalyze reforms and efficiencies at the UN and other implementing partners. The ultimate objective is to maximize the impact of hard-earned U.S. tax dollars and deliver the best outcome for those dollars.

The President's budget continues global health funding at a level that will sustain our work and our leadership in this area, including through flagship programs like PEPFAR and the President's Malaria Initiative.

We sustain our support for these assistance programs because we know they are a projection of American leadership and they contribute to economic growth, and social and political stability. They are not only measures of the values of the American people, but they contribute to our interests. As we have seen with outbreaks of Ebola and other diseases in the past few years, these health programs have provided a foundation to prevent, detect, and respond to infectious diseases of epidemic potential, which helps protect the American people.

America's message must be shared with the world at all times. The FY 2019 budget request further defends and advances America's values by devoting \$565 million to public diplomacy programs. These programs are essential to informing public opinion abroad and communicating

American values like respect for human rights and the rule of law. The people of the world must know not only the policies, but also the principles for which the United States stands. Even as our public diplomacy budget calls for greater burden-sharing of long-standing programs, the \$55.4 million requested for the Global Engagement Center covers both its original counter-extremist mission, plus an increase of \$20 million to counter state-sponsored disinformation campaigns. We will not tolerate Russian interference in the 2018 elections, and we must take countermeasures in response to an effort to do so.

Finally, I would like to update you on what is happening inside the Department. The Department's workforce is our most valuable asset. Since becoming Secretary, one of my highest priorities has been ensuring that the finest diplomatic corps in the world is fully prepared and empowered to achieve our mission. I am unleashing our teams to do what they do best on behalf of the American people.

Just last week I held my first town hall in which I laid out my leadership vision, and committed to working as one team with all our personnel. I'm listening to their expertise and counsel.

With so many challenges before us, the State Department needs a full team on the field, from locally employed staff around the world to senior leaders in Washington. That's why I lifted the Eligible Family Member hiring freeze as one of my first acts as Secretary, and also lifted the hiring freeze for all Foreign Service and Civil Service personnel last week. All Foreign Service and Civil Service hiring will be consistent with the funding levels that Congress recently enacted.

Additionally, I know that our career professionals work best when the goals are clear and the leadership team is at full strength. I have devoted a great deal of time to filling vacancies at the Under Secretary, Assistant Secretary, and Ambassador levels. We need our men and women on the ground, executing American diplomacy with great vigor and energy, and representing our great nation. We need the best tools as well: this budget would also invest \$150 million for IT modernization. We need to work at the speed of 21st century diplomacy.

As I have said many times, my great goal is to restore the trademark State Department swagger that has been instrumental in advancing American security, prosperity, and liberty for centuries. I define swagger this way: we must be everywhere with the best ideas. We must create value during the policy formation process. We must outwork and out-hustle others. We must be aggressive in working with our allies and ferocious in defending American values against our adversaries.

Today I ask for your support to ensure that our diplomatic, development and organizational initiatives are successful for the State Department and USAID, and, most importantly, for the American people

Thank you for your time. I will be glad to answer any questions you may have.

Chairman ROYCE. Thank you very much, Mr. Secretary.

Let me begin by recognizing your efforts to secure the release of Americans wrongly detained in North Korea. So we are very glad to have them home.

When we think about what happened to Otto Warmbier, your efforts were all the more important in terms of securing them. You are one of the few Americans also to have met Kim Jong-un, and I would just ask you for your opinion on this. What are his goals for this negotiation?

Many have speculated that one of those goals is to try to split the U.S. and South Korea and our alliance with South Korea. I will just ask you what do you think his goal is here?

Secretary POMPEO. So in my conversations with him, we've talked about what our mutual goals are—the things that the world demands and that America demands and the things that North Korea wants to see for itself as well.

There's places where we still have lots of work to do to find common ground. But he has shared, candidly, that he understands that economic growth for his people, the well-being of his people depends on a strategic shift and we hope he's prepared to make that.

Our demands have been unambiguous. When I spoke with him, I could not have been clearer about the scope of the verification work that would be required—all of the elements that would be necessary in order for America to understand that there had been real denuclearization. He took those on board. In return, he made clear it was important to him that when that time came—when those objectives had been achieved—that he, in turn, would receive economic help from America in the form of private sector businesses, knowledge know-how from others, perhaps—contributions, foreign assistance, and the like and that he wanted security assurances from the world—the end of the status that sits between South and North Korea, with the eventual goal of being a peace treaty.

Those were the objectives we discussed. I am very hopeful that he and President Trump will get a chance to elaborate on that further in the next couple weeks.

Chairman ROYCE. As you prepare for the potential June summit in Singapore, I think it's very important we keep the pressure applied here to the Kim regime.

I will ask you this question—when will the administration begin implementing sanctions against shipping registries—this is something that I've had a particular concern about—on those governments that knowingly violate U.N. Security Council resolutions barring trade with North Korea?

These were mandated by Title 3 of the act we passed here, the Countering America's Adversaries Through Sanctions Act.

Secretary POMPEO. I don't know the answer to that. Let me get back to you, Congressman Royce. I do know the administration has, again, redoubled its efforts on ship-to-ship transfers—

Chairman ROYCE. Okay.

Secretary POMPEO [continuing]. Something I think is imperative. With respect to the registry and sanctions, if I may I will take that back for the record.

Chairman ROYCE. I appreciate that.

The last question I was going to ask you, Mr. Secretary, is for those who've talked to anybody who's ever been in and out of those prison camps in North Korea, it is a human rights nightmare.

You have got over 100,000 North Koreans suffering in barbaric conditions in those camps. It's important that any future economic engagement with North Korea not empower the regime to continue its brutal mistreatment of Koreans in that kind of circumstance, and regardless of any agreement, we should be ramping up, I think, Radio Free Asia broadcasting and dissemination of information.

And I think it's critical that we maintain our military deterrence. Last week, the U.S. reportedly cancelled a U.S. B-52 bomber exercise over South Korea. Was this a concession to Kim Jong-un's regime?

Secretary POMPEO. Chairman Royce, I will leave the discussion of that military exercise to Secretary Mattis. It is my view that we have made zero concessions to Chairman Kim to date and we have no intention of doing so.

Chairman ROYCE. Thank you, Mr. Secretary.

Well, in our interest to get to all the members, I am going to go to Mr. Engel now for his questions.

Thank you.

Secretary POMPEO. Thank you.

Mr. ENGEL. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Mr. Secretary, budgets reflect an administration's values, or lack thereof, and I realize a lot of this happened before you came. So we are looking for you—

Secretary POMPEO. For 2020, yes.

Mr. ENGEL [continuing]. To try to right the wrong. The international affairs budget proposal that President Trump now has sent to Congress 2 years in a row brings with it a clear message to the world that the United States has no interest in maintaining our global leadership role because of the cuts.

It's a budget that makes Americans less safe. And as you know, I am not alone in feeling this way. Over 150 retired generals and admirals, former Secretaries of State from both parties, Fortune 500 CEOs, and religious leaders all agree that the administration's proposed cuts to the international affairs budget would have a devastating effect on U.S. global leadership.

So why are all these people wrong? In the last 2 years, Congress restored the cuts. Is Congress wrong, too? I would like to hear your views on it and I hope you will lead us into a more enlightened path than we've seen so far.

Secretary POMPEO. Ranking Member Engel, thanks for the question.

Here's the commitment I've made to the team at the State Department, the commitment I've made to President Trump, the commitment I will make to you here today.

I will ensure that the State Department has every dollar it needs to achieve its mission around the world. You mentioned the international affairs budget. There's humanitarian assistance money. There's lots of different pieces of the State Department's budget. I will make sure we have every single dollar we need and not \$1 more.

Mr. ENGEL. And I hope not \$1 less.

Secretary POMPEO. Every dollar we need, not \$1 more.

Mr. ENGEL. This past March, Ranking Member Cummings, Senator Menendez, and I wrote to the State Department expressing concern over allegations that senior officials, including the Director of Policy Planning, retaliated against career State Department employees based on their national origin or because they were perceived as not sufficiently loyal to the President.

Do you believe officials who targeted career employees in this way should be working at the State Department?

Secretary POMPEO. I do not.

Mr. ENGEL. Thank you. In the letter I sent with Ranking Member Cummings and Senator Menendez, we requested access to emails and other documents, a request that Heather Nauert confirmed to the press would be granted.

So far we haven't heard anything. Can you give us an idea of when will we be granted access to those documents?

Secretary POMPEO. I can't, but I will get you an answer. You have my commitment I will have you an answer on the time line by the end of this week.

Mr. ENGEL. Okay. Thank you.

And finally, you said—and I agree with you—that Russia is working to interfere in this year's election just as it did in 2016. Has the administration done enough to deter and countering Russian interference in our next election, which is only 6 months away?

Secretary POMPEO. Indeed, elections are ongoing, as you all know better than I do, right. We have primary elections going on even as we speak.

There is a great deal more work to do. Having said that, I am incredibly proud of the work that this administration has done in countering Russia. It is light years better than was done in the previous administration. I could go on for a long time speaking about them. I am happy to enumerate them if you'd like to do so.

But I have to say there's more work to do. We have not been able to achieve effective deterrence of some of these efforts of the Russians. But this administration has taken enormous efforts to push back against Russia that haven't been done in an awfully long time either here in the United States or, frankly, from our partners who are even more threatened by Russia than we are in Europe and elsewhere.

Mr. ENGEL. So is it your position that the administration has forestalled the next attack on our democracy? Because if so, I haven't seen it.

Secretary POMPEO. No responsible government official would ever state that they believe they've done enough to forestall any attack on the United States of America.

We work diligently at it each day. We reduce threats. We take them from the battlefield. We take them from the economic sphere. We reduce them diplomatically. We work at it hard every day. But I will never share with you that I believe we have accomplished that to 100 percent certainty.

Mr. ENGEL. Okay. I look forward to working with you on all these issues. There are, obviously, many important issues—our

support for Israel, Iran's aggression, and we could go on and on—and I hope that this committee can be a partner with you.

Our views may diverge, but we are all Americans and we all care about these issues and I think it's very important to discuss them, to have hearings, and we are glad that you're here this morning.

Secretary POMPEO. Yes, sir. I am counting on the partnership with this committee on both sides of the aisle.

Mr. ENGEL. Okay. Thank you.

Chairman ROYCE. Ileana Ros-Lehtinen of Florida.

Ms. ROS-LEHTINEN. Thank you so much, Mr. Chairman.

Mr. Secretary, welcome. It's great to see you in this position. I wanted to commend you and the administration for calling this week's election in Venezuela what it was—a sham and illegitimate.

The administration has stood strong in support of the Venezuelan people, using new Executive orders and targeting the Maduro regime with sanctions. Thank you for that.

I also want to thank you for the actions the administration has taken against the Ortega regime. The situation in Nicaragua is quickly deteriorating and it is alarming—over 75 killed and hundreds more injured or detained in just these past weeks.

We need to take swift action before we are facing a similar situation—a crisis in Nicaragua—that we face in Venezuela.

I urge the administration to press our friends in the Senate to pass our NICA bill so it has even more tools at its disposal to hold Ortega accountable. We passed it out of the full House twice already.

I also wanted to follow up on a letter that I had sent to you last week alongside Congressman Deutch, McCaul, and Lowey. We've met with the families of the American citizens and legal permanent residents being held in Iran many times and it's clear that they're growing frustrated.

They see Americans being freed from North Korea and they are so happy for them and their families, but I only reminds them that there hasn't been any continuity or leadership within the administration to resolve their cases.

But now that the President has announced his intent to appoint a special Presidential envoy for hostage affairs, we sincerely hope that this individual will lead on those hostage cases and have the authority to bring them home.

I ask for a written response on this following question, Mr. Secretary. Does the administration support the Reciprocal Access to Tibet Act, H.R. 1872?

It's a common sense that would help stop China's destabilizing behavior in Tibet by revoking the visa of any Chinese official found to be responsible for restricting the access of U.S. citizens to Tibet.

And then the one question that I have for you to answer—the what question—I wanted to follow up on something that I had asked Ambassador Satterfield last month. He said he would get me a written response but I don't—I don't have it yet.

What is the justification for allowing the PLO office to remain open, given the lapse in waiver authority with no new waiver having been issued?

And it's particularly timely, Mr. Secretary, given that the Palestinians submitted a referral on Israel to the ICC this week, which would trigger several provisions of U.S. law.

So that's the one question I have and thank you for the administration moving the Embassy to its rightful capital.

Secretary POMPEO. Congresswoman Ros-Lehtinen, thank you.

With respect to leaving the office open without a waiver, with your permission I will get back to you and find out the details. There may be a legal issue that I am not aware of.

With respect more broadly to issues there, continued funding for UNRRA is under review. We are trying to figure out how to make sure we get that right, to continue to make sure that there's security while not rewarding bad behavior. We are deeply aware of the Taylor Force Act and its implications as well and we are working through that process.

I've had one chance to be briefed on the State Department's role there. There will be more. And if I might take just 1 second to address two other points you made, first, with respect to Venezuela we did this morning receive a formal notification that our charge d'affaires had been PNGed.

We will respond appropriately, certainly, reciprocally. But perhaps more than that, perhaps proportionately.

We understand that there's a second U.S. officer who will also be PNGed. We are watching the Maduro regime continue to engage in destructive behavior for the Venezuelan people.

And then, finally, you opened with your concerns about the hostages being held by the Islamic Republic of Iran. I know those cases well—the case of Bob Levinson. I mentioned three others in my remarks on Monday.

I know Mr. O'Brien as well, who will be our special envoy, know that it will be a very important part of what the State Department does to try and get not only those held in Iran but Americans held throughout the world back home to their families. It was quite a remarkable thing to be able to bring home three from North Korea. There remains a great deal of work to do.

Ms. ROS-LEHTINEN. It's so wonderful to have you in this post. Thank you, Mr. Secretary.

Mr. Chairman.

Chairman ROYCE. Mr. Brad Sherman of California.

Mr. SHERMAN. I will have a number of statements and questions for the record. I know we have this 5-minute time limit and I look forward to reading most of your answers.

As to Iran—you knew I would do that—as to Iran, we need to get Europe on our side to impose sanctions, whether or not they view those as sanctions because they don't like the Iran deal or because they don't like Iran's other non-nuclear policies.

I want to thank you for bringing to the attention of our European friends the assassinations that Iran has been responsible for in Europe. I know you faced some push back on that.

But whether it's the death in Bulgaria in 2012 by the assassination of Hezbollah, an Iranian surrogate, or whether it's the death just last year in Istanbul or whether it's the Netherlands assassination of an advocate for the Arab minority in Iran, there are assassinations in Europe.

And you should know that sitting right there Secretary Kerry told this committee that it is fully consistent with the JCPOA for the United States to impose sanctions on Iran for their non-nuclear wrongdoing including sanctions against the Central Bank of Iran.

I had only wished that the administration had gone to Europe, urging sanctions for that reason rather than asking them to repudiate the JCPOA.

I want to associate myself with the ranking member as to the issue of resources and particularly ask you to focus on appointing an East Asia and South Asia Assistant Secretary.

As to Pakistan, it is a country of great importance to us and has various regions. I hope the State Department would do public diplomacy in the Sindhi language and I hope that you would reach out to the leaders of Pakistan about the disappearances in Sindh—the force disappearances.

As to North Korea, I can understand that your bargaining position is a complete immediate dropping of their entire nuclear weapons program in a verifiable and irreversible manner.

That has been referred to as the Libya model. I would hope that, while you can go into negotiations with that, if you can come out with verifiable limitations, an end to the creation of new fissile material, a halt permanently to their ICBM program, that should not be regarded as a failure simply because you don't get complete verifiable irreversible denuclearization of the Korean Peninsula.

As to Turkey, I hope that the administration would oppose the sale and prevent the sale of the F-35s. They are not a weapon to be used against terrorists. They're a weapon to be used against Greece.

And I hope the State Department would at least be neutral should Congress consider, as we are considering, the remembrance of the millions of Armenian, Greek, Assyrian, Chaldean, and Syriac victims of the Ottoman Empire at the beginning of the last century.

As to our trade deficit with China, that grew from \$309 billion to \$337 billion in the first year of the administration and I hope that we don't see a shuffle where we continue to import oil, then China buys our oil and natural gas, and then we are told, oh, we've done something about the trade deficit. We should not count oil and gas exports to China as a reduction in the trade deficit.

I would hope that when you talk to President Sisi you urge him to protect the Christian minority and note that only 53 permits have been issued to renovate or build churches when over 5,500 applications have been made.

One question for an oral response or a quick response, and that is: Can we meet our challenges around the world with a 30 percent cut in the foreign aid budget?

Secretary POMPEO. I am still poring through the reports on this. A 30 percent cut seems like an awful lot to achieve, so you have my word. As I said, we are going to get this piece right, I assure you.

And I want to comment on one other. I am close to making a number of significant announcements about new members of the team—Assistant Secretary for East Asia Affairs and South Central Asia amongst them.

Ambassador Shannon is retiring here shortly. We'll need a replacement for him and we are very close to moving along. We've got to get them through the Senate, but I am looking forward to getting the whole team built back.

Chairman ROYCE. We go now to Chris Smith of New Jersey.

Mr. SMITH. Mr. Secretary, thank you for your leadership. Thank you for recognizing the existential threat that Iran poses with regards to nuclear weapons and for recognizing what needs to be done to try to get us to a better place and a negotiated text that is viable and predictable and will protect the security of the United States, Israel, and others. So thank you for that.

Mr. Secretary, as author of the Trafficking Victims Protection Act, a law that created a comprehensive whole of government approach to combatting sex and labor trafficking, protecting women from this unbelievable cruelty, both domestically and internationally, I respectfully ask, if you would, to move as quickly as possible on appointing an Ambassador-at-Large.

That post, which is the point person, has gone unfulfilled, and I know you're new on the job, and I know that you care deeply about that issue. Please move on that.

And in like manner, in 2004 I authored the Anti-Semitism Special Envoy. That too has not been filled, and I know you care deeply about combatting this scourge of anti-Semitism which is rising all over the globe. Please move on that as well.

Secretary POMPEO. You have my word we'll move on them.

Mr. SMITH. I appreciate that.

And thank you for ratcheting up the pressure on Joseph Kabila. You know, we have been working really hard in our Subcommittee on Africa, Global Health, Global Human Rights, and International Organizations.

We want a smooth transition, as smooth as possible, and Kabila certainly has the capability to cause unbelievable violence and war, and the sanctions certainly play a real—and I know you have already meted out some of those sanctions.

I especially want to thank you for designating India, Brazil, and now Japan as violative of the Sean and David Goldman International Child Parental Abduction Return Act.

Japan is notorious for not returning American children, including American service members' children, and your department now has taken that step which previously was not done to say they are non-compliant with the Goldman Act, and I deeply appreciate that and I hope there will be follow-up on sanctions with that.

With regards to the negotiations with China, one of the big misses with North Korea, China, and Iran, especially with the hostages, was not including human rights in the talks.

Andrew Natsios, who worked on North Korea issues very effectively—a former USAID Administrator—said the big miss with North Korea was keeping human rights separate from all the negotiations. So I encourage you, if you would. Xi Jinping is in a race to the bottom with Kim, frankly, and other dictators around the world on religious freedom persecution and like-minded human rights abuses. So please make that a more robust part of the efforts. I know you, personally, believe that and I hope you will do that.

And, finally, over the last couple of days, weeks, I've been meeting with Hua Qu, whose husband has now been held in Iran in Evin Prison for 653 days. Her husband, Xiyue Wang, is an American. He's a graduate student and has done nothing wrong. He had all the preclearances before he went to Iran to do his studies and then before he returned was arrested and has been maltreated.

His wife, at a big Princeton rally that she put together, said, and I quote—very, very telling—she appealed to you and to the President. “My husband,” she said, “is an innocent man, Mr. President. He is in prison solely because he is an American.”

I just encourage you and I know you believe this and we now have a hostage and perhaps it'll be part of his portfolio—Mr. O'Brien—Charles O'Brien—who will work on this. It has to be 24/7 to get these Americans to safety because they are being used as pawns by the Iranian regime.

And, again, having seen her tears, her family, her little boy, it just breaks your heart. So the more you can do on that, the better.

Secretary POMPEO. Yes, sir. She is correct in her analysis. Her husband is completely innocent and held for a singular reason, and I hope you will come out and join me at the State Department in a couple weeks when we roll out our International Religious Freedom Report. I invite all of you to join us. It's an important day. Much work to be done there as well.

Mr. SMITH. Thank you very much, and I would note David Saperstein, our former Ambassador-at-Large, obviously, did a wonderful job, and Sam Brownback is doing a wonderful job. You're doing a great job on religious freedom. It is one of the most elemental of all human rights in the world. It is under assault perhaps as never before from radical Islamic belief to communist dictatorships.

So, again, I want to thank you for the work that you're doing on that. My hope is that Vietnam will be designated a CPC country. I also hope that Erdogan in Turkey would also be so designated for what he has done years to date against the Orthodox as well as so many others.

So I thank you.

Chairman ROYCE. Mr. Greg Meeks of New York.

Mr. MEEKS. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Mr. Secretary, I have some concerns because I can recall your immediate predecessor sitting here and he said almost exactly the same thing that you said about the budget—that they would not spend \$1 more. And yet, we received such drastic cuts that you heard Mr. Engel speak about and other members.

So I am worried about that aspect of it. You know, when preparing for this hearing I couldn't help but go back and I looked at some videotape, and the videotape was actually of you, Mr. Secretary, and the attitude that you had about a predecessor—you didn't give her any courtesy when Secretary Hillary Clinton was sitting in a seat before the Benghazi Committee and you scolded her. You went after her with venom. I couldn't believe the tape when I saw it and you basically went after her about the QDDR report, which you said only included two pages of Diplomatic Security. You then said and implied and said clearly that meant that the report had no balance and therefore diplomacy security was

only mentioned a few times and so the insinuation was that therefore the Secretary was not interested in Diplomatic Security. That came from your mouth at that time at that testimony.

So I went back and I looked at your testimony, Mr. Secretary, when you were before the Senate for confirmation. I waited patiently here listening to your testimony here today, Mr. Secretary.

I have not heard you mention one single time about Diplomatic Security—not once—not once. And then, I know at the time too, and I will try not to play with my colleague playing politics but we are here on hallowed soil so I think we've got to get to the facts of the matter, and on the facts of the matter we heard the majority leader, Kevin McCarthy, at the time say that it was about bringing Hillary Clinton down.

And so I hear that I may be giving you the benefit of the doubt. If it wasn't about bringing Hillary Clinton down at the time, then I ask you, Mr. Secretary, should we conclude that because you have not mentioned it, not once, should we conclude, based upon that fact, that you do not care about Diplomatic Security, Mr. Secretary? Haven't heard it from you—not once.

Secretary POMPEO. No. You should not conclude that.

Mr. MEEKS. Okay. I will take you at your word.

Secretary POMPEO. You should note—if I may—if I may respond—

Mr. MEEKS. I will take you at your word. You said no. I take you at your word.

Secretary POMPEO. No, but I feel like I need at least—

Mr. MEEKS. I only have 5 minutes so I am going to take you at your word. You will have time. I am going to take you at your word—

Secretary POMPEO. You should know the very first briefing—

Mr. MEEKS [continuing]. Because I happen to agree with you.

Secretary POMPEO [continuing]. The very first briefing I received as a nominee was from the head of Diplomatic Security.

Mr. MEEKS. I happen—Mr. Secretary—

Secretary POMPEO. You should know that the very first briefing I received—

Mr. MEEKS. Reclaiming my time. Mr. Secretary, I happen to agree with you.

Secretary POMPEO [continuing]. When I became the Secretary of State was from the head of Diplomatic Security.

Mr. MEEKS. I happen to agree with you.

Secretary POMPEO. You should know that I am diligently working on it. I am—

Mr. MEEKS. I happen to agree with you, Mr. Secretary.

Secretary POMPEO. I take Diplomatic Security very seriously. Never make an accusation of that kind.

Mr. MEEKS. I happen to agree with you. Oh, now the real Secretary is coming out.

Chairman ROYCE. If I—if I could just—if I could just explain.

Mr. MEEKS. I am reclaiming my time.

Chairman ROYCE. Okay. We are going to give you time but we want to give the Secretary a chance to respond.

Mr. MEEKS. Well, he didn't do that with Secretary—

[Crosstalk.]

Chairman ROYCE. Okay.

Mr. MEEKS. He did not—he did not do that with Secretary Clinton, let me tell you that.

Chairman ROYCE. Okay. Well, we are going to—we are going to proceed with the questions and the answers.

Mr. MEEKS. But I agree. I am taking him at his word that because—simply because something is not mentioned in a report it does not mean that someone doesn't care. I believe that you do. That's why I am taking you at your word.

But I think that we can conclude that what does matter is how much money is appropriated for Diplomatic Security, and in this whole thing, when I look at the budgets that was for Diplomatic Security I saw that in fiscal year—under the Obama administration, over \$3 billion went to Diplomatic Security. But once President Trump came in, I see it went down to \$2.1 billion and fiscal year 2019 down to \$1.6 billion.

So the budget or the money for Diplomatic Security has gone down about 45 percent from the Obama administration. So where is the concern now on the side of this administration about Diplomatic Security?

Secretary POMPEO. Diplomatic Security is not about dollars expended. It's about delivering real security. It's about getting the right outcomes. It's about having the right people in place. It's about being thoughtful about where you put people.

We are going to take risks. We are going to be an expeditionary State Department. I think President Trump demands it. I think each of you do as well.

But I will take a back seat to no one with respect to caring about and protecting the people that—

Mr. MEEKS. Nor did Hillary Clinton take a back seat about diplomatic security in this country.

Chairman ROYCE. Okay. [Sounds gavel.] Order.

Next in the queue is Mr. Dana Rohrabacher or California.

Mr. ROHRABACHER. Mr. Secretary, might I suggest that we have more opportunities and I hope that now that you are the Secretary to talk to you privately and have discussions like this so we wouldn't have to use up time at a hearing and do things publically. So I hope that—

Secretary POMPEO. Mr. Rohrabacher, can I say this? I would welcome that with as many of you as I can. My theory on this is as many cups of coffee as we can have to have these discussions, the more we can work together to achieve American—

Mr. ROHRABACHER. Let's have some of those sessions so people can get their points across and have a discussion because we are limited with time here.

I am very pleased that we have an administration now and a Secretary like yourself who knows that we shouldn't be treating enemies like friends. We should be treating enemies like enemies and friends like friends, not the other way around, and I am afraid that our Government quite often has gotten into that pattern.

I would like to ask—based on that concept, I would hope that we are going to be supporting the Kurds. Erdogan has become our enemy. He is not our friend and the Kurds are the people who need our help.

I hope that we are going to have a relationship with India and Japan and accelerate that relationship because that is pivotal. They are friends that are pivotal to helping us defeat our enemies.

I understand that the budget request has no increase for Pakistan. I don't see any reason whatsoever to give the Government of Pakistan any money in terms of our foreign aid until Dr. Afridi, the man who helped us bring justice to Osama bin Laden, the man who slaughtered 3,000 Americans and our Pakistani friends have proven their friendship by keeping him in a dungeon.

In Afghanistan, we have a great friend, a man—if anybody's seen "12 Strong"—helped defeat the Taliban and Dr.—and right now, he is the vice—supposedly the vice president, General Dostum—he is in virtual exile now and he's—there's been assassination attempts. I hope that we make it very clear that General Dostum is the guy who can defeat the Taliban. He's done it before, and we need to stick by him.

Third, again, Egypt—in Egypt now we have a government that is against radical Islamic terrorists and in fact they replaced a government that was pro-Muslim Brotherhood.

But we have policies that make it more difficult for Egypt to purchase American weapons than when Egypt was under the President who was part of the Muslim Brotherhood.

This is ridiculous. I hope that that would get your attention.

Finally, Iran—congratulations on taking hold of this situation and stepping forward with positive leadership as you have. Let me just note, when it comes back to treating your enemies as enemies and your friends as friends, we have a lot of friends in Iran.

People always mistake, and I keep reminding our folks here, the Iranian mullah regime—that's the enemy. The people of Iran are our friends.

These folks over here in their yellow jackets, these are Iranians who love freedom and we need to make sure that we work with the Baloch, with the Kurds, with the Azaris, and others, and the Persians who are pro-freedom in Iran and be proactive like Ronald Reagan was when he ended the Cold War and we can defeat the mullah regime without having a military operation by helping these people who believe in freedom.

And now I've given you a minute to reply. [Laughter.]

Secretary POMPEO. If I might, I will try and tackle two of those. I will tackle Pakistan and then the Kurds, if that's okay.

So with respect to Pakistan, we released far fewer funds in 2018 than in the year prior. The remainder of the funds available are under review. My guess is that that number will be smaller still.

I worked diligently on the issue of Dr. Afridi in my previous role, unsuccessfully. Please be aware that it's in my heart and I know it's important and we can do that. We can achieve that outcome.

Mr. ROHRABACHER. When it's getting worse in Pakistan—if people in Karachi and the Sindh and the others, they are now facing these—you know, people who are killing their leaders or killing their people who believe in certain things that are different than the radical Islamic philosophy of some of the people in the Pakistani Government.

Secretary POMPEO. Our State Department officials are being treated badly as well. The folks working in the Embassies and in

the consulates and other places are not being treated well by the Pakistani Government either—a real problem that we need to take the measure of also.

If it's okay, I will get back to you on the Kurds in a written note.

Mr. ROHRABACHER. All right, and as I say, Mr. Secretary, looking forward to some private sessions where we can all discuss things.

Secretary POMPEO. Thank you.

Chairman ROYCE. Albio Sires of New Jersey.

Mr. SIRES. Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Thank you, Mr. Secretary, for being here.

Mr. Secretary, going to the Western Hemisphere, as I look at it, being a part of the Subcommittee on the Western Hemisphere, I look at Venezuela, which basically has become a satellite of Cuba with Cuba having 30,000 people or more in Venezuela running just about everything, from security to all the other things that run somehow in Venezuela.

The other concern that I have is, obviously, Nicaragua—I am glad that the administration is finally speaking up on Nicaragua. I think we definitely have to support those student and the people that are on the streets.

But one of the things that always concerns me is as part of the Ayatollah's efforts to export the revolution, it seems that we have been building cultural centers in some of these Latin American countries.

Are we really monitoring to see how much influence they have and how many they're opening? I mean, they started out with 10. Now they're about 100.

I am concerned about the security. Can you—

Secretary POMPEO. I don't know the answer to how well or how frequently we are monitoring that. I will get you an answer.

Mr. SIRES. Okay, because I think—

Secretary POMPEO. I am aware of this issue but I don't know what monitoring is taking place.

Mr. SIRES. Okay. Going now to Cyprus, are we considering to lifting the arms embargo in Cyprus so we can sell them arms?

What's happening in Cyprus is Turkey keeps sending people, more and more on their side, and this is an issue that the Cyprus people feel that they have to have in order to protect themselves, and we have an arms embargo.

I know that you only just got to the State Department but these are questions that I think that we should look into.

Secretary POMPEO. I will mention this. I don't want to address that issue in particular but, rather, talk about issues in the Eastern Med, more broadly.

I met with the Greek Foreign Minister on Monday of this week. There is a great deal of work we have—increasing threats—that America has enormous interests that we have to figure out precisely how to deal with each of them. It's a complex place.

Congressman Rohrabacher mentioned Turkey. Maybe a couple others have as well. We have a NATO ally, that I will meet with their Foreign Minister early next week to try and plot a path forward together with them in Syria but who is proving incredibly difficult.

Mr. SIREs. And I hope that you consider not giving them the F-35s in the future. It seems that we give and give and give, and we get slapped in the face when we need them.

I represent the largest Coptic Christian community in New Jersey and I am always very concerned about the security.

I hope that the State Department makes an effort to really concentrate on the safety of the Coptic Christians in Egypt. It is important there were over 16 million Coptic Christians in Egypt and they were under assault day in and day out.

So if we can put more pressure on the Government of Egypt to give them more protection, that would be good for all those people that are under such pressure.

Secretary POMPEO. Thank you.

I think the administration has done a reasonably good job. I think we've made real efforts. I agree with you that there remains a great deal of work to do to make sure that they have the protections they need to practice their religion in Egypt.

Mr. SIREs. And going back—I have about a minute—and going back to the Iran question, they seem to be building more and more their forces in Syria.

How closely are we monitoring this? It seems that they're getting ready for something.

Secretary POMPEO. So I actually am very familiar with this issue—the Iranian efforts in Syria. Their forces have expanded modestly over this past 24 months. But they have become more willing and more capable.

That is, the weapons that they have moved into Syria have become more capable. That is, their capacity to threaten the region including Israel has increased over those same 24, even 36 months now.

It is a difficult complex environment to respond in. Rest assured, we are working closely with our European partners, our Israeli, our Arab partners.

We are well aware of the threat from Iran and we are working to develop details under the strategy I laid out on Monday about how to respond to that.

Mr. SIREs. And how is the investigation on what happened in Cuba going with our diplomats?

Secretary POMPEO. So the Accountability Review Board, I am told, will have a report to me by the middle of next week.

And if I may, you're speaking about the incidents—the incidents in Havana?

Mr. SIREs. Yes.

Secretary POMPEO. If I might add here for the benefit of those who saw the news last night, we had an incident in Guangzhou that the medical indications are very similar and entirely consistent with the medical indications that have taken place to Americans working in Cuba.

One incident—we announced it to the workforce while we slept here last night. We have medical teams that are moving to be on the ground there. We are working to figure out what took place both in Havana and now in China as well.

We've asked the Chinese for their assistance in doing that and they have committed to honoring their commitments under the Vienna Convention to keep American Foreign Service officers safe.

Mr. SIRES. Thank you.

Chairman ROYCE. We appreciate very much your department keeping us in the loop on this as this proceeds.

We go to Steve Chabot of Ohio.

Mr. CHABOT. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

And Mr. Secretary, as a founding member of the Congressional Taiwan Caucus, I would like to focus first on one of our key allies in what can be, obviously, a very dangerous world—the nation of Taiwan—and I say nation intentionally.

It's not a faux pas. Taiwan has been a de facto independent country for more than half a century now. They, of course, have to put up with China's bullying on an ongoing basis.

The State Department had a self-imposed policy that prevented top Taiwanese officials—the President, Vice President, Foreign Minister, and Defense Minister—from coming to the United States, including to our Nation's capital here, Washington, DC.

They could transit through, say, Los Angeles or San Francisco as they headed to South America, for example, but that was it.

And top U.S. officials couldn't travel to Taiwan. That policy was disrespectful and counterproductive, in my view. Recently, the House unanimously passed H.R. 535 and I would like to thank my Democratic colleague, Mr. Brad Sherman, as well as Chairman Royce and others for joining me as principal sponsors in what passed the House unanimously and passed the Senate unanimously, and then President Trump—God bless him—signed it into law.

I would note that the resolution not only allows high-level visits but encourages them.

Mr. Secretary, I would like to encourage you and the rest of the administration to take advantage of this, and I don't want to put you on the spot or anything but I would hope that at some point in the not too distant future, President Tsai of Taiwan herself could come and address a joint session of Congress or visit President Trump in the White House.

So, that being said, Mr. Secretary, could you comment on the Taiwan Travel Act and how you would see it working in real time?

Secretary POMPEO. In my previous role, I was part of the discussions around that, trying to at least understand American national security implications for it.

The administration has had many discussions. We understand its implications, not only its urgings but the direction of travel that was required by that, and you should have great confidence that we will continue to abide by that.

My recollection is there was an Assistant Secretary that travelled there just before my time or maybe it was a couple months before my time.

Mr. CHABOT. Thank you very much, and we are sending a letter I believe today to John Bolton to encourage him perhaps to go as well. So my guess is he would probably like to do that.

So thank you very much.

The next thing I would like to mention, we had a hearing last week. I've introduced legislation a number of times. As you know, gas prices have gone up to \$3 a gallon in Cincinnati and other places. They're higher here in DC. But they're hurting a whole lot of people.

And it was called NOPEC—I would introduced it with John Conyers in the past. We'd passed it in the House. They passed it in the Senate. But it wasn't identical. There would be climate change stuff put in in the Senate. So for whatever reason we didn't get it across the finish line.

It's my understanding that President Trump likes the idea. In essence, what it does is it would allow the attorney general to file a lawsuit for anti-competitive violations, basically, which would be in violation of anti-trust law—the Sherman Act—and I would encourage you to take a look at that. The legislation, hopefully, will be passed here in the House in time in the near future and those OPEC companies who work with Russia and others are artificially keeping production down, which drives the price up. So if you would take a look at that I would greatly appreciate it.

Secretary POMPEO. I would be happy to.

Mr. CHABOT. Thank you.

Secretary POMPEO. And I also hope the good oil and gas people of your great state would get after it as well.

Mr. CHABOT. I totally agree with you.

And then one final thing I would like to do, and I would like to commend my colleague from Virginia, Mr. Connolly, for not letting the world forget about Crimea, which too often, I think, they have.

I think Russia's invasion and criminal annexation of part of Ukraine—Crimea—is going uncommented on by the rest of the world too often.

So if you could elevate that in any way I would greatly appreciate it. I don't know if in the little time you have left if you could comment on that.

Secretary POMPEO. I appreciate the need to elevate that. The last trip I took in my previous world was actually to the Donbass to see the challenges that are presented to Ukraine and its people there.

This is a very, very serious matter. The Russians annexed one-fifth of that country. We should never forget that that's the case.

Mr. CHABOT. Thank you very much.

Chairman ROYCE. Mr. Ted Deutch of Florida.

Mr. DEUTCH. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Welcome, Mr. Secretary. Thanks for your service to our country and thanks for being with us today.

As my colleagues know, I make the same request of every official who comes before this committee. You have already had a chance to speak to this and you and I have had many conversations over the years about Bob Levinson, the longest held American hostage, and all the other Americans who are held in Iran. I appreciate the commitment that you have made here today to focus on bringing them home and we are proud to be joined today by Bob's youngest son, Dan, who's sitting with us here.

Because there are now no longer any regular direct channel talks with Iran, where the American hostages were brought up on then sidelines, I just would ask that, at a minimum here, for you to com-

mit to continuing to communicate with the Levinson family to keep them apprised of the extent of your efforts to help bring him home.

Secretary POMPEO. Of course.

Mr. DEUTCH. I appreciate that.

Mr. Secretary, you said in your testimony that we won't tolerate Russian interference in the 2018 elections and we have to take countermeasures in response to an effort to do so.

I just wanted to get your quick response to something. Yesterday, particularly given your previous position—in January 2017, ODNI found the Russian Government favored the Trump campaign over Hillary Clinton and that Putin personally ordered to influence the campaign to undermine public faith in the American democratic process.

Yesterday, our Homeland Security Secretary said that she didn't believe that she'd seen that conclusion that the specific intent was to help President Trump win.

I just wanted to confirm that you share the view of the intelligence community and the conclusion that they reached in January 2017.

Secretary POMPEO. Yes. I haven't seen anything that would dissuade me from believing it's right. It's worth noting, however, that that particular judgment that was made was the least confirmed—that is, there was the least support for that and the intelligence committee report make that clear as well.

Mr. DEUTCH. So and just confirming that it's—it was still a conclusion reached by the intelligence community.

Secretary POMPEO. Yes, sir.

Mr. DEUTCH. Also, again, not tolerating Russian interference in 2018 also means, I think, that we need to fully understand everything that happened in 2016.

To that end, I just wanted to ask whether you support allowing the Mueller investigation to play out so that we can gather all of the necessary information to make conclusions about what happened in 2016 in order to safeguard, as you point out in your testimony, and prevent any Russian interference in the 2018 elections.

Secretary POMPEO. I am not going to comment on any of the ongoing investigations. As I said in my confirmation hearing, I was interviewed by Mr. Mueller's team. So I've been part of it. I was part of it in my role as Director of the CIA, providing information to committees here in the House, committees in the Senate as well.

I am simply going to make no comments about any of the ongoing investigations.

Mr. DEUTCH. On Iran, I want to just go back to the President's decision to withdraw from the JCPOA and where things stood the moment before that happened and just ask whether—as your sense of how things can go forward.

At that moment, there were ongoing discussions—negotiations with our European allies about addressing the shortfalls in the JCPOA, specifically, the inspections regime, the sunsets, and the ballistic missiles, and I would add human rights to that.

And the understanding was by a lot of us that if we could reach some agreement on those issues to strengthen the JCPOA and address those shortfalls that that would have been sufficient for the administration to remain in the deal.

There is this 180-day period now before the sanctions are fully implemented after the President's decision. Are those discussions continuing with our allies?

Is there any chance, if our allies were to agree to the demands of the administration to strengthen the JCPOA and there were an opportunity to achieve that with them, would that have an impact on what we do over the coming months following the President's announcement to withdraw from the JCPOA?

Secretary POMPEO. So we will certainly continue to work with our European partners. Indeed, the German Foreign Minister will be here on Thursday—tomorrow—or maybe it's even this afternoon when he will arrive.

I was part of those negotiations. While I don't want to go into the details, I can say this. We worked diligently during my 2 weeks as Secretary of State to try and bridge that gap and, ultimately, the three European countries would not sign up for that.

It's worth noting—so there were an extended period that negotiations took place, some of it—some of which predated my time. It's worth noting that during the entire duration of the JCPOA, in spite of their attested willingness to put additional sanctions in place, no sanctions were put in place.

So everyone—there was this discussion about how there were these—we can still continue with non-nuclear sanctions. The actual willingness to do that, to actually engage and say we are going to sanction Iranian missile conduct, for example, which would, if put in place properly, have required European businesses not to be in Iran—they're still engaged in this missile activity—I think we can all agree it didn't happen.

Mr. DEUTCH. And so are we prepared to fully impose secondary sanctions on our allies?

Chairman ROYCE. The gentleman's time is——

Secretary POMPEO. The answer is the sanctions are back in place today with a 90-day and a 180-day wind down period for different components.

Chairman ROYCE. Let me say, I appreciate our Mr. Ted Deutch's continued focus on Bob Levinson and his fate. Let me also add that I would add this with extreme caution, Mr. Secretary. The U.S. permanent resident, Nizar Zakka, is reported to have disappeared from prison in Iran and I hope the administration is working swiftly to locate him and ensure his well-being.

The reason I raise the point is there is reports not only that he was in poor health but also reports that he had been tortured. And so thank you for your engagement on this.

Secretary POMPEO. Yes, sir. We are aware of those reports as well.

Chairman ROYCE. Thank you.

We go to Mr. Joe Wilson of South Carolina.

Mr. WILSON. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

And Mr. Secretary, thank you for being here today. I had the extraordinary opportunity to lead a delegation for the opening of the Embassy in Jerusalem.

What a fabulous positive celebration this was, and I was really grateful for the leadership of President Trump, for your leadership,

Ambassador John Bolton, and, of course, the extraordinary Ambassador to the U.N., Ambassador Nikki Haley.

In working with Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu, I believe this will help promote the peace process in the Middle East. So thank you for your success.

Additionally, the question would be the results of the most recent elections in Lebanon change what's the status of U.S. policy? Do we need to make changes on how to provide our economic and security assistance to be more effective to counter Hezbollah and Iranian influence, and what do you see as the most effective tool pursuant to U.N. Security Council sanctions that the United States can promote to enforce the disarmament of Hezbollah which, today, has 150,000 missiles directed at Israeli families?

Secretary POMPEO. So I think there were three questions there. I will start with the last one with respect to Lebanese Hezbollah.

So we not only now have them as a problem in Lebanon, we have them as a problem in Syria as well—Iranian-funded, Iranian-fueled. Part of our Iran strategy is aimed, clearly, at reducing their capacity to create havoc and conduct terror operations around the world.

Second, you asked about the election. Certainly, changes, but ultimately it's our assessment at this point that the overall balance of power won't be materially changed as an outcome of that.

That's good and bad. The existing balance of power is not a good one in its own right and so there are real challenges about how America can introduce its influence and get Lebanon to move in the direction of that great nation.

To date, we've largely relied on two places including the Lebanese Armed Forces to help us achieve the security element of our efforts there and we need to review each of those to make sure that we are using American taxpayers' dollars right and supporting the groups that can most likely achieve our outcome there.

Mr. WILSON. I am also grateful that the administration is providing additional funds for European Deterrence Initiative to provide for military NATO troops and Estonia, Latvia, Lithuania, American troops in Poland.

To me, this is so important. But the challenge that you have is that only 15 of the 29 NATO allies have said that they would reach the 2 percent minimum by 2024.

What can we do to encourage our allies to better defend themselves to promote peace through strength?

Secretary POMPEO. President Trump should be credited with making real progress there. That is, there are more countries today meeting the 2 percent commitment. There's a corollary commitment of 20 percent for equipment as well—more countries achieving that as well.

I was with Jens Stoltenberg this past week. He's committed to putting pressure on each of them to do so. There's a NATO summit in July that the President will attend, and I hope that two things will take place—one, that every country will show up with a plan, at least, to get to 2 percent. Some of the countries, including Germany, have the financial wherewithal to do so and have simply chosen not to; and second, I hope that the countries that have

plans will move their date closer—that they will get to their 2 percent target in a more timely fashion.

Mr. WILSON. And I am really grateful, a rare example but it's true that we worked together with Gerry Connolly and Steve Chabot, and that is that we are concerned about Russian aggression, beginning in Moldova. Then it was the Republic of Georgia, and then 10,000 were killed in Ukraine.

What more can we do to work with our allies to provide proper equipment, particularly to the three nations that I mentioned, to stop the aggression by the Putin regime?

Secretary POMPEO. So, Congressman Wilson, I don't know the details of the armaments issues with respect to those three countries. I am happy to take a look at it.

I was with the Georgian prime minister. We had the seven U.S.-Georgian dialogue hosted at the State Department this week. We can keep these issues at the forefront.

We can make clear with respect to at least Georgia that we are working to get their accession to NATO. These are the kinds of things that can support the people of those countries in the right way.

We also, in that same neck of the woods, made the decision last year to provide defensive weapons systems to the Ukrainians—weapons systems that they have now used—and there is much work that remains—I concur, this is not partisan—much work that remains to promote those former Soviet entities who are on a path toward joining the Western world.

Mr. WILSON. And I've seen the success of Bulgaria and Romania, and now Georgia. Thank you.

Chairman ROYCE. We go now to Mr. Bill Keating of Massachusetts.

Mr. KEATING. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Good morning, Mr. Secretary. Three things—first, the President's reversal on the telecom giant from China, ZTE—you know, in 2012, the Permanent Select Committee on Intelligence of the House said that “This company could undermine core U.S. national security interests.”

Even last week, your nominee to the Counterterrorism Center said that they present a serious security risk to the United States. Even Senator Rubio said it'd be crazy to go back on this.

So it's really not an issue if it presents a security question. Yet, the President, by a tweet, took the pressure right off just 3 days after getting a loan arrangement that'll support the Trump brand and reverse this.

Now, either last night or this morning he said, well, maybe it could be dealt with with a fine or changing the principles of the company, which you know are run by the Chinese Government and influenced by the Chinese Government.

Number one, should that be reversed? Should that ban be reversed and, number two, should the President really divest himself of these business interests?

Now, second quick question is on the President's phone. There have been reports that his cell phone isn't equipped with sophisticated security devices and it exposes him to hacking and surveillance in that regard.

You wrote, Mr. Secretary, a couple of years ago, dealing with the former Secretary described for the letter and spirit of the law in her handling of classified information is not a political issue—it's a national security issue that puts American interests and American lives in danger.

Second question, will you advise the President to change his phone and make it more secure in that respect?

And finally, if you could, you said just a few minutes ago that security is about being thoughtful for where you put people. So I would like your opinion on the fact that in all the people in the administration and all the qualified people in the United States of America, the President has put the chief negotiator for Middle East peace in the hands of his son-in-law, Jared Kushner, who is limited in his knowledge of this because he's been denied security clearance necessary, really, to have a full grasp of that issue.

His temporary clearance was removed due to apparent conflicts of interest and a very large number of discrepancies on his SF-86 form.

So on those three questions, if you could, Mr. Secretary, please respond.

Secretary POMPEO. Sure. Let me take a swing at all three of them.

Mr. KEATING. Thank you.

Secretary POMPEO. I will try to do them in the sequence you provided them.

With respect to ZTE, you note that this threat has been known since 2012. You should note nothing was done in what now amounts to almost 6 years.

This administration is going to do something. We are still working on the appropriate response and how to address it. But it's worth noting that for 6 years, mostly under the previous administration, nothing was done.

Mr. KEATING. Mr. Secretary, but just a quick comment—

Secretary POMPEO. Sure.

Mr. KEATING [continuing]. That doesn't make it right.

Secretary POMPEO. No, sir. It doesn't.

Mr. KEATING. Either there is danger or there's not. The President has been in office for a year—over a year now and nothing was done, evidently.

Secretary POMPEO. I agree.

Mr. KEATING. So time to do it, right?

Secretary POMPEO. I agree. I agree. We need to make sure that America is secure from threats to all. There are multiples—ZTE is one amongst many of these same types of threats, and I look forward to working this. This seems to me a bipartisan issue.

Mr. KEATING. So it still should be banned?

Secretary POMPEO. We are going to get this right. We are going to reduce the risk from ZTE to America. It's still under review what's taking place. I've been part of some of the discussions, although not all of them.

But I understand, at least as of yesterday afternoon, no final resolution had been reached.

I will leave to others the President's phone. I won't walk away a single bit from what I said previously. Every government elected official has the responsibility to comply with—

Mr. KEATING. Including the President, Mr. Secretary?

Secretary POMPEO. Every government official—

Mr. KEATING. So who would tell him that, in your organization?

Secretary POMPEO. Congressman, I don't have any comment on that. We all have a responsibility.

Mr. KEATING. But excuse me—if you know it and it's true—if it is true, would you feel compelled to say, Mr. President, you got to change your phone—it's a security risk? Wouldn't you at least do that for America?

Secretary POMPEO. [Laughter.] I will tell you this. I will tell you this.

Mr. KEATING. You can't do that for America? Come on now.

Secretary POMPEO. We are both great patriots. I think we share that. I am going to do everything I can—

Mr. KEATING. You wouldn't tell the President if he had an unsecure phone, hey, Mr. President, you got to get a new phone? You wouldn't tell him that? Why wouldn't you tell him?

Secretary POMPEO. I have managed for 16 months not to talk about conversations I've had with the President. I do not—

Mr. KEATING. Well, have you had that conversation?

Secretary POMPEO. I do not intend to violate that principle today with respect to conversations between myself and the President.

Mr. KEATING. Well, I am going to take that, if you will, that you have never told the President, hey, you better get a new phone that's secure.

Secretary POMPEO. I can't account for how you will take it. I can only tell you that—

Mr. KEATING. You can't account for how he'll take it?

Secretary POMPEO. I can't account for how—

Mr. KEATING. Who can?

Secretary POMPEO. You shouldn't construe the absence of a comment from me one way or the other. Know this—every time I see a security issue, I try to do my best to face it, whether it's something that I got wrong or someone else made an error as well.

Chairman ROYCE. Mr. Mike McCaul of Texas.

Mr. MCCAUL. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

And Secretary, it's great to call you Secretary. It's great to see a friend and former colleague in the position that you are in, having travelled with you to the Middle East and Northern Africa.

I've seen you and your talent as a diplomat and we are just so proud of you in the House.

With respect to the allegations about the Diplomatic Security corps, I would just respond that nobody knows that issue better than you, having served on the Benghazi Commission where our Ambassador was killed in the previous administration.

I sort of think you appreciate that issue probably more than anyone. And so with that, I would like to move on to Iran. When you and I talked about the JCPOA when we were in the Congress together, we had concerns about the ballistic missile capability.

We had concerns about the inspections not being anytime anywhere, no access to military installations, and the \$150 billion that

has gone into terrorism that now we see as the Shi'a Crescent, as Netanyahu calls it, into Iraq, Syria, in Lebanon, and now Yemen.

I know you have these E-3 negotiations that apparently got pretty close to an agreement.

I applaud the efforts to move forward with more leverage on Iran by lifting the sanctions in a 90- to 180-day time frame.

Can you tell us about what the status of those negotiations are and if there is any path forward to come forward with a deal with our European allies, the Saudis, and Iran?

Secretary POMPEO. So we are not very far along. We are only a handful of days post the President's decision to withdraw from the JCPOA. But a number of discussions have taken place below the Foreign Minister level.

I am planning for, depending on, frankly, my schedule, sometime in earlier June or mid-June to gather up with a number of partners including the E-3 partners to plan our way forward.

There is near perfect overlap in our values and interests on this. There is no dispute about the Iranian missile program, about its malign behavior, about the assassinations that were spoken about earlier.

Everyone agrees to the problem set. We need to find a path forward together to address it, and economic sanctions get a lot of attention. They're important. They're an important tool.

But there's a great deal more to that, some of which we can talk about in this setting, some of which we cannot, each of which needs to be delivered globally.

So when you think about our allies, it's not just the three Europeans. We have Arab countries and their back yard. We have the airport in Riyadh that has missiles landing in it.

There are Americans going to land in the Riyadh airport within the next 12 hours. These are serious issues. We are simply asking Iran to be a normal country. Some said my remarks were fantasy. I hope it's not killing folks. Doesn't seem like a fantasy.

We demand it of every country in the world. We certainly ought to be able to achieve that and get our partners to agree to help Iran be——

Mr. McCAUL. Well, I think the President put the right man in the job to get that done. We have every faith and confidence in you.

North Korea—you're one of the few diplomats, if not the only American diplomat, to have met with Kim Jong-un, which is an incredible experience, I am sure.

We know their track record. We have constantly looked at sanctions to get to the negotiation table and they have consistently violated—they have consistently—they got out of the nuclear proliferation treaty—consistently pulled the rug out from under us.

So what is your sense of the man himself, having that opportunity to meet with him, and what is your sense of any optimism that we can achieve a true negotiation that's good for the United States with him?

Secretary POMPEO. So it is always with the deep knowledge of the history of the relationship and North Koreans' unwillingness to honor their commitment that, one, begins any discussion on this—one, eyes wide open that we have been fooled before and can't permit that to happen again.

Having said that, the discussions I've had with them, he knows the file. He doesn't use notes. He is speaking. We have real conversations through a translator, obviously. We would have had conversations about what America was prepared to do and how we might be prepared to do it—our demands, the things we need from North Korea in order to achieve that—real conversations, not stilted talking points, as we've had in the past with the North Koreans.

He's from a different generation and at a different time, and it's my hope that when he and President Trump get a chance to be together that we can get the North Koreans to make the strategic shift about how best to serve the country—that the nuclear weapons program isn't in fact the thing that keeps the regime in power but the thing that prevents the regime from being in a place it wants to be with economic success.

Mr. MCCAUL. Thank you, sir.

Chairman ROYCE. We go to David Cicilline of Rhode Island.

Mr. CICILLINE. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Mr. Secretary, welcome to the committee. I have four questions that really require a yes or no answer before I get to my other questions.

Will you, as Secretary of State, do what so many other Secretaries have not and recognize the genocide perpetrated by the Ottoman Empire against its Armenian citizens during World War I? Yes or no.

Secretary POMPEO. I can't answer that. I don't know the answer. I will review the issue.

Mr. CICILLINE. Okay.

You strongly criticized the Obama administration for not including issues like human rights in the nuclear deal with Iran.

Do you have a commitment from the Kim regime in North Korea, the most brutal dictatorship in the world, to take steps to alleviate the human suffering of their own people, including opening civil and political rights as part of any negotiated deal?

Secretary POMPEO. The issue was raised directly between me and Chairman Kim and it will be part of the discussions as we move forward.

Mr. CICILLINE. Will it be part of the deal? Do you have a commitment from the Kim regime?

Secretary POMPEO. We have broad outlines of what it is that each nation is prepared to do.

Mr. CICILLINE. Thank you, Mr. Secretary.

You said in response to written questions for the record during your Senate confirmation hearing that you would appoint a new special envoy for the human rights of LGBTI persons at the State Department.

That special envoy position has been vacant for some time. Will you expeditiously appoint someone fill that post?

Secretary POMPEO. Yes.

Mr. CICILLINE. And can you give us a time line?

Secretary POMPEO. No.

Mr. CICILLINE. Okay.

Secretary POMPEO. But just know, I have a couple dozen posts that are of similar importance, each of which we are working through and developing lists. Yes.

Mr. CICILLINE. Thank you.

You have talked a lot about supporting freedoms in the Middle East region. Have you raised your concerns with the Government of Saudi Arabia about the recent arrests of activists, particularly, women activists?

Secretary POMPEO. I've spoken with that with the leadership of Saudi Arabia, although I haven't had a chance to speak to them lately on—

Mr. CICILLINE. I hope you will.

Next, Mr. Secretary, I want to build on Mr. Keating's question about ZTE. Do you believe it's appropriate for the President's business organizations to benefit from Chinese Government loans and financial incentives while the administration considers official matters related to the Chinese Government?

Secretary POMPEO. I will leave that to others to comment on.

Mr. CICILLINE. Do you think it's appropriate?

Secretary POMPEO. Yes, I am going to leave that to others.

Mr. CICILLINE. Do you have an opinion as to whether that is appropriate?

Secretary POMPEO. Yes. That's, I think, six levels of hypothetical that I don't know the facts—

Mr. CICILLINE. Well, no, Mr. Secretary, with due respect, it's not hypothetical.

Secretary POMPEO. No, it is.

Mr. CICILLINE. The President reversed his decision and received a financial benefit. If in fact the President doesn't divest himself of his business interests, how will you ensure that this body, the Congress of the United States, that you are not engaging on matters of foreign policy and national security, where the President's interest is really the bottom line, in your mind, rather than the interests of the American people?

Secretary POMPEO. Well, first of all, I can assure that that's not true.

Second, I can prove now that it was a hypothetical. You said that the President had changed his position. It's still under review. We are still working our way through it.

Mr. CICILLINE. Mr. Secretary, if the President's business interests remain in place how will you assure the American people and this Congress that the decisions that you make on matters of foreign policy will be dictated by the best interests of the American people and not the financial benefits to the Trump organization or President Trump?

Secretary POMPEO. If I guess—I guess—

Mr. CICILLINE. When you don't even have an opinion as to whether or not it's a good thing or a bad thing.

Secretary POMPEO. I guess—

Mr. CICILLINE. You wouldn't even render an opinion as to whether or not you think it's appropriate for the President's business organization to benefit from financial loans and incentives from a government that you're negotiating with?

Secretary POMPEO. I am confident that the President will comply with the ethics rules that are in place. Right. So, yes—

Mr. CICILLINE. Mr. Secretary, that's a very disappointing answer, with all due respect.

Secretary POMPEO. I did—I did comment——

Mr. CICILLINE. I will go to my next question. In your speech on Iran this week, you outlined 12 demands for the Iranian Government now that President Trump has abandoned the JCPOA.

And while I agree with all the goals that you laid out in your list, I have to say it was more like a letter to Santa Claus than a policy document.

It's nice that you have 12 things that you want the Iranians to do. But that is far different from having the negotiating ability, the skill, and the coalition to support those efforts.

And from what I've seen so far, this administration has none of these things. In fact, this administration has been in power for a year and a half and nothing in the JCPOA prevented the administration from cracking down on Iran's malign activities in the region and they've done very little.

So why will it be different now how you translate this very lovely wish list into actual policy?

Secretary POMPEO. May I actually answer this question?

Mr. CICILLINE. Yes, please.

Secretary POMPEO. Thank you.

In the almost 3 years of the JCPOA, the Iranians marched across the Middle East. They conducted heinous activities. I don't know which of the 12 asks you would like me to get rid of. Do you have what you'd like me to drop from the list?

Mr. CICILLINE. No. No. Mr. Secretary, I am asking how do you take this list? Your administration has been in office for 15 months. They have done nothing to hold Iran accountable on any of this malign activity.

What I am asking you is how you convert this wish list which, you know, a terrific list—I agree with its contents—into actual policy—how you make those things happen? What's the strategy?

Secretary POMPEO. So I laid that as well. It took me about 13 minutes at the Heritage Foundation to lay it out. I am happy to deliver that to you in the 5 seconds I have remaining.

You should know we are committed to developing a diplomatic solution that gets there.

Mr. CICILLINE. I thank the chairman will allow you to answer the question if you'd like to share the way that you expect to make that actual policy. I think it's——

Chairman ROYCE. We go to Mr. Tom Marino of Pennsylvania.

Mr. MARINO. Thank you.

Welcome, Mr. Secretary, and congratulations.

Secretary POMPEO. Thank you, sir.

Mr. MARINO. I will get right to the point. Is there an aggressive plan to punish China and Mexico for flooding into the United States the extremely deadly drug fentanyl?

Secretary POMPEO. Yes.

Mr. MARINO. Thank you. I yield back.

Chairman ROYCE. Mr. Ami Bera of California.

Mr. BERA. Thank you. Caught me a little bit off guard there.

So first off, thank you, Mr. Secretary. In your opening comments you talked about how the State Department workforce is its best asset, and I couldn't agree more.

And I think it's important for all of us to recognize the incredible work that that workforce does every day representing the United States.

I am going to turn my focus of my questions to global health. I am a physician by training. Public health has been something I've done for a long time and, obviously, we know that there is an outbreak of Ebola in the DRC right now and we obviously have some concerns.

My concerns are whether the administration is placing the right amount of priority on global health security and preparedness and here's why I have that concern.

If we think about the 2014 Ebola outbreak and the response and the lessons learned from that outbreak, there were a few things.

Part of the delayed response was the lack of funding that was available to quickly respond, and as a physician and global health expert, it is incredibly important to get ahead of these outbreaks very quickly to contain them.

So I am grateful for the \$8 million that's been allocated to help address this response but also concerned about—you know, we spent about \$5 billion or we appropriated \$5 billion in that 2014 response.

About \$1 billion was left over that we allocated to USAID and CDC to work in 49 countries to help build better infrastructure there, better disease surveillance, et cetera.

In the current budget allocation or ask the administration is talking about pulling funding from 39 of those 49 countries.

I think that would be a mistake. I also know in the current rescissions proposal the administration seeks to pull back \$252 million in residual Ebola funding. That also would be a mistake, particularly given the outbreak that we see right now, and here's why.

What we know is we built in some flexibility for response not just to Ebola but to other outbreaks and, when we had the Zika outbreak a year and a half ago, we were able to quickly respond, take some of that funding and respond to that Zika outbreak and get ahead of it.

As you go back and, again, that rescission decision may have been made before the current Ebola outbreak—I would say, you know, let's take that out and I would make that same message to the appropriators.

A third lesson that we learned from that Ebola outbreak was the importance of having a command and control structure that could take charge, could work across agencies and you had someone who, clearly, was in charge.

I am very worried right now. With kind of the dismantling of that—the biosecurity wing of the NSC, the loss of Admiral Tim Ziemer, who, clearly, was an expert here, and the loss of some of our expertise, with regards to addressing these global health and security challenges, I guess my question would be with this reorganization in the midst of a potential Ebola emergency, would you agree that this is not the right time to be doing this reorganization—this would not be the right time to be pulling that \$252 million and what that org chart would look like in terms of biosecurity preparedness?

Secretary POMPEO. Thank you for your question.

A very important topic—frankly, gets too little attention, I think, from time to time.

Three thoughts—first, with respect to the Ebola outbreak, I believe we have the resources in the short run to do the things we need to do and to respond.

Frankly, it's probably never fast enough, but to respond in a way that is important and material and gets ahead of this in a way that we weren't able to do before. I think we'll execute on that.

Second, with respect to the rescission package, I will certainly review it. I've had conversations even in just these 3 weeks about that rescission package. There's another as well. I've expressed my views internally inside the administration on each of those.

And finally, with respect to the broader structural issues, I know what existed before. I am not familiar with where those structural decisions are today.

I will have my team come up and help me out to make sure that we have command and control right and not only for this immediate issue but as we move forward, thinking about these important global health issues as well, sir.

Mr. BERA. Well great. Mr. Secretary, I would invite you to work with us in Congress, those of us that are interested in global health security, to make sure we have the right command and control structure and the right personnel in place.

Thank you.

Chairman ROYCE. Mr. Paul Cook of California.

Mr. COOK. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Welcome, Mr. Secretary. I think one of the previous conversations we had was, I think, in the SCIF talking about the Cuban situation with our diplomats and you raised that issue today. It's, like, everything goes full circle.

I wanted to bring up something and it's about the Western Hemisphere. You have got a lot on your plate. We got the upcoming conference, everything in the Middle East and everything else.

But we had group of us that went down to the conference in Peru and the takeaway that we had, I think, all of us—it was very, very bipartisan in nature—was that our friends in the region feel like the United States have abandoned them in many, many ways.

I think that's part of the reason your predecessor went down there, and there's a lot of things going on in the world but this is an important year. There's 13 elections.

You got the upcoming OAS General Assembly, the G-7 Summit, the G-20, and they're all very, very nervous about a lot of things going on, particularly with the influence of China—China's money, their economic power, and how they are aligning themselves with certain countries.

And the second, of course, is the Iranian influence. Hezbollah in some of the countries, and even some of the countries in the Caribbean which, quite frankly, I think are aligning themselves with the Maduro government in Venezuela. Each one of those small countries had one vote in the OAS, the same as the United States.

What I am looking for is some kind of feedback. I know you got a lot on your plate, a lot of balls in the air. But what I was trying to convey to you is there's this feeling of a lot of the countries in the Western Hemisphere that we, as a longstanding partner, have

kind of overlooked, ignored our allies and I think it's incumbent upon us to reassure them and do something on that.

Can you address that comment?

Secretary POMPEO. I am not sanguine about their views about us having abandoned. I spent a fair amount of time there in my previous role. I had a chance to meet many of the leaders in those countries.

In 3 weeks I've met with a number of Foreign Ministers. I've participated in the layman group discussions.

Frankly, I've found there to be a great deal of energy and shared vision for how things ought to proceed in Central and South America alongside of us.

And so I am very hopeful. I think there's enormous opportunity in that region and I will spend a good deal of my time trying to build a team out.

We have an Assistant Secretary now close to being on board. We will—the State Department will have Western Hemisphere at the top of its mind across many of these important economic and security issues.

Mr. COOK. Yes, and in line with this, foreign military sales. A number of the countries are concerned. Peru is—I think they're putting in a plug for the C130-Js—very, very interested—and so I, obviously, am very, very concerned before in the past we were much more involved in that.

And as I said, there's a lot of countries, most notably China and Iran, that are involved in that. What can we do to increase foreign military sales in that region?

Secretary POMPEO. I, for one, would advocate for working closely with them and encouraging them to purchase U.S. equipment that fit their country, that was the right tool set for them, for themselves and their security interests.

I hope that we can across the board streamline the State Department's process connected with foreign military sales. There's work to do.

Mr. COOK. And I've brought up this subject before in regards to NATO. You know, Eastern Europe, they're still relying on the parts from Russia.

Once you go with another country you're going to be dependent on that. So I think we've got to look at that whole situation. Or once they buy, they're going to be buying there for——

Secretary POMPEO. Yes, sir.

Mr. COOK [continuing]. The next five generations or something. Thank you very much. I yield back.

Secretary POMPEO. Thank you.

Chairman ROYCE. Thank you. We go to Lois Frankel of Florida.

Ms. FRANKEL. Thank you. Welcome.

Secretary POMPEO. Thank you.

Ms. FRANKEL. So I am going to try to be very calm about this, but if I really had my way I would be yelling and screaming because—and not at you, yet.

Secretary POMPEO. Soon now. [Laughter.]

Ms. FRANKEL. But soon. No.

Here's what I am concerned about. We've heard a lot in this committee about the undeniable link between the treatment of women

and global peace and security, and also women's prosperity and that link.

And I think a lot of us are very, very concerned what's happening to the women of this world by policies of this administration—slashing international family planning assistance by half, eliminating all assistance to the U.N. Population Fund, which also combats sex trafficking and child marriage, genital mutilation, leaving the Ambassador-at-Large for Global Women's Issues vacant, reinstating and expanding the inhuman global gag rule that forces health care providers to cut services for women, and which really causes and increase in maternal deaths and unwanted pregnancies.

And I am not talking about funding abortion, all right. We can have that argument on a separate date. I am sure you probably know this, abortion is not contraception, and I just want to give you an example of what's going on in your department.

There were reports every year, I believe it is, 200 countries on human rights reports are put out. There's a section on women.

Last year, for every country there was a section—women—there was a section on rape and domestic violence and then there was one on sexual harassment and discrimination and reproductive rights.

The new report has completely eliminated reproductive rights and substituted—it's almost insane what—I will just give you an example.

Last year's report for El Salvador said that women were being imprisoned for miscarriages. That's an example.

It said Ugandan men were beating their wives for using contraception and in the Philippines poor women were being denied family planning services.

Now, basically, there's a substitute for this—basically, that just—it just will—it's almost ridiculous what it says now.

So, really, my first question to you is—I don't know whether you're aware of this, whether you will look into this. Why don't we start with that?

Secretary POMPEO. I am not as familiar with the report as you are. It may have been issued on my watch. I would guess it was before that. But I am happy to look into the issues.

Ms. FRANKEL. How about the Ambassador position, on global—Secretary POMPEO. You mean the global women's issue?

Ms. FRANKEL. Yes.

Secretary POMPEO. Yes. Yes, ma'am. It's on my list.

Ms. FRANKEL. And how about—

Secretary POMPEO. By the way, I agree it's important. We need to find the right person. I think the issues are incredibly important.

Ms. FRANKEL. All right.

The global gag rule has been expanded to not—again, this is not—we are not talking about the Federal funding of abortion.

It's been so expanded now that health care money is getting cut off from agencies that even might refer or mention services that will perform abortions.

So, basically, contraceptive services—I am not talking abortion—contraceptive services are being cut off. My question to you is

this—whether or not you will take a look and see how this is impacting the women’s health all over this world.

Secretary POMPEO. Yes. Always about data and facts.

Ms. FRANKEL. You’re about—okay. Well, here’s what I would like you to be about, please.

Please stop with this—we have, from this administration, what I call abortion hysteria. Because of this hysteria, you’re cutting off health care to women all over the world.

So if I could just ask you to calm down from this hysteria and really take a look at the health of what’s happening to women and to remember that women’s rights are human rights and it is absolutely tied into the peace and security and prosperity of the world.

Secretary POMPEO. That’s an easy one. I am fully committed to that. This administration has demonstrated enormous commitment to the health of every woman.

Ms. FRANKEL. Well, no, that’s not true.

But thank you for being here.

Chairman ROYCE. We go to Scott Perry of Pennsylvania.

Mr. PERRY. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Mr. Secretary, welcome. Congratulations. Thank you for your service on multiple levels. I am confident in your judgment.

I will begin with an observation. I want to commend my friends on the other side for their concern about totalitarian communist socialist Russian/Chinese involvement, malign involvement and actions in our country.

The Bolshevik Revolution was in 1917. So for 99 years I think it’s fair to say that they have been silent on this issue and maybe a strong case can be made that they actually helped the other side in this issue.

So for 99 of the last 100, I wish they’d have been where they are not. But I am happy to see they finally got in the fight and they’re here and I am with them in their concern.

Mr. Secretary, a couple questions. Let’s start with Ukraine. Is air defense artillery something that the administration is considering regarding our actions toward Russia and thwarting their activities and continued activities, of course, which they deny, but I think with air defense artillery present it would be hard to deny that Russian separatists were indeed flying over Ukraine if one of their aircraft landed on the ground?

Secretary POMPEO. Is your question about what the Russians have moved into the—

Mr. PERRY. No. My question is whether we are considering either selling or providing air defense artillery in Ukraine.

Secretary POMPEO. The administration is committed to providing the defensive weapons systems to Ukraine. I don’t know with respect to any particular weapons system whether that’s under consideration or not.

Mr. PERRY. Okay. And maybe we can continue the conversation along those lines to find more granularity in that and specificity, and that includes the conversation that you had with my colleague, Mr. Rohrabacher, regarding the Kurds and Turkey.

I love the Turkish people. However, I find no favor with the Erdogan regime and I think it’s a matter of if, not a matter of when. It’s a matter of when, not if.

We have to change our strategy there, and if that's a conversation that you're going to have in private or otherwise I would like to be involved in that conversation with regards to the Kurds and Turkey, air defense in Ukraine.

I read the State Department classification regarding UNRRA and the IG report regarding the supply and content of textbooks, and I am unsure why it's classified. And if you can't divulge that in this setting I am happy to sit in another setting with you.

But I am interested to know if that's going to change. I've read the report. I see no reason. But maybe there's something on this.

Secretary POMPEO. I don't know the answer. I am happy to declassify it if it's appropriate.

Mr. PERRY. Okay. So I am interested in follow up on that. In Bosnia, I am concerned that there's an October election and there's a problem with the constitution. The Dayton Accords were never supposed to last 20 years. They have.

But I am concerned that we are not headed in the right place there and I just want to get your thoughts on that. If we are going to wait to see what happens, if we are going to take preemptive action, I would hate to see that things burn down and us end up with the United States having troops on the ground there to try and secure the peace and also if we are interested in pursuing—putting some forces there, again, to thwart Russia and if that's a consideration. So those two topics, sir.

Secretary POMPEO. So let me start, first, with Bosnia. We are working on the very issue you described. I can't say a lot about it. But you know that the State Department and others—Department of Defense are there.

We understand the risk. We think the region is very important. We know the—and this transitions to your second part of the question, which is we know the Russians are hard at work there destabilizing—

Mr. PERRY. As are the Turks, right?

Secretary POMPEO. Yes. And so there are a handful, although, admittedly, not sufficiently sized levers currently being employed, and we are working to develop a strategy that puts us in a better place.

There are important parts of the bulwark of democracy that we need to continue to work on.

Mr. PERRY. I appreciate that, and I would like to pursue that further.

Mr. Secretary, this is a picture—I am sure you're well aware of an M-1 tank manufactured right here in the United States, paid for by the citizens of the United States with their taxes.

That has a Hezbollah flag on it. I am concerned and have written letters regarding the train and equip program in Iraq and the Shi'a Crescent and the land bridges they're building across Iraq with the militias there.

Again, many of the Iranian people want freedom. They want peace and they don't agree with the regime that they're working—living under.

But I offered amendments in the NDAA to stop the funding in the train and equip program. One was found in favor, one was not. So we leave it up to you.

I want to make sure that you're aware that this is happening, including militias like Kata'ib Hezbollah, listed as a terrorist organization for killing American soldiers.

And if the Congress is unwilling to stop it, I hope you will be willing to stop the funding of the train and equip program in Iraq and funding the Iranian militias that are willing to kill Americans and Jews and everybody across the Crescent that disagrees with them.

Secretary POMPEO. I will say this. It is the case that when we perform train and equip functions, from time to time equipment ends up in the hands of the wrong people. It's a risk inherent in those operations.

The question becomes is the value we are getting from that training—those exercises—outweigh the risk that happens. You should know that the U.S. Government works diligently to put rules and process in place to make that picture or pictures like that as infrequent as possible.

Mr. PERRY. I don't think the Iraqis are complying.

Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I yield.

Chairman ROYCE. Thank you.

Joaquin Castro of Texas.

Mr. CASTRO. Thank you, Chairman.

Secretary, thank you for your testimony. Is the North Korea summit going to happen or not?

Secretary POMPEO. Sir, that decision will ultimately be up to Chairman Kim.

Mr. CASTRO. So the President—

Secretary POMPEO. He asked for the meeting. The President agreed to meet with him. I am very hopeful that that meeting will take place.

Mr. CASTRO. You have been to North Korea twice and met with North Korean leaders to lay the groundwork for a nuclear agreement with Kim Jong-un.

How do you define the denuclearization of the Korean Peninsula?

Secretary POMPEO. Well, we've said complete.

Mr. CASTRO. What does that mean?

Secretary POMPEO. So there are multiple components of their system that threatens America. This would include their weapons capability, their missile capability, the technology that goes with that.

So engines and systems associated with space launch vehicles in addition to the missile programs and then everything that is upstream from that including the production of fissile material, the technology that permits the capacity to produce that material and all of the engineering and R&D connected to that.

Mr. CASTRO. Will you leave them with a civilian nuclear program?

Secretary POMPEO. We've said that it won't be appropriate for them to have the capacity to enrich. I will say it this way. I can't answer that question. I am not in a position that I can answer that question for you today.

Mr. CASTRO. How will you move out the nuclear material?

Secretary POMPEO. Well, there will be long hard discussions about how the verification of that work will go. It is one of the most difficult verification programs that will ever have been undertaken.

We have large teams already at work, preparing in the eventuality that we are successful in negotiations so that we can achieve that. It'll take many—it's a long hard process. It won't be just American. There will be other partners that will participate in it as well.

Mr. CASTRO. Will you suspect that would include Russia?

Secretary POMPEO. I don't know if it'll include the Russians are not. It certainly would include the IAEA and others that have tremendous capacity and expertise in this area.

Mr. CASTRO. One of the things that has hurt this administration is that on any controversial issue of foreign policy and domestic policy often—but on foreign you often two or three or four different answers depending on who you're speaking to in the administration. That was certainly true when your predecessor, Rex Tillerson, was Secretary of State.

So let me ask you, who is in charge of these negotiations? Is it you or Mr. Bolton?

Secretary POMPEO. President Trump.

Mr. CASTRO. And who is going to lead up the team?

Secretary POMPEO. I will.

Mr. CASTRO. How many members are on the team and who is on the team?

Secretary POMPEO. I am not going to go into the details of how the team is being built out. There are different teams work—there are lots of teams that work across all over the United States Government, several within the State Department, a number in the Department of Energy, Department of Defense. There are many folks—folks at the National Security Council.

There are large teams working not only on—I think your question was with respect to the negotiation but there are lots of teams preparing for every element of our work on North Korea. The existing pressure campaign, which continues—

Mr. CASTRO. Sure.

Secretary POMPEO [continuing]. Our work to ensure that we are working alongside of our allies, the Republic of Korea, Japan, and China to make sure that we are connected with them and developing a comprehensive strategy.

There's a lot of focus on this summit with that.

Mr. CASTRO. Well, let me—I know, and I appreciate that.

Secretary POMPEO. There's a lot of work to do.

Mr. CASTRO. Let me ask you—I talked about getting different answers on very controversial and important and consequential issues. We saw a prime example of that the other day in the middle of a press conference when Mr. Bolton talked about the Libya model, which Secretary Mattis has also mentioned before, and President Trump corrected him live on camera, it seemed like.

So let me ask you, since you're leading up the team, which approach do you take? Are you pursuing the Libya model that Mr. Bolton has mentioned? Or do you think that's not appropriate here, as Mr. Trump has indicated?

Secretary POMPEO. I don't think there's the distinction that you draw. The model that we have laid forth is a rapid denuclearization, total and complete, that won't be extended over time, I think, when Ambassador Bolton was speaking about this, although, obviously, it would be better to ask him.

What I think he was speaking of is a comprehensive denuclearization that didn't take place in exchanges that worked along the way—a slow years-long process where an exchange for act X the United States sends a check across the transom.

Mr. CASTRO. Well, does that include—

Secretary POMPEO. And he spoke about that and he's saying that's not our model and it is, indeed, not our model.

Mr. CASTRO. Does that include helping to remove him 2 or 3 or 4 or 5 years later?

Secretary POMPEO. We are focused on denuclearization. The President has made clear that we are prepared to provide security assurances in exchange.

If we can get America's interest safe and secure, we are prepared to do a great deal to ensure that we get that.

Mr. CASTRO. Thank you. I yield back.

Chairman ROYCE. We go to Mr. DeSantis of Florida.

Mr. DESANTIS. Thanks, Mr. Chairman.

Welcome, Mr. Secretary. We had a great Embassy dedication last week in Jerusalem—long overdue, very successful. The fact that we now are recognizing Jerusalem as Israel's capital—will you support allowing Americans born in Jerusalem to have Israel listed on their passports?

Secretary POMPEO. You know, the team is looking at that. I don't know the right answer. I think the President made the right decision to recognize the reality of Jerusalem as Israel's capital.

With respect to important but technical issues about how that will manifest itself, the team is going to give me their expertise and I will present those options to the President shortly.

Mr. DESANTIS. There was strong opposition within kind of the rank and file of the State Department for the move to Jerusalem. When I travelled last year to look at the Embassy, pretty much everyone I talked to said it would be a total disaster and that really hasn't happened.

So is there an issue with group think in the State Department kind of at the career level that they're kind of in more of one mind? Or do you have confidence that they're all on board to implement the President's agenda?

Secretary POMPEO. You know, I think every team—every team I've been part of in the private sector—when I was a young lieutenant every team always suffers the risk that the status quo is the path forward.

So I don't—and I view things like that I saw at CIA, too, I am sure I suffered as well. And so when leaders make bold changes I think teams sometimes lag in their understandings.

And my observations so far in 3 weeks at the State Department is you have a team that very much wants to get out and execute America's foreign policy as directed by President Trump.

Mr. DESANTIS. Great. In terms of what's going on in Venezuela, there's a pretty significant Cuban presence of military intelligence. Is that your estimation?

Secretary POMPEO. I am sorry. Could you repeat the question?

Mr. DESANTIS. In terms of the situation in Venezuela, propping up the Maduro regime, is part of that the Cuban military and intelligence apparatus?

Secretary POMPEO. In this setting I can say there are a great deal of Cuban influence that is working alongside the Maduro regime.

Mr. DESANTIS. And it's not helpful to what America wants, correct?

Secretary POMPEO. It runs adverse to U.S. interests—directly adverse to U.S. interests.

Mr. DESANTIS. The President, before you were Secretary, announced a really strong re-evaluation of the Obama Cuba policy. Not all of that has been implemented.

When is all that going to finally be implemented?

Secretary POMPEO. May I take that for the record? I don't know the process or the timing but I will get the answer to you.

Mr. DESANTIS. Great. In terms of Iran, I think that your speech was great the other day and I think the President's decision was the right one. How do we go about—I mean, the Iran deal gave them a cash windfall. I guess we are going to now be moving to impose new sanctions. Are there going to be other things that have not yet been enacted into law that you're going to want Congress to do?

Because it seems to me Order A has got to be choking off the money flow to this regime.

Secretary POMPEO. So Congress has granted the executive branch a great deal of power to execute these sanctions already. I am, having said that, confident that we will come back to you seeking further authority to expand the scope of what it is we are permitted to do.

It also goes beyond just the economic sanctions. There are designations. There are issues with respect to visas. There are a broad set of undertakings that not only the State Department but other elements of government could take to achieve what the President laid out, which is to deny around the wealth creation opportunities that have permitted them to threaten the world.

Mr. DESANTIS. The Iranian people, obviously, are not happy with this regime. I mean, this is a militant Islamic regime that's been really imposed on a relatively pro-Western populace—educated middle class. We see the protests. The President has spoken out I think correctly. What can we do to help?

Because it seems like the regime cracks down on the social networks. They don't want there to be a free flow of information. But I think it's certainly in our interest to empower people who view this regime as illegitimate and not representative of their ideals.

Secretary POMPEO. It's long been a U.S. deeply held position that we will do the things we can to ensure that peoples all around the world have their human rights, their political rights, and their capacity to express themselves.

We shouldn't shy away from that with respect to Iran either. There are a number of tools that we can use, some of which I am now responsible for their implementation. Others exist other places in government. We should bring them all to bear to allow the Iranian people to be governed by the leaders that they choose.

Mr. DESANTIS. Final question with respect to North Korea—and congratulations on being able to be over there. I think you have a chance to make history and there's no better guy to be in your position than you, in my judgment, to get this done.

But there's been this issue about the Libya model or not Libya model, and I think, as I read it, I mean, 2003 was actually a good model because Gaddafi got scared. He realized that the nukes were making his regime less stable, not more stable—at least his program up to that point. But then you have the 2011 Obama model, which is after he agreed to give up his weapons they then attack.

So can you just say what—how does Libya—what's the model that Kim Jong-un is going to look at and say, hey, how is America going to react if I do a deal with them?

Secretary POMPEO. I should study the Libya case more closely, perhaps. I could tell you what it is that President Trump has directed me to do with respect to how we are going to proceed against North Korea.

We are not going to do trade for trade. We are not going to let this drag out. We are not going to provide economic relief until such time as we have an irreversible set of actions—not words, not commitments—undertaken by the North Korean regime and when we get there, in exchange for that we are prepared to do a great deal to help the North Korean people.

Chairman ROYCE. Robin Kelly of Illinois.

Ms. KELLY. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

Thank you, Secretary Pompeo, for coming to testify before the House Foreign Affairs Committee. I am the ranking member of the Committee on Oversight and Government Reform's Information Technology Subcommittee and we are currently having a hearing on the Federal Information Technology Acquisition Reform Act scorecard.

And I don't know if you knew this but the State Department has a D minus, and in 2017 the Department of State scored the lowest of any agency on the Federal Information Security Modernization Act.

Secretary POMPEO. I did know that.

Ms. KELLY. Okay. Well, I guess you don't want to keep that score? You do not?

Secretary POMPEO. I aim for at least a C, quick.

Ms. KELLY. The 2016 and 2017 Inspector General reports found that the primary reason the department has not implemented an effective information security program is because the chief information officer does not have sufficient authority to manage IT activities as provided in the law and is not properly positioned within the department to ensure that the department's information security program is effective.

And President Trump—his recent Executive order requiring CIOs to report directly to the head of the agency, do you plan to

follow this order and restructure the CIO position in the near future?

Secretary POMPEO. So I, in just 3 weeks, already spent a lot of time staring at this.

Ms. KELLY. Congressman Meadows is interested in this too because we did this together.

Secretary POMPEO. Yes. This is an important issue. I actually saw this in my previous role as well where the agency that I ran was in probably a little better position than the State Department is but had a great deal of work to do as well.

We expended a fair amount of resources but, most importantly, we made real progress in improving the systems there. It is central that we do it here. There are security issues surrounding it. There are efficiency issues surrounding it. There is data management.

It is a broad system and, as best I can tell, that D is justified. The D minus is justified, and I will empower our CIO, but not only the CIO—the Undersecretary for Management and everyone that is connected to that and, indeed, you don't fix these processes and systems without an organization wide commitment. No one person or one team can do it. I will be very focused on this and I understand we have a great deal of resources to attack the problem.

But I assure you if I don't have the resources I need I will lay out a plan and come back and ensure that we make the case to you that we have the resources that we need.

Ms. KELLY. And the Foreign Affairs Committee always talks about being bipartisan but our subcommittee is very bipartisan, led by Chairman Hurd, and we want to know what we could do to help you implement what you want to do. So——

Secretary POMPEO. Thank you. There's much work to be done but it's important work.

Ms. KELLY. The State Department has very few women and people of color in senior level positions—a problem that was exacerbated by your predecessor. During your confirmation hearing, you spoke about the importance of diversity at the State Department. Currently, there are no minorities in senior positions at the State Department. How will you make sure senior level officials at the State Department better represent the diversity of the United States?

Secretary POMPEO. I did talk about this during my confirmation hearing. It's actually been something I've cared about all my life.

We had some success during my tenure at CIA. We had some success when I was running little old Thayer Aerospace back in Wichita, Kansas, some years ago to make sure that we had the most talented people regardless of their gender, their sexual orientation, their race.

I am confident we can do that at the State Department as well. I've asked for the statistics and the history at the State Department. I think I have them but not had a chance to review them yet. But know that I will empower the organization—indeed, demand—that it treat every single human being with the dignity and respect that they deserve and that we have a workforce that truly does represent America. It's important for diplomatic reasons as well as just being the right thing to do.

Ms. KELLY. Thank you, and thank you for your time.

I yield back.

Chairman ROYCE. We go now to Ted Yoho of Florida.

Mr. YOHO. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Secretary Pompeo, congratulations. Thanks for being here.

As you know, the world is going through a tectonic shift in world powers we haven't seen since World War II. The State Department and our United States Government needs the tools to effectively counter and balance some of these rising powers, i.e. China.

We can't compete with them dollar for dollar and I greatly appreciate your written testimony regarding the BUILD Act. As you know, the White House endorsed the measure in a press release and encouraged that Congress consider a few changes to strengthen institutional linkages between the new Development Finance Corporation and USAID and a revised funding structure to protect taxpayers from risk.

This committee worked with the National Security Council, OMB, to adopt the White House's proposed changes in the bill that was ultimately reported from this committee earlier this month and I would like to dive down a little bit more, and ask you your opinion of the amended HFAC BUILD Act and if that, in your view, more fully aligns with the administration's goals.

Secretary POMPEO. It does. I don't know the details of it. I think this is a very important piece of legislation. I think there's real opportunity for the United States if we get this right and I am happy to work with you or others on both sides of the aisle to get to the right place here.

Mr. YOHO. I look forward to doing that because that's a tool that we need. We met with somebody over at the Pentagon and they said how this tool is so critically needed today to counter some of these other foreign powers that are rising.

Secretary POMPEO. If I may—I actually think we can—we can counter China dollar for dollar. It won't be taxpayer dollars, necessarily.

Mr. YOHO. Right.

Secretary POMPEO. But this—America has been great not because of the resources we've spent from the Federal but for other reasons. I think this bill hits that perfectly.

Mr. YOHO. I think so, and we are excited about that. So I am glad to hear that because that was my next question to ask you.

Let me ask you something else. Earlier this Congress, the House passed Chairman Royce's Cyber Diplomacy Act. This bill would establish an Ambassador for Cyber Issues reporting to the Undersecretary for Political Affairs to ensure that the office covers the full range of issues in cyberspace.

Former Secretary Tillerson presented a plan to this committee to create a cyber bureau. Do you plan to implement this proposal?

Secretary POMPEO. I don't know. I am looking at it. I am aware of that proposal. There were several dozen proposals pending when I arrived. I will take a look. I don't know the answer to that.

Mr. YOHO. Okay. Any information that we can provide you, I know they'll be happy to do that.

So my second question was dependent on that one. Moving to North Korea, the President is scheduled to meet with Kim Jong-un in just under 3 weeks.

This committee has led efforts to sanction the Kim regime, passing both H.R. 757 and the Countering America's Adversaries Through Sanctions Act.

These bills have paved the way for the administration policy for maximum pressure. How much more can be applied and needs to be done through the use of secondary sanctions?

I would like to hear your opinion. Do you think we've done enough with the other countries that are still dealing with North Korea as far as funnelling money through their bank accounts?

Secretary POMPEO. That's an excellent question. We actually made really good progress along multiple dimensions, getting the entire world to participate in this effort.

Mr. YOHO. Sure have.

Secretary POMPEO. It was well done. Not me, others, did this good work. But the world came alongside and it's come along side. Frankly, our focus today is to make sure that that doesn't change. There is a tendency—a historic tendency when there are discussions taking place and it looks like there's an opportunity for there to be a shift, for folks to back away from that—

Mr. YOHO. Right.

Secretary POMPEO [continuing]. To make decisions to begin, for example, to rehire North Koreans that would remit money. We are spending an awful lot of energy working with those countries to remind them that this is a meeting—an important meeting—but there's a long way left to go and the sanctions that are in place today need to remain. There is still work to do. There are still gaps in those sanctions. There are still financial agents—North Korean financial agents distributed throughout the world that we haven't gotten to yet. Know that the Treasury Department, informed by the intelligence community, working alongside the State Department, is working to identify those as well.

Mr. YOHO. And that's great to hear and like the BUILD Act, we see that as a tool that we have for an administration to direct foreign policy. And so what we've done through this committee, and I chair the Subcommittee on Asia and the Pacific, is to call out the Treasury Department on why certain entities haven't been sanctioned.

And one of the ones we are looking at, or two of them, are the Agricultural Bank of China and the Chinese Construction Bank. We'll go after the smaller ones but I hope that you will continue pressure on these larger entities because no bank or entity is too large not to sanction, to keep that maximum pressure campaign.

I am out of time. I look forward to working with you.

Secretary POMPEO. Thank you.

Chairman ROYCE. We go to Brendan Boyle of Pennsylvania.

Mr. BOYLE. Thank you.

Mr. Secretary, I want to ask actually about two areas that I don't think you have been asked for the entirety of this hearing. The first is with respect to Syria and the \$200 million of the stabilization program.

I am actually the co-founder and the co-chair of the House Free Syria Caucus, along with my colleague, Adam Kinzinger. We have both worked a great deal on this issue, give its importance.

So I was quite surprised, shocked, when the announcement was made that these funds were suddenly put on hold. I just want to describe a few things that our \$200 million go toward.

These are funds to ensure that the White Helmet first responders can rush to the scene of an air strike to save lives, and as an aside, having had a couple opportunities to meet with the White Helmets they are remarkable people who risk their lives to rush in to an area that has been bombed by the regime, even knowing the regime will then bomb them while they're trying to rush in and save lives.

These are funds for the investigation and prosecution of persons responsible for the most serious crimes committed in Syria since March 2011, otherwise known as IIIM, the U.N. mechanism for accountability for war crimes in Syria—funds for digital security for those who are willing to stand up to Assad's war machine, a project to counter violent terrorism and a basic recovery for those in territory formerly controlled not by the ISIS—or not by the Assad regime but by ISIS.

So these funds do good work and are important in terms of U.S. interests. So why was this funding suddenly put on hold and what can be done to have that hold lifted?

Secretary POMPEO. Thanks for the question. So that funding—the entire \$200 million of that funding is under review. I understand that there is a decision pending. I don't know what that decision will be and I don't want to talk about the internal discussions that we've had.

I've met the White Helmets, too. I know the remarkable work—I know the remarkable people that they are as well. So we'll have a decision shortly.

I will say this. We have also been hard at work at getting other countries to provide support as well. This is a region surrounded by a number of wealthy countries, each of which has a direct interest in the same way that we do in making sure that once ISIS is completely removed from the battlefield at least as an organization capable of holding real estate that doesn't—that they don't come back—that we don't allow that real estate to be retaken.

Mr. BOYLE. Let me just, since I only have a couple minutes left, switch to a topic that hasn't come up this entire hearing and I think gets too little attention here on Capitol Hill, and that's Brexit.

One of the great achievements of American foreign policy was the Good Friday agreement. There is concern here on Capitol Hill—bipartisan concern as well as concern in Ireland, in the U.K., and in the rest of Europe that one of the unintended consequences of Brexit might be the ripping up of the Good Friday agreement.

Given the severity of the situation, 32 members of the House of Representatives—again, both Democrats and Republicans—sent a letter to you requesting that a special envoy be appointed to Northern Ireland, the position that George Mitchell held and that a few others have had subsequently.

Will you appoint or will the President appoint a special envoy to Northern Ireland?

Secretary POMPEO. I don't know. I haven't considered it. I am happy to review your letter.

Mr. BOYLE. You haven't considered the issue yet?

Secretary POMPEO. I haven't considered whether we should appoint a special envoy or not. It hasn't—

Mr. BOYLE. That is very concerning. As I mentioned, 32 Members of Congress have written on this issue. I believe we previously have been given positive indications that it was under consideration. So the fact that actually this issue hasn't been considered by the leadership of the Secretary of State, I would urge you to please consider it and to do so promptly, as the negotiations right now are at a tenuous point.

Secretary POMPEO. I am happy to do that.

Mr. BOYLE. Thank you. I yield back.

Chairman ROYCE. Thank you. We go to Adam Kinzinger of Illinois.

Mr. KINZINGER. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Thank you, Mr. Secretary, for being here. A lot has changed for both of us since we sat next to each other on the Energy and Commerce Committee.

You went and ran the CIA and now you're Secretary of State, and I grew a beard. So it's been a pretty interesting—a little bit of time.

I just want to say a couple of quick things. I think it's important to note the good work Colombia has done in the Venezuelan crisis in terms of housing 700,000 people that have crossed their border, 152,000 vaccines in 23,000 children in part of this crisis.

Just a couple of points before I get into my questions. First off, there's a lot of discussion about Russia and about the Libyan model.

Firstly, on Russia, I think it's important to note that this administration, and I think through your continued leadership we'll continue to see it, has been one of the most aggressive administrations against Russia that we have seen in modern times.

Everything from pushing back to them in Eastern Europe, in Ukraine, and everywhere else, and I think that's important to note. We don't have to talk about everything that's being done all the time in order to say this has been the most effective administration for pushing back against that, not to mention energy development, et cetera.

And on the Libyan model, people are bringing that up a lot, and I get it. We all know what the point when it was mentioned the Libya model. The point was get rid of all your nukes.

To push that into when Gaddafi was stabbed in the back of a pickup truck is not appropriate. Look, you oppress your people, you attack your people, they're going to rise up and take you out.

It has nothing to do with the denuclearization of Libya. So I think that's important to note. But I do want to ask you, as my colleague had started to talk a little bit about Syria, I believe that with the existence of Assad and that oppressive regime, it actually creates a cauldron for the recruiting of ISIS or the next generation of ISIS or the next al-Qaeda.

And so I think staying engaged in Syria is essential to preventing that from happening in future generations.

Mr. Secretary, from your perspective, what would be a successful outcome militarily and politically in Syria? And I know that's a difficult question because it's a very difficult conflict.

Secretary POMPEO. It is difficult—difficult especially to do in a short time. Our mission statement is pretty clear—at least, the near-term mission statement is pretty clear, right. It's to continue—from the State Department's perspective, to continue to support the Secretary of Defense's efforts to defeat ISIS, to provide the diplomatic space for them to achieve that so they don't have threats around them; second, to work to de-escalate the violence so that we can set some conditions for returnees. There have been a handful, right. We are seeing this a little bit in Iraq.

We hope to be able to set conditions where we can achieve that in Syria, although there is an awful lot of work left to do. I can walk pocket by pocket in the north. I will meet with my Turkish counterpart next week with the expectation that we will walk out of there with a plan for how we don't have two NATO partners at each other in that space.

And in the southwest, we see what happens when Iran continues to advance, right. The Israelis are going to do what they need to do to defend themselves. And so there's an important diplomatic role there for us as well. To work with the handful of willing partners we have in Syria to create the conditions to first take down the level of violence so that the Syrian people have a chance, and I will concede this is aspirational for—that seems difficult to see today, but have a chance to create conditions for themselves which aren't the desperate ones in which they've been living for these past too many years.

Mr. KINZINGER. Thank you, and I know it's an issue you're passionate about. And I want to echo what Mr. Boyle said about the \$200 million in aid. You answered that question so I won't hammer on that but I am very concerned with what I've seen including the freezing of \$300,000 for the IIIM, which is investigating war crimes. I think we have an obligation as a country to prosecute and push back against war crimes and so I would hope that part of that review that money is released.

I do want to shift briefly to the issue of Russia. You served on the—you, obviously, understand energy issues as well as foreign policy issues. Can you talk about the nexus between our ability to push back Russian influence in Europe and the development of European energy, our exports, et cetera, and how that plays together and what we can do to actually strengthen our hand there?

Secretary POMPEO. So, Representative Kinzinger, this slightly simplifies it, but to the extent the Europeans are dependent or reliant upon Russian energy, it makes their freedom of movement in pushing back against Russia more limited.

And it's a little more complex than that but it is a true statement at its core. We have the opportunity—the real opportunity to decouple them from Russia across many dimensions coming out of the Caucasus. Lots of different parts who can deliver this energy.

America ought to be part of that. We should continue to push the Nordstrom II to be ended. We should not increase the dependence that Europe has on Russian energy, and if we can achieve those things we will put Europe on a much more sound footing.

So if there's a day where there is a crisis, where there is a real challenge and Russia decides to use that tool to advance its interests that there are substitutes or capacity that that power, that lever, that the Russians want to have won't exist.

Mr. KINZINGER. Thank you. Thank you for your time.

I yield back.

Chairman ROYCE. Norma Torres of California.

Ms. TORRES. Thank you, Mr. Chairman, and Secretary Pompeo, welcome to the Foreign Affairs Committee. I wish you the best of luck in everything that you do. As a true American, I hope that you will represent all of our interests here at home and abroad.

I want to talk to you a little bit about Central America. I know that you have been very, very busy working on issues with North Korea and the Middle East, and all of that is extremely important.

I hope that you don't lose focus of what is happening in our back yards. I've worked with Secretary Tillerson's folks. They have been very supportive of U.S. policy in Central America.

I am very concerned about what is happening with legislators there, in Guatemala specifically. Are you aware that some very corrupt officials and criminals are working to undermine the efforts of local prosecutors and judges who are fighting against corruption in Central America?

Secretary POMPEO. Yes, and I know that the team is engaged to work to take down the level of corruption there and to really, frankly, to enable the Guatemalans to do so themselves.

There's been some progress there.

Ms. TORRES. Yes. We want to continue and build on that.

Secretary POMPEO. But much—yes, ma'am, much work remains.

Ms. TORRES. Thank you, and thank you for being committed to working to continue to improve the lives of the people in that region so they can stay in that region and we can continue to reduce the number of young people that are fleeing north to our southern border.

When we become lenient, as we've seen with Honduras, they were certified—that country was certified in the midst of a terrible election. It was a head-in-the-sand time, I think, for us to do that and was a slap in the face to the people of Honduras that are facing a dictator.

So dictators exist in our own hemisphere. Please don't forget that. I want to help you to the extent that I can on ensuring—and every time you come to this committee I will focus on this issue, I promise you.

I am very concerned from my constituents' perspective on what is happening at the White House and who is advising the President on foreign affairs issues.

How do you deal with advising the President and his ongoing support of Fox News and getting advice from the TV channels or newscasters?

Secretary POMPEO. So I've had many, many opportunities to provide the President with intelligence. I did so most days in my previous role. I found him to take on board the professional work that the team that I represented then had done. They were lively conversations. They were often lengthy conversations. He took seriously the information that we presented and I often saw him use

that information to make decisive actions—to be actionable. He based decisions on that. I've only been the——

Ms. TORRES. Are his financial advisors present during these meetings?

Secretary POMPEO. I am sorry. I am sorry. I didn't hear the first part.

Ms. TORRES. Are his financial advisors present during these meetings?

Secretary POMPEO. Ma'am, the folks who were present most days would have been——

Ms. TORRES. Don, Jr. and Eric?

Secretary POMPEO [continuing]. The national security advisor, myself, a professional CIA officer, the director of national intelligence, often the Vice President, the President himself, and I think that's it.

Ms. TORRES. Don, Jr. and Eric?

Secretary POMPEO. I don't believe I ever saw either one of them at either of those—at any of those meetings nor in meetings that I've had as the Secretary.

Ms. TORRES. Senator Rubio just made a comment earlier saying that some in the administration are short-sighted over ZTE. I am concerned about that decision and how the President came to care more about Chinese workers than the workers at a Fontana steel mill in my district and the impact that they would have should there be job losses with a trade war with China. I am very concerned at how he came to that conclusion overnight.

Secretary POMPEO. I don't believe that's an accurate statement about the decision the President made. He is incredibly concerned about American workers.

One of the reason he has taken the approach he has with respect to China's nonreciprocal trade arrangements—I am being very polite there—I am learning diplomacy as I go.

Ms. TORRES. Okay.

Secretary POMPEO. These are a very unfair set of rules that have harmed American workers for an awfully long time and he is determined to change those conditions so we will have more jobs here in America.

He is the first President in a long time to take on that challenge with respect to China.

Ms. TORRES. Thank you for your time.

Chairman ROYCE. Ann Wagner of Missouri.

Mrs. WAGNER. Thank you, Mr. Chairman, for organizing this hearing and, Secretary Pompeo, thank you for your time this morning and congratulations to you and your family on your appointment. We are grateful for your service and excited to see the vitality and dynamism that you're going to bring to the State Department, as a former U.S. Ambassador and for 4 years deeply involved with State.

Last week, a bill that I sponsored, the Elie Wiesel Genocide and Atrocities Prevention Act, was passed unanimously out of this committee and, among other things, the legislation highlights the importance of mechanisms like the Complex Crises Fund, or CCF, which supports flexible efficient responses to unforeseen crises overseas.

I firmly believe that genocide prevention is possible and necessary. But we need to make wise investments in prevention that will save lives and taxpayer dollars over the long run.

The CCF is one of those investments. The Institute for Economics and Peace estimates that every dollar invested now in conflict prevention is \$16 saved.

CCF funds were recently deployed in Central Africa Republic, Burundi, and Jordan. Can you explain how this money was used to mitigate atrocities and prevent further violence?

Secretary POMPEO. I don't know the details of that particular deployment of that capital. But it is the case I have the great joy now of being the leader of the organization that gets to do the diplomacy—that gets to do this good work—that can do conflict prevention. And there are many, many places where we can use those resources to do just that and to save the American taxpayer money in so doing.

And so I look forward to working alongside you. I am not familiar with the piece of legislation you described, either. But its intent seems incredibly important and noble, and if we could achieve that—frankly, anyplace we achieve that we will have done a good thing for America and for the world.

Mrs. WAGNER. I think so, too. While the White House fiscal year 2019 budget recognized the need for these kinds of rapid response capabilities related to prevention, it didn't request funding for CCF. How does the State Department plan to rapidly kind of mobilize resources to prevent genocide and mass atrocities?

Secretary POMPEO. So if I understand the history there right—I've only had one, admittedly short, conversation about this—there are resources that are available that are, if you will, on standby.

That is, they could be accessed—

Mrs. WAGNER. Correct.

Secretary POMPEO [continuing]. With relative speed to deploy in the event that we see these issues emerging—that see the risk of genocide emerging. It is often the case that it's not a resource issue but a political will issue or an understanding of the severity of the issue. That is, we, the United States, ended up behind the curve. We didn't see it coming fast enough or we reacted too slow to make decisions, and not the absence of having resources to do so.

I think the most important thing we can do is make sure that we have teams in place that send the flag up that identify these challenges and so that we quickly develop decision making processes that can put our team on the field to address them before the conflict actually gets in a place where there is not much we can do.

Mrs. WAGNER. NGOs have found that comparatively small investments in community identification and response to threats have had great returns. And so how does the State Department plan to deepen its investment in community-led peacekeeping and peace building approaches?

Secretary POMPEO. I don't know the answer to that other than to say that my experience has been the most effective peacekeeping missions have always been driven by folks on the ground, by local communities, by NGOs, where we've provided some assistance, sometimes financial, sometimes technologic or management and

leadership, but almost always bottoms up as opposed to top down and I think that's what you're describing there as well.

Mrs. WAGNER. It is, and, to me, prevention is the key here and we have seen so many of these atrocities and genocides occurring in many places—the Rohingya. We see it, certainly, in Syria. Given also that the Burmese Government has cut off Rakhine State to aid workers and international observers, how is State working with—I would be interested in how you're working with some of the local actors to mitigate the violence against Rohingya Muslims in Burma.

Secretary POMPEO. So it's certainly—the United States is involved trying to do that. It's not just the State Department. There are others—

Mrs. WAGNER. Right.

Secretary POMPEO [continuing]. Working as well. It's going to take a big team effort. This is an enormous challenge. My predecessor worked on this diligently. So has Ambassador Haley.

Mrs. WAGNER. Yes.

Secretary POMPEO. We all identified the challenge and are working to try and find the tools.

Mrs. WAGNER. We are pleased to have that legislation make it through markup. I look forward to working with you.

Chairman ROYCE. Brad Schneider of Illinois.

Mr. SCHNEIDER. Thank you, and Mr. Secretary, thank you for joining us here today. I appreciate your offer for coffee and I look forward to having that opportunity.

Secretary POMPEO. It's not the best coffee but it's coffee.

Mr. SCHNEIDER. I am not a critic.

But I would like to focus my limited time I have on Iran's malign activities in the Middle East and Russia's interference in the U.S. election. Earlier when talking about Syria, you had a list of four priorities.

Last among those four was in the southwest. However, in the past year, Iran's advance has accelerated and solidified into substantial bases and troops.

I am extremely concerned by Iran's continued and disturbing presence in Syria and equally concerned and troubled by the administration's lack of a strategy to ensure that Iran is not able to maintain a permanent foothold in the country.

As we have seen in recent months, Iran is provoking Israel into conflict and is intent on building a permanent presence inside Syria.

I previously wrote to Secretary Tillerson about my concerns and have yet to receive an adequate response. I would like to know what specifically is the administration doing to counter Iran's influence in Syria and prevent Iran from expanding its presence there.

In particular, what are we doing to thwart Iran's efforts to establish permanent bases and their development of an indigenous missile-making capability not just in Syria but in Lebanon?

How specifically is the administration supporting Israel, our greatest ally in the Middle East and how are we pushing back on Iran's activity on Israel's northern border?

And I have a long list of questions. I suspect I will have to take your answers back in writing.

I also remain concerned by Iran's malign behavior beyond Syria—in particular, its continued support for Hezbollah. Iran's support has grown beyond weapons transfers to helping build missile production facilities in Lebanon to enable its indigenous rocket-producing capability for Hezbollah.

This would be a game changer for Hezbollah and for Israel, and represents a very significant existential threat to Israel.

Hezbollah has also recently achieved significant electoral success in the elections earlier this month. How is the administration cracking down on Iran's support for Hezbollah? What is the administration doing to stop the flow of Iranian arms to Hezbollah and to disrupt their efforts to develop this indigenous missile production supply chain?

I am also concerned by the lack of a clear plan and the President's subsequent decision to withdraw the United States from the JCPOA.

While I opposed the JCPOA when it was announced due to the inherent risks, gaps, and flaws in the agreement, including sunsets on limits to Iran's enrichment programs and failure to address Iran's ballistic program and malign actions in the region, however, once in place this agreement pushed Iran to more than a full year away from a nuclear weapon and created a window of opportunity for the United States and our allies to craft a comprehensive strategy for the long term.

Iran must never be allowed to acquire a nuclear weapon—not now, not for the duration of the JCPOA, not ever. I fear that by walking away from the JCPOA this way the administration has made it more challenging to ensure that Iran never gets a nuclear weapon.

Earlier this week, you spoke about the administration's new Iran strategy and that we will work with allies to counter Iran's destabilizing activities, to address their missile program and proliferation, and that "We will also ensure Iran has no path to a nuclear weapon."

Can you please elaborate on how exactly the administration will address Iran's malign behavior, missile proliferation, and nuclear program?

How is this different from actions by previous administrations? How do our goals differ? How do the actions we are taking differ? How will we measure things differently—measure their compliance but also measure our progress toward the goal that Iran never gets a nuclear weapon?

And what is your plan if Iran rejects the demands you laid out during your speech on Monday?

Moving to Russia, every week we seem to learn more about the sophisticated activities by Russia used to spread disinformation and misinformation in our election.

Our intelligence chiefs have concluded that Russia interfered in the 2016 Presidential election and are unanimous that they will seek to do the same in 2018.

You yourself stated earlier this year that Russian activity and intentions will have an impact on the next election cycle here.

What are we doing to make sure Russia cannot take action? What actions are we taking specifically? What actions remain to be taken?

The State Department's Global Engagement Center was created in 2016 to lead U.S. efforts to counter propaganda and disinformation from foreign actors.

I was surprised to learn that we haven't spent any of the money necessary or allocated since 2016 to counter their efforts and I hope we'll continue to invest in the GEC.

We didn't spend this money because the department failed to act on its transfer authority and wasn't able to hire during the hiring freeze. I hope we will take care of this.

I would like to hear from you how we are going to fix these problems so the GEC will have sufficient funding and staff to stand up to and counter malicious efforts by Russia and how will you ensure that the GEC can effectively lead the interagency process with DoD and the intelligence community to counter propaganda from foreign states?

And finally, let me thank you for your pledge to support the appointment of a special envoy to combat anti-Semitism.

Chairman ROYCE. The gentleman's time has expired. We could just do that answer in writing if it's all right, Mr. Secretary.

Secretary POMPEO. Thank you.

Chairman ROYCE. We go now to Mr. John Curtis of Utah.

Mr. CURTIS. Thank you, Mr. Chairman and Mr. Ranking Member.

Mr. Secretary, I am new here and haven't had a chance, like my colleagues, to get to know you. But they all speak very highly of you and you come with great recommendations.

Secretary POMPEO. Not all of them. [Laughter.]

Mr. CURTIS. Many of them speak highly of you, and I look forward to getting to know you and working with you.

Secretary POMPEO. Thank you.

Mr. CURTIS. As you know, for almost 2 years Utahan Josh Holt has been detained in a Venezuela prison without trial and on spurious charges. It's my understanding that Senator Hatch has worked hard with you and other members of the delegation—Congresswoman Mia Love—to bring him home, with his wife, Tammy.

With the heightened political turmoil in Venezuela, I've received letters and phone calls, continue to from constituents. Just last week, we saw reports of a video of Josh, who Facebooked he feared for his life with the riots in El Helicoide Prison.

Like so many Utahans, I am concerned about his safety and hoping that the U.S. State Department is doing all they can to bring him home.

Mr. Secretary, can you give me any update or on his condition or any efforts underway to bring him home?

Secretary POMPEO. Unfortunately, I can't give you an update on his condition. We were following closely the riots that surrounded the place that he's being unlawfully detained.

I have spoken with many in your delegation and yourself, Senator Hatch—I've communicated with Representative Love as well. Our team is very focused on getting his return.

Unfortunately, we are going to have two of our senior officials kicked out. So our capacity to reach them on the ground will actually be diminished. I am very worried about that.

Know that the plight of Mr. Holt is on our minds and we are doing the things we can with the tools we can to encourage the Maduro regime to at least, in this one instance, do something right and send this fellow back.

Mr. CURTIS. Thank you. On behalf of Utahans and his family, I thank you for keeping it top of mind and doing all within your power.

Last Monday, you gave a bold speech and talked about pulling out of the Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action—the Iran nuclear deal.

You insisted that Iran end all of its nuclear enrichment and close its heavy water reactors. You promised them that if they didn't they'd see the strongest sanctions in history.

Recently, I had a chance to travel in that region. As a matter of fact, I followed you through a few countries by a couple of days, and without exception there's great concern in the region and, interestingly, I heard different opinions about staying in the deal, pulling out of the deal.

But what was unanimous and was not contested is that the deal would lead to Iran having nuclear weapons maybe sooner rather than later, but eventually having nuclear weapons, and that was unanimous among all the countries that I visited which, as you well know, is totally unacceptable.

In addition to the sanctions, what else can we do and what else can I expect the Utahans to expect to move us toward a situation where we wouldn't have nuclear weapons there?

Secretary POMPEO. So there are many tools in addition to the economic sanctions. There are designations of senior leaders that will impact those leaders' capacity to move around the world.

Our efforts in Syria are designed, certainly, to protect our friends, Israel, the Jordanians, and others. But to the extent we are successful in the counter ISIS campaign, we also contain the space in which Iran can move with great freedom in set conditions in Syria, which will, for the first time in a long time, begin to call out Iran for what they're really doing there, which is not fighting terrorism but, rather, working to expand their power.

Iran moves in lots of parts of the world. We are aiming to build a global effort, much like we were successful doing it against North Korea to call out the Iranians.

And so if there are Iranians working in countries, we are going to work to convince folks that they ought not be doing the things that create the wealth, that, frankly, has been used in ways that the Iranian people don't want it used.

Mr. CURTIS. Thank you. I agree with that comment about their influence.

We hardly visited a country where you couldn't see an Iranian or Russian presence pressing on a border or in some way impacting that country.

Let me quickly turn to North Korea. As the CIA Director, you visited there. We have these talks coming up. It seems that the ex-

pectations have been elevated to anything less than world peace, right, is unsuccessful.

What would you have me take back to Utahans about reasonable expectations? Just a really quick answer, please.

Secretary POMPEO. At its core, this problem gets solved when these two leaders both agree that the solution we are aiming for—complete denuclearization of North Korea in exchange for fundamental assurances for the North Korean regime—if we can get the two to agree that that's the end state we are working towards, we will have had a good day.

Mr. CURTIS. Thank you. I yield my time.

Chairman ROYCE. Tom Suozzi of New York.

Mr. SUOZZI. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Mr. Secretary, thank you so much. You have an enormous portfolio.

Who would consider to be your main point person on Afghanistan and Pakistan?

Secretary POMPEO. So we have a number of people. We have Ms. Wells working on it. We have our Ambassador in Kabul, Ambassador Bass. We have our Ambassador in Islamabad, Ambassador Hale—each of whom is working on implementing, at least for the State Department's piece, working on delivering the present South Central Asia—against the President's South Central Asia strategy.

Mr. SUOZZI. So I have the great honor of also serving on the Armed Services Committee and it's clear to me that we really have a military strategy to clear and hold in Afghanistan.

It's well thought out. It's a comprehensive strategy. It makes sense. I've supported the administration's efforts there.

But when it comes to the civilian side, it seems like we have more of a list than a strategy. We have a lot of little things that we are doing both from the State Department and USAID that many of our partners are doing, that many different agencies throughout the world that are cooperative with us—India, for example, most recently—but it's a list of things as opposed to a comprehensive strategy.

And this administration has made a decision that we would move to—from a calendar-based strategy to a conditions-based strategy as to what we are going to do. But we don't really know what the conditions are that we are looking for for us to move forward.

What are we going to do? What's our conditions we are looking for regarding terrorism? What's our conditions we are looking for regarding the form of government and its democracy—it's not going to be like our democracy—regarding corruption, regarding the economy overall, regarding security. So I am really looking for you to try and describe to me the strategy we have on the civilian side regarding Afghanistan and Pakistan.

Secretary POMPEO. So there are—you may call this a list. I would say it is a set of lines of effort that we are undertaking. You laid out some of them—you described them.

But let me start with the end state—what are the conditions that we are looking for? The President made this very clear in his remarks, now, goodness—a while back. He said we are looking for the conditions where the Taliban no longer believes that it can prevail through the use of force—that we concede that there's not a

military solution to achieving the stability and peace in Afghanistan that, frankly, most of the world is looking for.

And so the effort was to apply all elements of the United States Government pressure such that the Taliban would come to the negotiating table.

President Ghani, now a couple months back, agreed. He said he'd be willing to be part of those sets of discussions. Now we need to find the right leadership inside the Taliban to participate in those discussions and then we've got to bring lots of different groups to bear.

If you have been there, you know. We have lots of different groups that need to view being part of the solution as getting for them in their region their particular ethnicity, right—get all of those understanding that pieces gives them a better outcome than the place Afghanistan has been for the last at least 16 years.

Mr. SUOZZI. Mr. Secretary, respectfully, this is obviously such a complex issues and there's so much that needs to be done to create an Afghanistan Government that will be able to provide for its people, and we are not in the business of nation building, according to this administration.

Secretary POMPEO. Right.

Mr. SUOZZI. But there's so much being invested regarding everything from schools to infrastructure to electricity, toward training not only the police officers but also prosecutors.

I think that we need to really have a document, quite frankly, that says to us this is our plan on the civilian side, taking into account these many different players that are involved here from not only the State Department, USAID, the Treasury Department, the DOJ, the DEA, and all these many other varied governments, and we don't really have a plan from the civilian nonmilitary side, I believe, that says all these pieces fit together in a plan.

And I am not saying this as a criticism. Obviously, you're new in this job. But I would like to work together with you to try and figure out what that plan is going to be or I am sure that there's pieces of it—lots of pieces. It's just not in any kind of comprehensive strategy.

Secretary POMPEO. I welcome the chance to work with you. I think it's more comprehensive than you describe. But I am happy to work with you so that we can articulate in a way that does communicate all the various lines of effort that we are engaged in on the nonmilitary side.

Mr. SUOZZI. I've approached a lot of people to try and get a document—to try and get something that I can read that says this is our strategy—this is our plan—and I haven't been able to get that document.

So there's so many moving pieces. There's so many people in the world dedicated toward this effort that I think we need to fit it together into one comprehensive plan.

Hopefully, under your leadership, that can happen.

Secretary POMPEO. I would welcome that. It's worth remembering—you mentioned this, right—it's not just an American solution to this. There are—

Mr. SUOZZI. A lot of pieces.

Secretary POMPEO [continuing]. NATO mission. There are lots of other countries working alongside us that have made massive commitments to this as well.

Mr. SUOZZI. Well, I hope I will be able to work with you on this. Thank you so much, sir.

Chairman ROYCE. Mr. Ted Poe of Texas.

Mr. POE. Thank you, Mr. Secretary, for being here. Congratulations as well. It's always good to see a House member move up into the administration.

Secretary POMPEO. Thank you, sir.

Mr. POE. I want to cover a multitude of sins, so to speak, here. We'll start with Iran.

The last administration—the previous Secretary, Mr. Tillerson, said before this committee that he thought that the best end solution for Iran was a regime change—peaceful regime change from within.

Do you still hold that philosophy?

Secretary POMPEO. What I said on Monday, which is the President's policy, is that we are very hopeful that the Iranian people will get a chance to elect the government that they want.

Mr. POE. And are we supporting the dissidents and encouraging them or supporting them at least politically and verbally in their desire of the protests that they're making to have a regime change in Iran?

Secretary POMPEO. I have certainly spoken, both in my previous role and now in this role and then in my previous previous role as a Member of Congress, I have spoken about supporting Iranians who feel that their voices aren't being heard. We should continue to find our voice in doing that both as a government and I think individually as well.

Mr. POE. And, obviously, here in the audience today we have family members of Iranians that have been murdered by the current regime, and their desire is that there's a free Iran where the people make the decisions and not the Ayatollah.

Just most recently when we moved our Embassy to Jerusalem, Iranian student groups, supported by the administration, offered \$100,000 for someone to blow up the Embassy in Jerusalem.

That group was sponsored by the IRGC, which is sponsored by the Ayatollah. The Ayatollah made the comment, as he has done before, "Death to America."

Do you still believe that that is the policy of Iran—long-term is death to America?

Secretary POMPEO. Yes.

Mr. POE. The withdrawal from the deal has been talked about since long before the deal. I commend the administration for its bold decision. It was a bad deal. It's a worse deal now.

I am a little disturbed that former Secretary of State John Kerry went to the Europeans and to the Iranians right before the decision was made by this administration to try to make sure that the deal was not withdrawn from the United States.

But be that as it may, total support for looking out for the interests of the United States. A lot of Americans don't realize there was a side deal made by the IAEA.

Those documents are not public, and looking at those and some of the other intel that we've had support the decision that's made by the administration to leave the deal.

Georgia, Ukraine, and Moldova—I've recently visited with the Speakers of the House of all three of those nations, and they're in a bad neighborhood. They've got the Russians. Moldova has Russians in their country. So do the Georgians and the Ukrainians. They all have Russians in their country.

I would hope that we would, as a nation, focus on helping those three nations move to the West instead of being tempted to go back to Russia. Those Speakers of the House of those three countries are coming to the United States this summer.

I hope that there's time on your calendar to meet with them, if that is possible, so that we can encourage them and help them to be a free country as opposed to one that's still influenced by the Russians.

Turkey—do you think Turkey should stay in NATO?

Secretary POMPEO. They have been an important NATO partner. If Secretary Mattis was sitting here he would say we need them to be a NATO partner.

I would agree with that assessment. We need their behavior to reflect the objectives of NATO and it's what we are diligently working to do, to get them to rejoin NATO in a way that their actions that are consistent with what we are trying to achieve in NATO and not take actions that undermine its efforts.

Mr. POE. Mr. Connolly and I are on the U.S. delegation to the NATO Parliamentary Assembly, which meets this weekend. I hope we can bring up this subject of Turkey being a bad child of NATO.

Most recently, they have purchased or received S-400s from Russia, missiles—which violates sanctions by the United States on Russia. At the same time, they want to buy F-35s.

Your department makes the decision on whether or not they will be allowed to purchase F-35s. Have you made that decision yet?

Secretary POMPEO. I have not, and we continue to work to keep the Turks in a place where they don't actually acquire the S-400.

Mr. POE. All right.

Secretary POMPEO. I don't believe they have it yet and we are hopeful they'll never take possession.

Mr. POE. All right. Thank you.

Chairman ROYCE. We go to Ted Lieu of California.

Mr. LIEU. Thank you, Mr. Chair, and thank you, Secretary of State Pompeo for your civilian service as well and your military service. I also appreciate you being here today and agreeing to testify.

I would like to ask you about the conflict in Yemen, but before that, I just need to ask you a few questions about official statements the President of the United States made this morning on his Twitter account.

He said there is a criminal deep state and, as you know, Representative Nunes has said he's also going to investigate the State Department.

Do you believe there is a criminal deep state at the State Department?

Secretary POMPEO. I haven't seen the comments from the President. I don't believe there's a deep state at the State Department.

Mr. LIEU. Thank you.

You formally served as CIA Director. Do you believe your colleagues at the CIA are part of the criminal deep state?

Secretary POMPEO. You know, this term deep state has been thrown around. I will say this. The employees that worked for me at the CIA nearly uniformly were aimed at achieving the President's objectives and America's objectives.

Mr. LIEU. Thank you. And that's your experience also when you interact with colleagues at the FBI and Department of Justice as well?

Secretary POMPEO. Yes. There are always exceptions to every rule. I've never led an organization that didn't have bad actors. I don't think any government organization is exempt from having malfeasance as well.

Mr. LIEU. But, in general, you are confident that the members of the various agencies are honoring their oath to the United States Constitution?

Secretary POMPEO. Yes, in general. Yes, sir.

Mr. LIEU. Thank you. I would like to ask you now about Yemen. As you know, the war in Yemen is now the world's worst humanitarian disaster.

Over 22 million people are now at risk of starvation. Eight million don't know where their next meal will be and every 10 minutes a child dies of preventable causes.

So the U.S. is involved in Yemen in two ways. One is we are striking terrorists. I don't have a problem with that.

But the other way we are involved is we are assisting the Saudi-led military coalition and, again, I don't have a problem with assisting our allies.

But I have a problem when that coalition is killing large number of civilians through air strikes that are nowhere near military targets and as of last September more than 5,000 civilians have been killed, the majority from these air strikes.

In 2016, the State Department—its lawyers—wrote a memo saying that because we are refuelling these planes—these Saudi jets, and also providing them other assistance—that U.S. could be considered a co-belligerent and liable for war crimes.

I know you just came on as Secretary of State. I wonder if you had a chance yet to read that memo.

Secretary POMPEO. I have not.

Mr. LIEU. At your convenience, if you—

Secretary POMPEO. But I will. I will review the memo.

Mr. LIEU. Thank you. I appreciate that.

And if you could also make a request to your State Department to see if Members of Congress could also review that memo in a classified setting as well, that would be appreciated.

Secretary POMPEO. I take it you have not had a chance to see it?

Mr. LIEU. We have not. So if you could make that request that would be great.

Secretary POMPEO. I will review that, absolutely.

Mr. LIEU. Thank you.

So when this conflict first started, we had all these air strikes and a Saudi-led coalition, and what it turned out is it's not that they were trying to hit a Houthi vehicle that was moving, they missed, and struck a bunch of civilians.

What ended up happening is they intentionally struck those civilian targets. So they struck hospitals, weddings, schools, markets, and last year they struck a funeral that killed hundreds of people, twice.

So they hit this funeral and the jets went around and hit it again a second time, very precise. That's why the Obama administration actually stopped shipment of precision-guided because they realized these jets are intention to strike their targets and they were civilians.

It's my understanding that the Trump administration is now going to go forward with that sale. Just wondering why do you think anything has changed in Yemen that would authorize this sale to go forward?

Secretary POMPEO. So I am personally familiar with the incident you're describing. There are a very rigid set of rules that are thought deeply about in every national security that I've been part of at the CIA before, now at State Department, with respect to providing munitions to organizations that are intentionally engaging in civilian targeting.

We have a complex set of rules and prohibitions. We would never do that. It is this administration's judgement that providing the precision guided munitions actually decreases the risk to civilians, and it's for that reason we think this actually makes sense certainly for our allies and partners but also for citizens that are engaged in ordinary activity inside of Yemen.

If I might, this administration has also taken serious action to do our best to reduce the humanitarian crisis that is Yemen as well. We have not resolved it but we have made real progress.

Mr. LIEU. Thank you.

Chairman ROYCE. Tulsi Gabbard of Hawaii.

Ms. GABBARD. Thank you, Mr. Secretary, for your testimony and for sticking it out.

As you know, there is no more urgent or greater threat to my constituents in the state of Hawaii and to this country than the threat of nuclear weapons coming from North Korea.

As we meet today, we are literally at a historic moment in time where we have a brief window of opportunity to peacefully denuclearize North Korea.

Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, General Dunford, has remarked numerous times about how pursuing a military option with North Korea would be horrific on a scale not seen since World War II.

I commend your travels to meet with Kim Jong-un to lay the groundwork for these negotiations with the goal and objective of verifiable and complete denuclearization of North Korea.

This path forward should not be riddled with politics. There's far too much at stake here. It's unfortunate that some of our colleagues and some of the media are against this meeting and trying to undermine this meeting from happening—trying to say that we

should set preconditions that are unrealistic or that the North Korean leader does not deserve to meet with the U.S. President.

They are, clearly, out of touch with the reality that faces my constituents in Hawaii and the people of this country and the urgency and the seriousness of this threat. They believe that somehow we should not be meeting with who may be our adversaries or who are dictators or leaders of countries that are not our allies even as we are trying to further the cause of peace. This attitude is dangerous and short sighted and can only lead to more war and suffering.

There are numerous examples throughout history—JFK, Nixon, peace agreements between Israel-Egypt, Israel and Jordan, Reagan, Gorbachev—there are many examples of leaders making this step to meet with those that may be their adversaries to further the cause of peace.

So I encourage you and hope that you will continue your efforts and that the meeting between Kim and President Trump moves forward as planned so that we can achieve this historic moment of denuclearization with North Korea.

I've introduced a resolution that's before this committee, H. Res. 861, that has bipartisan support and co-sponsorship that states this sense of Congress in support of the efforts that this administration is taking to achieve this goal of denuclearizing North Korea.

In the time remaining, I am wondering if you can share more insights and details on your meetings and the administration's desired framework.

You talked about earlier security assurances for North Korea. It is something that they have set as a requirement in order to achieve denuclearization. What does that mean and what does that look like?

Secretary POMPEO. So, first of all, thank you. I am hopeful that the meeting will progress. You identified a number of situations throughout history where conversations with adversaries worked.

In each of those cases, if I read the history—at least the way I read the history—it was the timing that was right and the leaders that were right.

I am convinced that we have both the timing and, in this case, the leaders right for this meeting to have an opportunity to be historically successful and I hope that we can achieve that.

With respect to the framework, I don't—I would prefer not to provide a whole lot of detail about what the scope of those assurances is.

But it goes without that Chairman Kim's view—frankly, his father and grandfather's view—was that the nuclear weapons that protected the regime. That was the security blanket.

And so they have worked diligently over years and years to develop this weapons system to the point where in fact it does threaten the United States today, your home state in particular.

We now have this chance to stand that on its head, to convince them that it's in fact those nuclear weapons that present the greatest risk to the regime and to the North Korean people and that we are prepared to do the things that provide—the comfort and security that he knows that he can take away this thing that he's depended on and, frankly, he had told his people for a long time that

this provided their security to convince that, frankly, joining the list of civilization—the nations that participate in that is actually going to provide security for their people.

So we need to provide him a whole list of—it's not just us—the South Koreans will have to do the same. China will play a very important role here, so will Japan and, frankly, the Russians will have a role in this along the way as well, ensuring Chairman Kim that we want good things for the North Korean people.

If we can do that—if we can build the trust and confidence there along the way, we have a real opportunity to get the denuclearization that your state and America and, frankly, the world so desperately need.

Ms. GABBARD. Thank you.

Chairman ROYCE. We go to Adriano Espallat of New York.

Mr. ESPAILLAT. Thank you, Mr. Chairman, Ranking Member Engel.

Thank you, Mr. Secretary, for taking all this time. I am usually, like, the last—I am the Mariano Rivera of this committee.

Secretary POMPEO. I was a junior member when I left, too. I know exactly how you feel.

Mr. ESPAILLAT. I am the closer, and very often the questions that I already have been asked by somebody. But I do want to turn to the Western Hemisphere, because I sit on that subcommittee.

Very often people across America are under the impression that we are giving away the store when in fact it's only, like, a percent of the budget. And so this erroneous belief out there that we are spending money all over the world and sort of not taking care of people back home.

But I am concerned that in the Western Hemisphere, we sort of turn our heads and we've been a little bit too complacent and maybe even abdicated our leadership role in Latin American and as a result all these bad things have happened.

China is now very much present. Panama, Costa Rica, and most recently the Dominican Republic have stabilized relationship with a country that still engages in currency manipulation, in the stealing of our intellectual property rights, fraud. They don't even allow their population to have access to applications such as Wikipedia, What's App, even Facebook.

And so what can we do to re-establish our presence in that area? I met recently with one of the Latin American leaders and he said to me, name me one major project, one major infrastructure project that America is involved in investing.

As proposed to do in many of these countries—frankly, Mr. Secretary, as they say in the schoolyard, they're eating our candy. There is something that we have to do to establish ourselves back and it's going to entail, potentially, a fiscal commitment to the region as well as reestablishing our strong presence there.

What do you propose we can do to reestablish our leadership role on Latin America and engage vigorously in projects that will improve the quality of life for many of these countries?

Secretary POMPEO. I think there's at least two questions in there. Let me try and tackle each of them.

The first is China and China's involvement there. It's not only true in South America. It's true in other parts of the world as well but particularly in South America, I would agree with you.

I am convinced that the candy that they're eating will cause bad things to happen and that the people of South American will come regret taking these investments.

And so we have a role to explain to them what it is the Chinese are really engaged in there. They're not doing this because they care about the people of Peru or Colombia or anyplace else.

They're doing it to expand Chinese influence and they are making loans that will one day be required to be repaid and the Chinese influence in those countries will be devastating for those people.

So we have a responsibility to talk about this openly about what the Chinese actual aims are, why it is they're using their capital to buy influence around the world.

Second, how can America be more involved? So there are certain places where there will be resources required. I think that's likely true. But it's often the case that when America has demonstrated leadership in other places in the world it hasn't been our money that we've led with. It's been our presence, our leadership, helping democracies stand up, things like the rule of law.

I was always reminded when I was Director of CIA I had one of my counterparts in a very difficult part of the world tell me that America's spent a lot of money here—they've done a lot of things—the most important thing America did was they worked alongside our officers to show us what it means to work in a democracy—how to do the right thing—how to get up every day and go to work, and the intrinsic core of who the American people truly are.

And so I do think it's important that my team that are working out of Embassies and consulates around the world is out there every day interacting, engaged, proudly talking about the things that America does and how we do it.

If we do that, I think we can have an enormously good impact around the world but, certainly, in real opportunity countries in the Western Hemisphere as well.

Mr. ESPAILLAT. One quick last question. If the threats against Israel continue to mount, will the administration consider examining whether to increase current funding at an adequate level?

Secretary POMPEO. I am confident that the administration will do what it needs to allow Israel to have the capability to defend itself.

Mr. ESPAILLAT. Thank you, Mr. Secretary.

Chairman ROYCE. We go to Mr. Gerry Connolly of Virginia.

Mr. CONNOLLY. Thank you, Mr. Chairman, and welcome, Mr. Secretary.

I was just reflecting that I've, on and off, been working here on the Hill for 20 years. You're my 10th Secretary of State. So welcome and good luck in your new assignment.

Secretary POMPEO. That puts the mean at, roughly, 2 years. I am going to try and beat it. [Laughter.]

Mr. CONNOLLY. Well, Mr. Secretary, you remember this body and certainly a part of and subjected to the sort of partisan rancour that all too often accompanies the work we do up here.

Now you're in a new role, and I want to give you a quick opportunity to comment on how you see that new role in terms of working with Democrats.

Secretary POMPEO. Yes.

Mr. CONNOLLY. Who also love their country and want to see a successful U.S. foreign policy.

Secretary POMPEO. I would more than concede that point, that everyone on this committee and, frankly, every Member of Congress comes here with a noble and patriotic objective.

I will equally concede the point that as a Member of Congress, I could do partisan with the best of them, and I understand that we all had constituents that had different views and we did our best to represent.

I hope that during my time I did that for the people of south central Kansas. They might well have had different views than the people of your district or other members' districts.

I hope—and there were exceptions to this but I tried every day to do that with dignity and respect. I didn't always quite achieve it, but I tried. In this role I will do the same.

You have my word. I will work with members from both sides of the aisle to achieve America's foreign objectives. We'll disagree often about how to get there.

But I will be surprised if it's frequently the case that we disagree about what we are trying to accomplish.

Mr. CONNOLLY. I very much appreciate that. Thank you.

Mr. Secretary, given the unprecedented and troubling Russian interference in our 2016 elections, which have been certified by all of our intelligence agencies including the one you headed when you were there, Congress passed and the President signed the Countering America's Adversaries Through Sanctions Act, which includes at least seven mandatory sanction provisions against Russia—mandatory sanctions—Russian undermining cybersecurity, Russian crude oil products, Russian financial institutions, dealing with Russian corruption, sanctions evaders, human rights abusers, on and on.

There were seven major mandatory sanctions with respect to Russia. How many of those mandatory sanction provisions has the President imposed?

Secretary POMPEO. I don't know how many of those different authorities have been used. I know that there have been significant sanctions imposed under CAATSA and I know that there are many more in the queue.

But I couldn't tell you which—how many of those seven have been used. I will bet you can tell me.

Mr. CONNOLLY. Yes, Mr. Secretary. The answer is one.

And I think, on a bipartisan basis, that bill passed overwhelmingly, as you know, here in the Congress and I think it absolutely expressed a certain point of view with respect to that subject—not just that subject but certainly that subject—and I think we do expect full compliance with the law by the administration and I would give you the opportunity to pelage your commitment to that implementation of what is now statute.

Secretary POMPEO. Yes, sir. You can count on—may I give you one caveat to that?

Mr. CONNOLLY. Of course.

Secretary POMPEO. It is the case that Secretary Mattis and I are both working to find places where we think that legislation did not give us enough to make sure that we don't do something that was unintended with respect to some of our allies who have historic relationships with, in particular, Russian equipment.

And so we—I think Secretary Mattis will take the lead but I will be part of it alongside him to see if we can get Congress to consider giving us waiver capacity so that we can ameliorate are not the intended objectives of the CAATSA legislation.

Mr. CONNOLLY. Thank you.

I have a quick last question, because I am going to run out of time—gosh, I wish we had more time—earlier this month in a story by Ronan Farrow, I think in the New Yorker, it was reported that a company called Black Cube involving Israeli official—not officials, operatives—investigate former Obama administration officials who were involved in the Iran nuclear negotiations. Are you aware of that story and were you familiar with any aspects of that alleged investigation?

Secretary POMPEO. I am familiar with the story but I read it as new information in the same way that it sounds like you did as well.

Mr. CONNOLLY. And to your knowledge, the administration had no involvement in said activity?

Secretary POMPEO. To the best of my knowledge, that is absolutely correct, sir.

Mr. CONNOLLY. I thank you, Mr. Secretary. Look forward to working with you.

Secretary POMPEO. Thank you.

Chairman ROYCE. Mr. Secretary, the administration has taken strong action, including recently sanctioning seven oligarchs with close ties to Putin along with 12 companies that they own or control under CAATSA.

We'll continue to push for full implementation of CAATSA. Not only that, but in addition to CAATSA we are also calling for the Senate to pass the Caesar Syria Civilian Protection Act, which the House now passed into the Senate and which would impose significant sanctions on Russia for its support for the monstrous Assad regime's actions.

I do want to thank you for engaging with the committee, Mr. Secretary. You have said you want today to be the start of a close collaboration with us—and I know you well enough to know that you're very sincere about this and I deeply appreciate the time you have spent with us here—the capability for every one of our members to engage.

I look forward also the dialogue we've had about continued discussions for the members here.

Mr. Secretary, the challenges facing our Nation are daunting. We've heard about many of them today. But we didn't hear so much about the opportunity for Americans worldwide.

Americans are doing great things as private citizens. They're doing great things as—in terms of the charities that they run throughout this worlds—the business that engage across the planet.

And the State Department often helps them in this regard. Americans shouldn't be afraid of the world. We can do a great deal to improve it, and I know that you understand that, Mr. Secretary.

So, Mike Pompeo, thank you very much and we look forward to our—I have just been reminded by the ranking member that there may be one other member coming through the doors as we speak, and that would be Karen Bass of California.

Secretary POMPEO. Of course.

Chairman ROYCE. So we will give her her 5 minutes.

Thank you for the 3-plus hours that you have spent with us here this morning.

Ms. BASS. And thank you, Mr. Chair.

As always, Mr. Pompeo—Secretary Pompeo—I am sure you know we have a very bipartisan committee here with wonderful leadership, and I know you were hoping to get out the door. I am not going to hold you long.

Secretary POMPEO. Ma'am, I've got all 5 minutes.

Ms. BASS. Okay. Well, and I know you know because you have been on the other side.

Secretary POMPEO. I have.

Ms. BASS. And so we are definitely proud of your success and are excited about you beginning your tenure at the State Department.

Secretary POMPEO. Thank you.

Ms. BASS. So I really would like to ask you about the DRC and the worsening situation there. I have met—we had a Africa policy breakfast about this. We've had hearings, et cetera, and what I am really worried about is that the President has said he's going to have elections in December.

He has not said he's not going to run. There is no faith that he's actually going to have those elections since they were originally supposed to be in December 2016.

And so I just wanted to know what our policy is going to be, moving forward, and what type of benchmarks are we going to hold him to?

Secretary POMPEO. So there are many challenges in the DRC, as you well know. We are worried about global health issues there—

Ms. BASS. Right.

Secretary POMPEO [continuing]. Certainly, which adds a half twist to the triple somersault, and just makes it more complicated.

With respect to the DRC's election process, we've got teams working diligently to push forward to try and find that democratic solution that, frankly—I think you said December 16—the problem has been longer than that.

There's a great deal of work. What I would love to do is get back to you and provide you with a detailed list of our activities. Know that I think we share the same policy outcome objective that you have just described.

Ms. BASS. So I would appreciate that, because there are a few of us that plan to go soon and to have the ahead of time, because right now I am just worried that we might have sent a mixed signal—that my big concern is that it actually adds to the confusion, especially because we have not secure anything from him saying that won't run a third term.

Now moving on to another crisis, South Sudan, and the idea that we need to have a weapons embargo for sure, but just wondering where you see things going there and what our policy is there and, in addition to that, Sudan, in terms of moving forward with relaxation of sanctions. But we also are concerned about a young woman who's on trial there for her life and a lot of questionable circumstances around that.

And so I wanted to know about those two areas—South Sudan and Sudan.

Secretary POMPEO. Let me try the region for you and—

Ms. BASS. Okay.

Secretary POMPEO [continuing]. See how they fit into that picture.

I was—I think it was my second to last trip as the CIA Director was in and around that region. So I got a chance to see it for myself just a little bit at least.

So there are lots of countries that try and help what's going on in both of those places—Sudan and South Sudan—who share America's objectives.

I don't think America is going to have the capacity to deal with that on our own. I think we need to find partners in the region that are prepared—those that share our view to move forward together.

I did advocate in my previous role for the relaxation of sanctions against them.

Ms. BASS. Yes.

Secretary POMPEO. They had made marked improvement.

Ms. BASS. Right.

Secretary POMPEO. But relapse is always a risk and we need to continue to provide them assistance but ensure that they don't turn back to the place that they were before.

I think the direction there is good.

Ms. BASS. I do, too.

Secretary POMPEO. But we need to be mindful and we need to provide support to further good works.

If we do that, I think we can get a really good outcome. Something 5 or 10 years ago—

Ms. BASS. Right.

Secretary POMPEO [continuing]. We would have all thought not possible. South Sudan is trickier and much more difficult. I've got just a few seconds so I will leave you with this thought.

It is incredibly important that we get that piece right for all the reasons you describe plus the risk that extends from terrorism in the region that threatens not only global terror and the efforts from their hiding spaces but the uncertainty it provides to the people of the region.

We have a real responsibility to try and get that right. It is a devil of a problem.

Ms. BASS. Exactly. And one of concerns too in going to Sudan is the state sponsor of terrorism designation and what that does. It actually complicates things on both sides.

And so, you know, as moving forward and, of course, hoping that they continue to move forward it obviously is contingent on that, but that we do have to take a look at that category.

Secretary POMPEO. Yes, ma'am. I completely agree.

If we can continue to see progress I would love to see us be able to rescind that.

Ms. BASS. Great. Thank you very much, and appreciate you allowing me the time, Mr. Chair.

Chairman ROYCE. Thank you, Congresswoman Bass.

And with that, Mr. Secretary, we stand adjourned.

Thank you.

[Whereupon, at 12:31 p.m., the committee was adjourned.]

A P P E N D I X

MATERIAL SUBMITTED FOR THE RECORD

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

Edward R. Royce (R-CA), Chairman

May 23, 2018

TO: MEMBERS OF THE COMMITTEE ON FOREIGN AFFAIRS

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

DATE: Wednesday, May 23, 2018

TIME: 9:00 a.m.

SUBJECT: Strengthening American Diplomacy: Reviewing the State Department's Budget, Operations, and Policy Priorities

WITNESS: The Honorable Mike Pompeo
Secretary of State
U. S. Department of State

By Direction of the Chairman

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

COMMITTEE ON FOREIGN AFFAIRS
MINUTES OF FULL COMMITTEE HEARING

Day Wednesday Date 05/23/2018 Room 2172

Starting Time 9:00 A.M. Ending Time 12:31 P.M.

Recesses 0 (____ to ____) (____ to ____) (____ to ____) (____ to ____) (____ to ____)

Presiding Member(s)

Chairman Edward R. Royce

Check all of the following that apply:

Open Session ☒

Executive (closed) Session ☐

Televised ☒

Electronically Recorded (taped) ☒

Stenographic Record ☒

TITLE OF HEARING:

Strengthening American Diplomacy: Reviewing the State Department's Budget, Operations, and Policy Priorities

COMMITTEE MEMBERS PRESENT:

See attached.

NON-COMMITTEE MEMBERS PRESENT:

N/A

HEARING WITNESSES: Same as meeting notice attached? Yes ☒ No ☐

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

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

QFR - Chairman Royce, Ranking Member Engel, and Representatives Smith, Sires, Cook, Connolly, Cicilline, Bera, Frankel, Kelly, Titus, Schneider, and Lieu

SFR - Representative Connolly

TIME SCHEDULED TO RECONVENE _____

or

TIME ADJOURNED 12:31 P.M.


Full Committee Hearing Coordinator

HOUSE COMMITTEE ON FOREIGN AFFAIRS

FULL COMMITTEE HEARING

<i>PRESENT</i>	<i>MEMBER</i>
X	Edward R. Royce, CA
X	Christopher H. Smith, NJ
X	Ileana Ros-Lehtinen, FL
X	Dana Rohrabacher, CA
X	Steve Chabot, OH
X	Joe Wilson, SC
X	Michael T. McCaul, TX
X	Ted Poe, TX
X	Darrell Issa, CA
X	Tom Marino, PA
X	Mo Brooks, AL
X	Paul Cook, CA
X	Scott Perry, PA
X	Ron DeSantis, FL
X	Mark Meadows, NC
X	Ted Yoho, FL
X	Adam Kinzinger, IL
X	Lee Zeldin, NY
X	Dan Donovan, NY
	James F. Sensenbrenner, Jr., WI
X	Ann Wagner, MO
	Brian J. Mast, FL
X	Brian K. Fitzpatrick, PA
X	Francis Rooney, FL
	Thomas A. Garrett, Jr., VA
X	John Curtis, UT

<i>PRESENT</i>	<i>MEMBER</i>
X	Eliot L. Engel, NY
X	Brad Sherman, CA
X	Gregory W. Meeks, NY
X	Albio Sires, NJ
X	Gerald E. Connolly, VA
X	Theodore E. Deutch, FL
X	Karen Bass, CA
X	William Keating, MA
X	David Cicilline, RI
X	Ami Bera, CA
X	Lois Frankel, FL
X	Tulsi Gabbard, HI
X	Joaquin Castro, TX
X	Robin Kelly, IL
X	Brendan Boyle, PA
X	Dina Titus, NV
X	Norma Torres, CA
X	Brad Schneider, IL
X	Tom Suozzi, NY
X	Adriano Espaillat, NY
X	Ted Liew, CA

Statement for the Record from Representative Gerry Connolly
 Strengthening American Diplomacy: Reviewing the State Department's Budget, Operations, and
 Policy Priorities
 May 23, 2018

President Trump's FY 2019 international affairs budget continues the Trump Administration's unilateral retreat from U.S. global leadership and doubles down on the reckless disinvestment in U.S. diplomacy and development in favor of American military might. As threats to U.S. national security grow around the world, the Trump Administration's response is to retreat from our commitments, cut our financial and human resources, and sacrifice strategy for headlines. U.S. global leadership has never been more essential or more at risk.

The Trump Administration has spent its first sixteen months in office systematically dismantling the hard won diplomatic commitments that bolster American security and prosperity. On his third day in office, President Trump withdrew from the Trans-Pacific Partnership (TPP), which would have deepened U.S. alliances in the Asia-Pacific and unlocked access to 40 percent of global GDP. In June 2017, Trump announced that the U.S. would pull out of the Paris climate accord, an agreement that has now been signed by every other nation on Earth. And earlier this month, the President abandoned the Iran nuclear deal, which will be recorded as one of the most sordid and reckless acts by a chief executive of this country. In doing so, he has ejected us from the deal without a parachute.

This week, Secretary Pompeo announced a so-called "Plan B" for Iran, conceived as an afterthought and predicated on America's shattered credibility to reconvene the parties for a "better deal." Just like there is no better TPP, or better Paris climate accord, there will be no better Iran deal. The probability of a nuclear Iran has now risen exponentially just when we had it under control. And if that happens, the Saudis have indicated they will pursue a nuclear weapon too. And now we're off to an arms race in the most volatile part of the world.

Trump's rejection of the Iran deal, despite Iranian compliance, has now set the standard of success for his high-risk gambit with North Korea – absolute denuclearization, absolutely verifiable. Anything short of that is a failure, by his own new standard. The President's impulsive agreement to a summit with Kim Jong-un instantly strengthened the regime in Pyongyang and gained no concessions in return. Last week, the North Korean regime's reaction to joint U.S.-South Korea military exercises exposed the precarious footing of these negotiations. The failure of this presidential summit would cause lasting damage to the prestige of the Office of the President and could be used by the Trump Administration to justify kinetic action on the Korean Peninsula.

Meanwhile, Trump still refuses to hold Russia accountable for its unprecedented and ongoing interference in American democracy, despite near unanimous agreement for such action among Congress, the American people, and his own Administration officials. That is why I, along with a majority of Democrats on this Committee, recently introduced a resolution calling upon President Trump to exercise mandatory sanctions authorities in response to Russia's continued aggression in

Ukraine, forcible and illegal annexation of Crimea, and assault on democratic institutions around the world. This resolution builds on the SECURE Our Democracy Act (H.R. 530), introduced by Ranking Member Engel and myself, which would sanction any foreign entity who unlawfully interferes with a federal election.

Underlying each of these points of retreat is a failure to invest in the financial and human resources that are needed to effectively implement U.S. diplomatic and development efforts. The President's FY 2019 budget proposes to slash the State Department and USAID's budget by 30 percent. This request blatantly ignores that Congress, civilian and military leadership, and the American people summarily rejected similar draconian cuts in the Administration's FY 2018 budget.

Secretary Pompeo has taken the helm of a hollowed out diplomatic corps at the State Department. Recruitment is down, retirements are up, and vacancies are rampant. The number of Americans applying to take the Foreign Service exam in October 2017 dropped 33 percent from a year earlier. In recent months, State has lost nearly 50 percent of its most senior career leadership – Career Ambassadors and Career Ministers – our nation's civilian equivalent of three and four-star generals. And 30 ambassadorships have not been named or confirmed, including in critical places like South Korea, Egypt, Turkey, Jordan, and the European Union. This dearth of diplomatic personnel leaves critical gaps to American interests right now, but it is also a problem down the road. As Ambassador Ronald Neumann said, "The Foreign Service is like the military – if you don't bring in lieutenants now, you don't have the majors you need in 10 years and don't have the colonels you need in 20."

The Trump Doctrine has emerged as one of unilateral retreat and empty promises that harm America. President Trump's bombastic foreign policy has oscillated between "fire and fury" and a Nobel Peace Prize moonshot, leaving much to be desired with regard to substantive strategy to protect U.S. interests. Given the decimation of resources at State and increasing global flashpoints in the Trump era, Secretary Pompeo has his work cut out for him.

Questions for the Record from Chairman Edward R. Royce

Strengthening American Diplomacy: Reviewing the State Department's Budget, Operations, and
Policy Priorities
May 23, 2018

Question:

Now that the hiring freeze has been lifted, what will the staffing levels will be for the Department's Office to Monitor and Combat Human Trafficking, which Congress has been pushing to increase in recent years?

Answer:


The FY 2018 FTE ceiling allocation for the Trafficking in Persons office will be 49 full-time equivalent (FTE) positions.

Question:

How many full-time equivalent positions will that Office have in the coming year, and how does that number compare to the prior three years?

Answer:

The FY 2018 FTE ceiling allocation for the Trafficking in Persons (TIP) Office is 49 FTE positions (42 Civil Service and seven Foreign Service). J/TIP's FTE ceiling as of January 2017 was 63, and was 47 in 2016.



Questions for the Record from Ranking Member Eliot Engel

Strengthening American Diplomacy: Reviewing the State Department's Budget, Operations, and Policy Priorities
May 23, 2018

Question:

Was the State Department Redesign contract a sole-source contract?

Answer:

The Redesign work was carried out in two separate contracting actions. The initial employee survey and resulting Listening Tour report was awarded to Insigniam on April 25, 2017 as a sole source contract. The follow-on work to assist in developing and implementing a Redesign plan was awarded to Deloitte on June 19. Redesign efforts with Deloitte were acquired under a task order against GSA Alliant Government Wide Acquisition Contract #GS00Q09BGD0018. This GSA contract vehicle is recognized by OMB as a preferred government-wide solution for agency procurement needs.

Question:

If the contract was sole-source, what was the justification for it being sole source? Please provide me with a copy of the justification.

Answer:

The justification and approval for the listening tour report by Insigniam was posted on FedBizOps on May 19, 2017 and is publicly available at the web address below. A copy is also attached.

<https://www.fbo.gov/index?s=opportunity&mode=form&id=9629be6b7e753f584f9e95d7e4b573a9&tab=core&tabmode=list&>

**JUSTIFICATION AND APPROVAL
FOR OTHER THAN FULL AND OPEN COMPETITION
FAR Part 6.302-2**

1. Identification of the agency and the contracting activity:

In accordance with Federal Acquisition Regulation (FAR) 6.302-2 in accordance with 41 the authority of 41 U.S.C. 253(c)(2), the Office of Acquisition Management proposes to award a Sole Source Contract to INSIGNIAM LLC to assist the Department in complying with the requirements of The Office of Management and Budget (OMB) issued a memorandum on April 12, 2017, entitled "Comprehensive Plan for Reforming the Federal Government and Reducing the Federal Civilian Workforce," (M-17-22

The period of Performance for this effort is less than one year and the estimated value will not exceed \$850,000 plus certain international travel expenses for the post visit.

2. This acquisition is restricted to the following source:

INSIGNIAM LLC
301 WOODBINE AVE
NARBERTH, PA 19072-1912

3. A description of the supplies or services required to meet the agency's needs:

The Department of State, the first Cabinet level agency, has a presence in over 160 countries around the globe, staffed by political appointees and members of the Foreign Service, Civil Service, and Locally Engaged Staff serving domestically and abroad at over 200 Embassies and consulates. Together with the U.S. Agency for International Development (USAID), the Department seeks to fulfill its mission in an efficient and effective manner. With a combination of over 85,000 employees and locally engaged staff, the organizations are large and complex.

The Office of Management and Budget (OMB) issued a memorandum on April 12, 2017, entitled "Comprehensive Plan for Reforming the Federal Government and Reducing the Federal Civilian Workforce," (M-17-22), which requires all agencies to, among other things, begin taking immediate actions to develop an agency reform plan. This plan, the first draft of which is due to OMB on June 30, requires proposals to identify how to improve the efficiency, effectiveness, and accountability of the agency, focusing on fundamental scoping questions and on improvements to existing business processes.

Before determining what improvements to make or what activities to eliminate, as required by OMB, data must be collected to understand the range of activities and functions currently performed throughout the Department. The Department aims to have this data collected from a wide swath of the Department community so that all groups of community members are represented. The collection and presentation of the data will inform the new Department leadership of the current structure, culture, and workflow.

The contractor shall provide the U.S. Department of State with a summary report of the poignant themes, patterns, and sentiments of the people of the Department of State and USAID regarding both organizations, State's and USAID's ability to fulfill its mission, and proposals and suggestions for how to improve the organizations and how each does their work. The contractor shall use listening sessions in the forms of verbal interviews and online surveys to gather data on aspects of the Department and USAID such as workforce culture, technologies used, and where the work gets done. The study shall be expedited, and shall proceed without preconceived notions of the optimal end state for a high performing agency, or its associated staffing level.

4. **Check and fill in all that are applicable:**

☐ The material or service must be compatible in all aspects (form, fit, and function) with existing systems presently installed.

☐ A patent, copyright, propriety data or licensing agreement limits competition. The proprietary data are described as follows:

☐ These are "direct replacement" parts/components for existing equipment.

☒ **Urgency**

☐ Exclusive Licensing Agreement

☐ Brand-Name

☒ **Other information to support a sole-source buy:**

OMB has mandated the first draft of which is due to OMB on June 30, requires proposals to identify how to improve the efficiency, effectiveness, and accountability of the agency, focusing on fundamental scoping questions and on improvements to existing business processes. The complexity involved with required information gathering as well as the development and coordination of the report does not allow for sufficient time to solicit for the necessary services.

A synopsis of the proposed contract actions will not be posted as authorized by the exception stated in FAR 5.202(b), in that after consultation with the Administrator – Federal Procurement Policy and the Administrator-SBA, advance notice is determined to be inappropriate and unreasonable

Question:

What experience did Insigniam have with the State Department or in terms of working for the federal government prior to being hired for the Redesign?

Answer:

Insigniam had not worked with the Department before but had significant experience in organizational transformation and culture change. This background was seen as key to help modernize the way the Department of State and USAID are organized, collaborate, and operate. Insigniam's work has traditionally focused on private sector transformation. This was their first federal contract.

Question:

What are the responsibilities and deliverables for Insigniam? Please provide me with a copy of the solicitation(s).

Answer:

For the listening tour, Insigniam's deliverable was a written report summarizing workforce culture and employee views on specific workplace issues. This report was received June 2017 and is posted on the Department's employee website. As this was a sole source procurement, no public solicitation was made. The FedBizOps entry is available at this web address:

<https://www.fbo.gov/index?s=opportunity&mode=form&id=9629be6b7e753f584f9e95d7e4b573a9&tab=core&tabmode=list&%20provides%20procurement%20details>

For the follow-on Redesign work, Insigniam was a sub-contractor to Deloitte in supporting a culture of transformation as the Department began to reinvent its business processes and execute project plans. There is no separate solicitation for Insigniam in phase 3. Both consultant teams worked together closely with Insigniam delivering the leadership and change management advice and Deloitte delivering the modernization project plans, subject matter expertise, and analytics support.

Question:

Please provide me with a copy of Insigniam's raw data from the listening tour (not the summary).

Answer:

The raw data from the Listening Tour has not been released for any purpose beyond the development of the report itself. Employees who responded to the survey were assured of complete confidentiality and that all identifiers (gender, grade, office symbol, employment category) and comments would remain private. The Department respects that privacy and does not plan to release the data.

Question:

How did the State Department monitor Insigniam's performance?

Answer:

As we do for all contracts at the Department of State, pursuant to procurement regulations in the Foreign Affairs Manual and Department of State Regulations (DOSAR), qualified personnel have been designated by the Contracting Officer to monitor technical progress and performance, approve invoices for payment, and oversee contract modifications and terminations.

The government's acceptance of the final Listening Tour Report in June 2017 marked the completion of Insigniam's contract. This contract had a 30-day Period of Performance and the government participated fully in the development of the questions, arranging employee interviews, and distribution of the survey to employees. No further oversight was required as the contracted product was delivered timely and complete.

During Redesign activities, the performance of the consultants was monitored through weekly meetings with Redesign leadership, and monthly contracting meetings with the contracting officer and contracting officer's representative.

Question:

How many consultants were working on the Redesign process? How many State Department employees were working on the Redesign process? Of these, how many are currently working on Redesign full-time?

Answer:

Because the Redesign activities were phased, the number of consultants and employees was highly variable. From the outset, a plan was in place to use contractors in the early phases and significantly reduce consultant usage as projects developed until the initiatives were entirely employee-led. During the Redesign (July through November 2017), 19 full-time Deloitte consultants and 55 part-time consultants supported the joint State/USAID teams. In that same period, 95 Department of State employees worked on the Redesign full-time.

For the Impact Initiative effort (January through April 2018), project teams and consultants focused on specific outcomes and included broader engagement from Department of State subject matter experts and bureaus with direct responsibility for implementation. This phase included a consultant support team of 42 full-time Deloitte consultants and 30 part-time consultants (Deloitte & Insigniam). In this phase, nearly 50 Department of State employees worked on Redesign and Impact Initiative full time and many more were involved part-time.

Question:

When do you expect the contracts to be completed?

Answer:

The listening tour contract was completed in May 2017. The contract for the Redesign and its successor Impact Initiative activities was suspended in May 2018 with only a small team of data scientists remaining to refine analytical tools.

Question:

What do you expect as the total final cost? What was the planned budget?

Answer:

The cost of the listening tour report was \$883,514. The cost of consultant support to Redesign as of May 2018 is \$11.19 million. The combined cost is \$12.07 million. The Redesign phase of intensive assessment and planning has concluded and the Department's investment for continued modernization will be supported by the implementing bureaus. The plan from the outset was to significantly reduce the use of contractors over time as projects developed. The Department's FY 2018 Operating Plan for D&CP will note where such work may continue within implementing bureaus.

Question:

What Bureau of Information Resource Management (IRM) contract did you amend and why did you choose this as opposed to a fixed contract? Please provide the Committee with a copy of the solicitation for the original and amendment to the IRM contract.

Answer:

Redesign efforts with Deloitte were acquired under a task order against GSA Alliant Government Wide Acquisition Contract #GS00Q09BGD0018. This GSA contract vehicle is recognized by OMB as a preferred government-wide solution for agency procurement needs. The IRM task order used for Redesign was #SAQMMA16F1155.

The Redesign plan is a long-term effort requiring OMB and Congressional notification, approval, and funding. Given the consultations required, the Department could not pre-determine an outcome and scope -- necessary conditions for a firm fixed-price contract. This GSA contract is Time & Materials based. Use of labor hours gives the Department maximum flexibility to adapt the consultant support role as needed.

Question:

What is the percentage of those belonging to traditionally underrepresented groups in the Senior Foreign Service and at what ranks (Career Ambassador, Career Minister etc)?

Answer:

As of April 30, the minority rate of the full-time permanent Senior Foreign Service (SFS), including both generalists and specialists, was 13.2 percent. Minority is defined as anyone self-reporting Hispanic ethnicity and or a race other than white.

*Senior Foreign Service (SFS) Minority Percentages by Rank as of April 30th 2018
(Includes both Generalists and Specialists)*

	Minority	Non-Minority
Career Ambassador*	0.0%	100.0%
Career Minister	21.1%	78.9%
Minister Counselor	12.4%	87.6%
Counselor	13.6%	86.4%
Total SFS	13.2%	86.8%

*Note: There are currently two Career Ambassadors

Question:

How many Assistant Secretaries or Deputy Assistant Secretaries belong to underrepresented groups? Please provide details of the bureaus in which they work.

Answer:

As of April 30 and out of 138 full-time permanent employees serving in Assistant Secretary, Deputy Assistant Secretary, or equivalent positions in the Department, 16 were minorities working in our AF (African Affairs), BP (Budget and Planning), CGFS (Comptroller and Global Financial Services), DS (Diplomatic Security), EAP (East Asia Pacific), EB (Economic and Business Affairs), ISN (International Security and Nonproliferation), OIG, PA (Public Affairs), S (Secretariat), and WHA (Western Hemisphere Affairs) bureaus. Minority is defined as anyone self-reporting Hispanic ethnicity and or a race other than white and hence may not reflect all minority employees in these positions if they did not self-report their status.

Full-time Permanent Staffing Counts for Assistant Secretary, Deputy Assistant Secretary, or Equivalent Positions as of April 30th 2018

	Minority	Non-Minority	Total
Assistant Secretary or Equivalent	4	18	22
Deputy Assistant Secretary or Equivalent	12	104	116
Total	16	122	138

Question:

What concrete steps is the State Department taking to address the significant gap of people belonging to traditional underrepresented groups in the mid-career and senior ranks of the Foreign and Civil Service?

Answer:

The Department provides career support and development to prepare employees for positions of increasing responsibility to strengthen and diversify its leadership pipeline. The Civil Service Career Development (CD) Division administers the Civil Service Mentoring Program, develops Career Guides to inform career strategies, and provides one-on-one guidance through the Career Development Resource Center. In addition, the Department's Senior Executive Service Candidate Development Program (SES CDP) grooms successful participants for non-competitive appointment into executive positions. Of 14 current participants, nine are female and six identify as minorities.

Foreign Service initiatives include redesigned mentoring services for mid-level FS employees serving their first domestic tours. Human Resources also provides long-term career mentoring services that begin in the first year of employment. Situational mentoring is available to all CS and FS employees. The Department supports CS and FS employee development through the International Career Advancement Program, whose mission is to bring greater diversity to senior-level foreign affairs practitioners. There is mandatory training for supervisors on managing for diversity and also mandatory equal employment opportunity training for every member of the Foreign Service with an emphasis on inclusiveness.

Question:

Please provide the detailed findings of the Bureau of Intelligence and Research diversity report.

Answer:

INR does not produce a diversity report. INR data is, however, included in broader State and Intelligence Community reports.

Question:

Please provide the following data on the deployment of your workforce in an electronic, searchable format, such as an excel spreadsheet:

- o Diplomatic density overseas by region, country, and post;
- o Core diplomatic positions overseas by region, country, and post;
- o Core diplomatic positions in the Washington, D.C., area by region and country;
- o Core development positions overseas by region, country, and post;
- o Core development positions in the Washington, D.C., area by region and country;
- o Diplomatic security positions overseas by region, country, and post; and
- o Direct hire positions at United States Government agencies, as appropriate, disaggregated by agency, region, country, and post (These are direct hires paid by other government agencies and serving at U.S. embassies).

Answer:

Enclosed is a spreadsheet of the Department's Full Time Permanent workforce as of September 30, 2017. Additionally, I would be happy to have the Department's human resources team come brief your office on our latest workforce data and better understand your data requirements and their context.

(the information follows)

CLEARED FOR PUBLIC RELEASE

Department of State - Full-time Permanent Workforce as of 9/30/2017

BUREAU	DOMESTIC-CS	DOMESTIC-FS	OVERSEAS	TOTAL
A	929	40	5	974
AF	67	115	1,151	1,333
AVC	86	8	15	109
BP	61	4	0	65
CA	2,436	197	0	2,633
CGFS	373	22	13	408
CSO	61	24	1	86
CT	81	18	0	99
DRL	97	33	0	130
DS	843	1,162	303	2,308
EAP	47	151	1,518	1,716
EB	93	85	0	178
ECA	322	46	20	388
ENR	37	32	0	69
EUR	135	230	1,984	2,349
FS STAFF	524	104	2	630
FS STUDENT	0	291	53	344
H	42	9	0	51
HR	432	178	0	610
HROTHER	26	389	34	449
IBC	8	0	0	8
IIP	155	31	19	205
IJC	10	2	8	20
INL	212	30	97	339
INR	252	66	0	318
IO	160	82	80	322
IRM	467	153	5	625
ISN	183	18	1	202
J/TIP	43	6	0	49
L	265	0	0	265
M	101	28	0	129
MED	91	35	4	130
NEA	144	153	1,123	1,420
OBO	495	68	300	863
OES	145	45	0	190
OIG	237	17	16	270
PA	181	33	8	222
PM	152	73	29	254
PRM	95	28	31	154
S	360	188	6	554
SOFR	52	0	0	52
SCA	52	55	907	1,014
WHA	84	149	1,753	1,986
Total	10,636	4,398	9,486	24,520

HROTHER includes details, interns, rotational officers, entry level in training and reassignments.

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Question:

Do the State Department and USAID have a standard procedure when responding to sexual assault allegations? If so, what are they? What is the standard procedure to report a sexual assault at the State Department and USAID?

Answer:

Per the sexual assault policy in 3 FAM 1700, the Department fully investigates any allegation of sexual assault in a manner that prioritizes the safety and dignity of the victim, including providing a victim advocate. State and USAID employees serving domestically are encouraged to report sexual assault to law enforcement authorities. Employees and family members abroad who suffer or are aware of an assault are encouraged to report it to the Regional Security Officer, the Bureau of Diplomatic Security, the Office of Civil Rights or the Chief of Mission. Victims may receive confidential medical treatment, including administration of a sexual assault evidence collection kit, from post's Health Unit or from the Bureau of Medical Services.

Question:

Who at the State Department has the lead on issues related to detainees who remain at the detention facility at Guantanamo Bay or who were previously transferred from the detention facility?

Answer:

Senior leadership at the Department of State remains actively engaged while the Department reviews the assignment of responsibilities for Guantanamo detainees. Responsibility for the Department's role in the Periodic Review Board (PRB) process is currently shared by its Counterterrorism Coordinator and Legal Adviser, both of whom are Senate confirmed officials. Responsibility for arranging the transfer of detainees who have been recommended by the PRB for potential transfer is now under discussion. Responsibility for detainees who have been previously transferred from Guantanamo falls, in the first instance, to the Chiefs of Mission at our embassies abroad.

Question:

Why were all the staff who worked in the office on the closure of Guantanamo Bay transferred to work on FOIA, leaving the office completely unstaffed?

Answer:

The Office of the Special Envoy for Guantanamo Closure (S/GC) is not unstaffed nor were staff transferred to the FOIA office. Some staff were temporarily detailed to the FOIA office. S/GC and the Bureau of Western Hemisphere Affairs continue to appropriately address issues related to Guantanamo closure, and we cooperate closely with our foreign partners to ensure that former Guantanamo detainees do not pose a threat to the United States.

Last fall, then Secretary Tillerson asked for employees from every part of the Department to temporarily assist in an effort to clear our backlog of FOIA requests with the belief that FOIA compliance is the responsibility of every bureau and employee and that FOIA helps promote transparency and accountability throughout government.

The Department's now updated FOIA process has short and long-term objectives. At its start, we sought to expediently reduce the backlog of outstanding requests. The Department is now phasing into implementation longer-term improvements to our FOIA management practices. Many Department employees who were temporarily assigned to assist with addressing the Department's FOIA backlog have now returned to regular duties.

Question:

Foreign Corrupt Practices Act. U.S. businesses lead the world in operating according to the law. Our companies follow environmental standards, comply with health regulations, and don't bribe foreign governments. In fact, under the Foreign Corrupt Practices Act, they can't bribe foreign officials – it's against the law. But, in 2012, President Trump said, "Every other country goes into these places, and they do what they have to do. It's a horrible law and it should be changed. I mean, we're like the policeman for the world. It's ridiculous." I haven't heard that President Trump has changed his position. Does he support the FCPA? Or is he trying to change the law? Does he still believe he should be able to bribe foreign government officials?

Answer:

As in other areas, the United States has been the leader in enforcement of anti-bribery laws. We continue to press other countries to take the actions needed to create a level playing field for American and other companies. Following our lead, Germany, Switzerland, the United Kingdom and, more recently, Brazil have actively joined the fight against bribery of foreign officials. Numerous other countries, including Australia and Israel, have recently secured convictions. But we need more countries to aggressively investigate and effectively prosecute cases. The United States will continue to use its diplomatic strength to improve enforcement efforts abroad.

Question:

Given the budget's suggestion that resources will be shifted to prioritize high HIV/AIDS burden countries, how will HIV positive pregnant women be taken into account in the lower priority countries? Will PEPFAR still be offering the full range of prevention of mother-to-child transmission (PMTCT) services from diagnosis through breastfeeding in these countries? If yes, can you please elaborate as to how PMTCT success will be maintained in lower priority countries where you are planning to reduce financial resources and how PMTCT services could potentially be compromised?

Answer:

HIV positive pregnant women remain a key beneficiary group for PEPFAR services as evidenced by the nearly 9 million pregnant women tested last year. Prevention of mother-to-child

transmission (PMTCT) services remains a key priority in PEPFAR and will continue in lower-burden countries as PEPFAR uses data to target testing and treatment resources to maximize the impact of U.S. funding against the HIV/AIDS epidemic. PEPFAR's targeting model has allowed us to identify a constant number of pregnant women with fewer tests. The U.S. government continues to target testing and treatment resources and works with host-country governments, the Global Fund to Fight AIDS, Tuberculosis and Malaria, and other funders to ensure resources are targeted to meet the highest areas of need. For example, in areas with a lower yield of testing among pregnant women, testing is often maintained by the host government with limited support from PEPFAR.

Question:

Finding HIV positive children to initiate them on treatment remains a barrier to the scale up of pediatric treatment of HIV. Will pediatric treatment scale up also slow in these lower priority countries? If not, can you please elaborate as to how pediatric treatment scale up will continue in lower priority countries where you are planning to reduce financial resources and pediatric treatment services could potentially be compromised?

Answer:

The most important and efficient strategies for identifying children with HIV infection are (1) through follow-up testing of infants born to women with known HIV infection and (2) through testing children of adults diagnosed with HIV infection (so-called family-index testing). PEPFAR supports both activities in lower-burden countries, which should enable continued progress in identifying children with HIV infection and linking them immediately to treatment.

Question:

Please provide all stakeholder comments submitted for the Mexico City Policy review.

Answer:

In conducting the six-month review, we welcomed comments from all sides of the issue. We do not plan to release stakeholder comments, as we did not inform stakeholders that their comments would be disseminated when they submitted them.

Question:

It is my understanding that the Department plans to conduct another review of the expanded Mexico City Policy this year. Will you commit to ensuring that this review is comprehensive, and fully details the effects that the Policy is having on access to health care? Where there are service disruptions, will you commit to review any requests for exemptions and what criteria will you use to determine potential exemptions? Will you also commit to making all stakeholder comments public – not just those that support the Policy?

Answer:

My intention is that the review examine the implementation of the policy. We are in the process of determining the specific scope and gathering some preliminary information. From the outset of the policy, it was contemplated that there may need to be exemptions in certain circumstances. In consultation with the Secretary of Health and Human Services, I will review any exemption requests received. Criteria that may be considered for exemptions include but are not limited to the existence of a public health emergency that impacts global health assistance; the possibility of extreme and irreversible service disruption if the exemption were not granted; whether there are other partners qualified to execute the program; or other extenuating circumstances that warrant granting an exception.

In conducting the six-month review, we welcomed comments from all sides of the issue. We do not plan to release stakeholder comments, as we did not inform stakeholders that their comments would be made public when they submitted them. Stakeholders, however, are free to make their own comments public.

Question:

How much funding is impacted by the four prime recipients who refuse to comply with the Mexico City Policy?

Answer:

Two organizations publicly indicated they will decline U.S. government global health assistance because of the Protecting Life in Global Health Assistance policy: the International Planned Parenthood Federation and Marie Stopes International. In FY 2016, the International Planned Parenthood Federation and Marie Stopes International received global health assistance under central awards in the amounts of \$9.37 million and \$15.44 million, respectively. The third organization that declined to agree to the PLGHA policy was obligated \$100,000 in USAID global health assistance in FY 2016.

The fourth declining organization was a Department of Defense prime partner that declined to sign in one country, though it signed in others. This organization's unsigned grant totaled \$151,000.

Federal departments and agencies reprogram to other organizations any U.S. government global health assistance funding they would have awarded to NGOs that do not agree to the conditions set on the acceptance of U.S. funding under the PLGHA policy.

Question:

How many people did the four prime recipients who refuse to comply with the Mexico City Policy previously serve and what measures are you taking to ensure the same number of women and girls receive life-saving health services?

Answer:

Most of the primes with which we work have multiple funding streams, so the number of people they served previously is not solely reflective of U.S. funding. The United States remains committed to helping women and children thrive, particularly in countries where the need is greatest. When an NGO has declined to agree to the policy, affected departments and agencies work to transition the activities that that would have been undertaken by the organization with our funding to other partners. This policy does not affect the total amount of U.S. government funding for global health programs. When departments and agencies reprogram funds to other organizations, the amount of funding directed to respective recipient countries remains the same and we remain focused on our goals. The Department will conduct a subsequent review of the policy to gauge impacts of the policy and is committed to ensuring any transition of activities minimizes disruptions of health service delivery.

Question:

Can you assure us that U.S.-funded programs will continue to support and supply a full range of modern contraceptive methods in order to ensure that women have access to the information, counseling, and methods best-suited to their needs?

Answer:

I support the Administration's efforts to support the maternal health and voluntary family planning needs of women around the world. Enabling couples to determine whether, when, and how often to have children is vital to safe motherhood and healthy families. The U.S. Agency for International Development (USAID) finances programs that help individuals make a free and informed choice about having children by providing access to and information about a variety of voluntary family planning options. The United States remains the largest donor to women's health around the world, and the President's Budget Request for Fiscal Year 2019 includes \$302 million for voluntary family-planning programs.

Question:

With respect to the defunding of the UN Population Fund (UNFPA), can you share where appropriated funding has been reallocated and what programs it is supporting? Can you assure us that any transferred funds will be going to our existing international family planning and reproductive health programs that support access to contraceptives and work to combat child marriage, gender-based violence, and female genital mutilation?

Answer:

As a requirement by Section 7082(b) of the Fiscal Year (FY) 2017 Department of State, Foreign Operations, and Related Programs Appropriations Act (SFOAA), the Department of State transferred the funding from the \$32.5 million directive for UNFPA in the FY 2017 International Organizations and Programs account affected by the March 2017 Kemp-Kasten determination to the Global Health Programs account at U.S. Agency for International Development (USAID). As

required by the 2017 SFOAA, USAID will make the FY 2017 funds available for family planning, maternal, and women's health activities, subject to the regular notification procedures of the Committees on Appropriations.

Question:

The FY 19 budget request includes significant cuts to funding for the Global Fund for AIDS, TB, and Malaria and PEPFAR. The President's budget states that you will still maintain enough funding for current treatment levels, but does not mention critical prevention programming, which is essential to decrease new infections, including among adolescent girls and young women through the DREAMS initiative. Do you believe this funding is adequate, and how do you plan to provide HIV/AIDS comprehensive prevention programs with these proposed cuts?

Answer:

The President's FY 2019 request seeks resources to advance PEPFAR's Strategy for Accelerating HIV/AIDS Epidemic Control (2017-2020). Funding in the request enables PEPFAR to continue investing in over 50 countries and maintain life-saving antiretroviral treatment (ART) for all of the patients we support. Funds will provide essential services for orphan and vulnerable children as well as vulnerable key populations, including adolescent girls and young women. We have a unique opportunity to accelerate progress toward reaching epidemic control by 2020 through the UNAIDS 90/90/90 framework and PEPFAR will expand HIV prevention in 13 high-burden countries while sustaining support to all countries and populations where PEPFAR works.

PEPFAR will continue to expand both HIV prevention and treatment services where possible through increased performance, efficiency gains, and shared responsibility of all partners.

Question:

Can you commit to us that PEPFAR will continue working to identify and treat all people living with HIV in every country served by the program?

Answer:

In the 13 high impact epidemic control countries, PEPFAR will accelerate efforts to reduce HIV infections and AIDS-related deaths toward achieving epidemic control. We will expand the most impactful HIV prevention, treatment, and care services among the highest-HIV-burden locations and populations. This effort will be supported by using data to drive accountability, find efficiencies, leverage partnerships, and increase transparency. Outside of these 13 high impact epidemic control countries, PEPFAR will maintain its current level of antiretroviral treatment through direct service delivery and expand both HIV prevention and treatment services, where possible, through increased performance and efficiency gains. The U.S. government, through PEPFAR, will also work with partner governments, the Global Fund to Fight AIDS, Tuberculosis and Malaria, and others to determine how HIV prevention and treatment services can be expanded in cases where PEPFAR is not the primary funder and/or service delivery provider. The United States will continue to lead international efforts that advance controlling the HIV/AIDS epidemic,

but these health challenges should not just be met by contributions from the United States. PEPFAR will continue leverage our dollars to ensure that other donor countries and local partners are contributing their fair share.

Question:

I am concerned that this year's State Department Human Rights Report failed to offer a complete picture of the abuses that women face by censoring descriptions of reproductive rights violations. Do you believe that denying women access to contraception – which could help them to plan their families and reduce maternal and infant deaths – is a violation of their rights?

Answer:

In the 2017 Human Rights Report, the "Reproductive Rights" subsection was renamed to "Coercion in Population Control" in accordance with the requirement of U.S. law that we report on "wherever applicable, practices regarding coercion in population control, including coerced abortion and involuntary sterilization." Additional material on maternal mortality, contraception, etc. is available via hyperlink in each country chapter and in an appendix to the Reports.

Question:

Do you believe that denying safe abortion care to rape survivors is a violation of their rights?

Answer:

As noted previously, revisions to this year's Human Rights Report aligned it with the requirement in U.S. law that we report on "wherever applicable, practices regarding coercion in population control...." Additional material on maternal mortality, contraception, and similar issues is available via hyperlink in the text of each country chapter and in an appendix to the Reports.

Question:

In the midst of the Democratic Republic of the Congo's ninth outbreak of Ebola, the Trump Administration has proposed rescinding more than \$250 million dollars in remaining Ebola supplemental funds that could be used to address this outbreak. Why is the Administration disposing of Ebola supplemental funds that could and should be used for maintaining global health security work?

Answer:

With respect to the proposed \$252 million rescission for Ebola, these funds were targeted for the West Africa Ebola crisis, which the WHO declared to be over in 2016. Congress has generously provided other funds, including the Emergency Reserve Fund, which enable us to respond appropriately to emergency needs like the current DRC outbreak, separate from the funds being proposed for rescission. The Administration has taken swift action in response to the current Ebola outbreak in the DRC and on May 22 announced that USAID is contributing up to \$8 million

towards interventions to help prevent the spread of this deadly disease, including \$5 million that I approved from the Emergency Reserve Fund. We commend the efforts of the Congolese and our international partners to confront this outbreak and help prevent a global health crisis and welcome future contributions from international partners and other countries toward this effort as well as long-term global health security efforts aimed at preventing future crises.

Question:

Who is currently in charge of global health security?

Answer:

Achieving a world safe from infectious disease threats is a State Department priority advanced by staff domestically and at U.S. foreign missions. Principal Deputy Assistant Secretary Judith G. Garber, currently the senior ranking official in the Bureau of Oceans and International Environmental and Scientific Affairs, leads the Department of State's global health security activities, including implementation of the Global Health Security Agenda (GHSA). In accordance with E.O. 13747, these activities include health security diplomatic outreach, coordination of U.S. programmatic activities, and engagement with non-governmental stakeholders. The National Security Council coordinates government-wide policy on global health security and serves as Chair of the GHSA Interagency Review Council.

Question:

Security Assistance. In the President's FY 2019 budget, the State Department's security assistance account has once again been slashed dramatically, leaving the door open for China and Russia to cultivate relationships with countries in Asia and other parts of the world -- while the United States sits on the sidelines. Of course, this lack of investment has implications for our national security and U.S. jobs, as well. How do you address concerns about countries becoming dependent on Chinese or Russian systems instead of ours?

Answer:

Our security relationships worldwide are based on far more than just equipment purchased via military grant assistance. The United States also strengthens partnerships that preserve and extend our global influence through the purchase -- via partner nation funds -- of U.S.-origin defense articles and services, in addition to our best-in-the-world professional military education programs and support for and encouragement of multilateral conferences and symposia to exchange best practices and promote multilateral cooperation against transnational threats. Conventional arms transfers too are instrumental in developing capable allies and partners, maintaining a strong defense industrial base that employs more than 1.7 million people, and deterring strategic competitors such as China and Russia.

The Department's 2019 security assistance request will support prioritized programs for partners who share our security interests. We also continue to improve coordination with like-minded donor partners, particularly in the Indo-Pacific, such that our programs are

complementary. Finally, our Title 22 programs are better integrated with the DoD's Title 10 programs to fulfill partner security requirements that meet our national security objectives. Our partners do have other options but we continue to be the trusted security partner of choice.

Question:

How much coordination and policy direction do you exercise over the considerable funds expended by the Pentagon each year?

Answer:

The level of coordination and policy direction exercised by the Department of State over the Department of Defense's security assistance funding varies based on the authority. The requirement for Secretary of State concurrence with, and joint planning of, DoD assistance, including pursuant to 10 U.S.C. 333, helps ensure State and DoD assistance policy and programs are synchronized. Absent such legislated concurrence requirements, as is the case with the DoD's Counter-ISIS Train and Equip Fund (CTEF), State concurrence must rely on interagency policy arrangements for coordination efforts which vary greatly depending on the authority. Separately, State and DoD initiated a process in 2017 to maximize the impact of U.S. security sector assistance (SSA) and in March the Department submitted to Congress the Quadrennial SSA Review report that identifies areas for improvement on State-DoD coordination on DoD's security assistance funding.

Question:

Please explain how that process works with the various Title 10 authorities over which the State Department has some policy role, as well as with Leahy Law vetting.

Answer:

The Department of State works with the Department of Defense to develop and institutionalize the necessary structures and processes to efficiently and effectively meet coordination and concurrence requirements under DoD's security assistance authorities, as well as any other additional requirements mandated by the relevant legislation. For DoD's authority under 10 U.S.C. 333, the Assistant Secretary for Political-Military Affairs (PM) is designated as State's lead coordinator for the joint planning, development, and implementation of such programs. Secretary of State concurrence with section 333 programs is delegated to the Director of the Office of U.S. Foreign Assistance Resources, who is best-positioned to maintain a full picture and analysis of how DoD's programming aligns with State/USAID foreign assistance resources.

In fulfilling its lead coordination role under section 333, PM manages a consultative and inclusive planning and approval process to ensure that State's priorities and policy concerns are reflected in DoD's plans and programs. Because DoD's section 333 programs are subject to the same restrictions or requirements that would be applicable to similar State programming, PM also works with State regional and functional bureau stakeholders, including the Office of the Legal Adviser, to determine applicable legal restrictions on DoD's proposed section 333 programming. State and

DoD then work to address State's conditions on concurrence, which include Leahy vetting and may also include satisfying specific legal requirements or adhering to certain legal restrictions, prior to DoD's execution of the program

Question:

Have these cuts [to Security Assistance] helped to drive countries into a violation of Section 231 of CAATSA, which imposes sanctions on those which buy major Russian military systems?

Answer:

We are not aware that the cuts have driven any countries to violate Section 231 of CAATSA. State Department's implementation of CAATSA Section 231 sanctions has borne fruit, directly leading several countries to forgo billions of dollars in purchases of Russian arms and defense technology, imposing real costs for Russia's malign activities. We remain deeply engaged with partners and allies to press for cancellation of planned or negotiated arms purchases from Russia and urge those nations that are historically reliant on old Soviet or Russian defense technologies to ramp down those programs to avoid sanctions.

Question:

FY 2019 foreign assistance budget for the Indo-Pacific, encompassing the East Asia-Pacific (EAP) and South and Central Asia (SCA) regions, supports U.S. engagement in regional security, economic connectivity, good governance and the rules-based order with an aim toward providing opportunities for U.S. businesses. It also supports the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN) to "help the organization speak with one voice on China's militarization of the South China Sea and North Korea's nuclear provocations." The Indo-Pacific region includes some of the most promising markets for U.S. exports as well as some of the most challenging security issues: China, Pakistan terrorism, and the DPRK's nuclear ambitions. Yet, the Trump FY19 Budget Request proposes a 47% cut in funding to this region. Exactly where – to what initiatives and in what accounts – will you be reducing funding? How do you square these cuts with the priorities in the President's National Security Strategy which defines these countries as priorities?

Answer:

The Department's FY 2019 budget request supports the Administration's Indo-Pacific strategy that is based on respect for sovereignty, democratic values, the rule of law, open markets, fair and reciprocal trading frameworks, freedom of navigation, and private sector-led economic growth. The request also funds the strategic priorities in the Indo-Pacific by supporting U.S. treaty allies, emerging strategic partners, and regional institutions to promote shared security interests, including strengthening maritime capacities; defending against cyberattacks; countering violent extremism; and tackling transnational crime, and by promoting trade and investment that fosters economic opportunities for the American people. The FY 2019 request reflects a 10 percent increase over our fiscal year 2018 request to support the Administration's Indo-Pacific strategy.

Question:

Earlier this year, the Administration backtracked on their identified nominee for U.S. Ambassador to South Korea reportedly because the would-be nominee expressed concern about the Administration's "bloody nose" threats. Still, almost a year and a half into the Administration, we have no nominee for this critical post, and our alliance with South Korea suffers because of that lack of leadership in these tense times. Why was Mr. Cha not nominated? When will you stop this almost endless vacancy from continuing to damage our efforts on the Korean peninsula?

Answer:

Admiral Harry Harris is the nominee for U.S. Ambassador to the Republic of Korea and I am confident in his ability to execute the duties of that office. The State Department has a roster of capable and experienced diplomats working on Korea policy. As I made clear in my confirmation testimony, one of my priorities is filling vacancies in important Ambassadorships and other senior positions.

Question:

Does the Administration have or has it ever had a so-called "bloody nose" option under consideration - one in which the U.S. would engage in a limited conventional attack on North Korean targets?

Answer:

My focus when it comes to North Korea is the same as the President's focus: to achieve through peaceful means the complete, verifiable, and irreversible denuclearization of the Korean Peninsula, including delivery systems. While all options remain on the table, I will not comment on hypothetical situations.

Question:

If the President chooses to carry out a preventative strike, how do you predict Kim will respond, and would we be able to prevent the military escalation of such an action?

Answer:

My focus when it comes to North Korea is the same as the President's focus: to achieve through peaceful means the complete, verifiable, and irreversible denuclearization of the Korean Peninsula, including delivery systems. While all options remain on the table, I will not comment on hypothetical situations.

Question:

What about a preemptive strike?

Answer:

I do not want to engage in discussion of hypothetical scenarios. My focus when it comes to North Korea is the same as the President's focus: to achieve through peaceful means the complete, verifiable, and irreversible denuclearization of the Korean Peninsula, including delivery systems.

Question:

In either case, would you advise the President to come to Congress for authorization prior to taking such action?

Answer:

My focus when it comes to North Korea is the same as the President's focus: to achieve through peaceful means the complete, verifiable, irreversible denuclearization of the Korean Peninsula, including delivery systems.

I respect Congress's role in authorizing the use of military force and in providing oversight on these issues. I also agree with the longstanding view of administrations of both parties that the President has the constitutional authority to use military force to support important national interests in certain circumstances. The parameters of that authority have been discussed by the Justice Department's Office of Legal Counsel in advising Presidents on the scope of their constitutional authorities over time. I will always provide my best advice to the President on the appropriate circumstances for the use of force and would consult with legal authorities in doing so.

Question:

Do you think that Kim can be deterred from using the nuclear weapons in his possession? If he can be deterred from using these weapons, why would risking a devastating preventative war be necessary?

Answer:

My focus when it comes to North Korea is the same as the President's focus: to achieve through peaceful means the complete, verifiable, and irreversible denuclearization of the Korean Peninsula, including delivery systems. North Korea knows that any use of nuclear weapons would be met with a devastating response by the United States.

Question:

Are you aware of any military option, limited or not, in which the United States can control the escalation ladder and avoid mass casualties on the Peninsula?

Answer:

My focus when it comes to North Korea is the same as the President's focus: to achieve through peaceful means the complete, verifiable, and irreversible denuclearization of the Korean Peninsula, including delivery systems. While all options remain on the table, I will not comment on hypothetical situations.

Question:

Would you ever support a preventative war with North Korea, and if the answer is yes, do you think that congressional authorization is required prior to such military action?

Answer:

My focus when it comes to North Korea is the same as the President's focus: to achieve through peaceful means the complete, verifiable, irreversible denuclearization of the Korean Peninsula, including delivery systems.

I respect Congress's role in authorizing the use of military force and in providing oversight on these issues. I also agree with the longstanding view of administrations of both parties that the President has the constitutional authority to use military force to support important national interests in certain circumstances. The parameters of that authority have been discussed by the Justice Department's Office of Legal Counsel in advising Presidents on the scope of their constitutional authorities over time. I will always provide my best advice to the President on the appropriate circumstances for the use of force and would consult with legal authorities in doing so.

Question:

By August of this year, will you make a determination as to what, if any, human rights violations may have occurred in Rakhine state in addition to ethnic cleansing?

Answer:

The Rakhine State crisis is a devastating human tragedy. Concluding that genocide, crimes against humanity, or ethnic cleansing have been committed is one of the most serious matters a Secretary of State may undertake, and such a conclusion is made only after a thorough review of the available facts and relevant legal analysis.

Question:

Will you make such evidence, reports or information as you use to make this determination public? Will you provide a copy of such evidence to the House Committee on Foreign Affairs?

Answer:

The Department relies on a variety of open and confidential sources to ascertain facts on the ground. The Department would need to first review this information and consider the sensitivity of sources before deciding what information to make public or share beyond the Department.

Question:

What is the status of the \$200 million in stabilization assistance to areas of Syria liberated from ISIS?

Answer:

In line with the President's request to review all bilateral foreign assistance for Syria, we continually reevaluate stabilization assistance levels and how they might best be used. This review includes the \$200 million in stabilization assistance announced at the Defeat-ISIS Coalition Ministerial in Kuwait in February 2018. We do this review on an ongoing basis, as we do elsewhere around the world. Our objective in these reviews is to ensure that our assistance is targeted, effective, and set at the appropriate level.

Question:

In your response to Mr. Boyle, you indicated that the funds are under review and that you were looking for others to step in, yet these projects are the definition of burden sharing. For some projects held under review, the United States isn't even the biggest donor. But, our funds do make a difference. Our allies have begged the United States to lift the hold on this funding, since the lack of stabilization can lead to chaos for Syria's neighbors, like Jordan, Lebanon and Israel. Which exact projects are under review? What is the timeline to conclude the review?

Answer:

In line with the President's request to review all bilateral foreign assistance for Syria, we continually reevaluate stabilization assistance levels and how they might best be used. The President has also made clear that, as we move forward, the Administration will continue to ask the international community and our partners in the Global Coalition to Defeat ISIS to take a greater role in stabilizing liberated areas of Syria.

Question:

Why did the State Department cut the assistance program to Northern Syria?

Answer:

In line with the President's request to review all bilateral foreign assistance for Syria, we continually reevaluate stabilization assistance levels and how best they might be utilized. We have decided to transition certain U.S. assistance efforts in northwest Syria over the coming months to

enhance our focus on efforts to the defeat ISIS campaign in the northeast and to stabilize areas liberated from ISIS.

Question:

Yemen is one of the worst humanitarian disasters in the world. Yemen was not a stable place before the civil war, and there is clearly no military solution to this conflict. How do you plan to help bring about a political solution to the crisis in Yemen?

Answer:

The Administration strongly supports and is working closely with UN Special Envoy to Yemen Martin Griffiths to revive political negotiations on an accelerated timeline. Our support is not passive. I, along with Secretary Mattis and senior White House officials, have met with the Special Envoy. I offered him our full support and will continue to engage with key regional partners, including the Saudis and Emiratis, to reinforce the Envoy's work. All sides, including the Houthis, will have to make compromises in order to reach a political solution.

Question:

For the last several months, U.S. assistance for the Palestinians in West Bank and Gaza has been on hold and under review. What is the goal of this review, and when do you expect to conclude it? What issues is the review working to address?

Answer:

The Administration routinely conducts a review of our foreign assistance in order to ensure it is meeting our national security interests, achieving our policy objectives, and providing value to U.S. taxpayers. The Department of State looks forward to briefing Congress on the conclusions of the review.

Question:

Humanitarian assistance, democracy assistance and people-to-people exchanges in the West Bank and Gaza have been on hold because of this review. The World Food Program is expected to run out of money to feed people in the West Bank at the end of the month and in Gaza at the end of next month. What U.S. interests are served by holding up humanitarian assistance, democracy assistance and people-to-people assistance?

Answer:

No decision has yet been reached on U.S. assistance to the Palestinians, which is under review. I will ensure that Congress is briefed on the conclusions of that review when it is complete.

Question:

Recently, the Israeli government announced that an agreement had been reached between Israel and the U.N. High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) to resettle, over the course of five years, at least half of the African asylum seekers in Israel, deporting them to Western countries. However, within a few hours the agreement was suspended, then cancelled, and now these asylum seekers are in limbo. What is the status of the agreement?

Answer:

There is not currently an agreement between UNHCR and the Israeli government related to African migrants in Israel.

Question:

Does the United States have a position on how the Government of Israel should treat African asylum seekers? Does the United States have a position on the agreement between UNHCR and the Israeli government?

Answer:

The United States has long been a world leader in advocating for humanitarian assistance and protection for refugees and displaced populations. The Department of State seeks to promote protection, ease suffering, and resolve the plight of refugees and displaced populations around the world.

There is not currently an agreement between UNHCR and the Israeli government related to African migrants in Israel

Question:

Will the United States commit to assisting Israel in resettling African asylum seekers?

Answer:

The Department of State seeks to promote protection, ease suffering, and resolve the plight of refugees and displaced populations around the world. The United States resettled 175 refugees coming from Israel in FY 2017, primarily Eritreans. In FY 2018, the United States has resettled 89 individuals coming from Israel as of May 23. We continue to accept referrals from UNHCR and anticipate doing so in the future.

Question:

U.S. civilian personnel are operating in Iraq with no legal, security or economic protections. U.S. civilians working in Iraq, even those supporting the counter-ISIS mission, are vulnerable under the current diplomatic note and exposed to the whims of the host government. U.S. contractors have experienced harassment to pay arbitrary taxes on American-based contracts and challenges

to obtaining visas and movement authorities for mission-critical staff, equipment and supplies. What is the State Department doing to address these concerns?

Answer:

The 2014 diplomatic note exchange with the Iraqi government provides civilian employees of DoD supporting the Defeat-ISIS mission privileges and immunities equivalent to those enjoyed by members of the administrative and technical staff of the U.S. diplomatic mission. Just as in any other country, U.S. government contractors in Iraq are subject to local laws, including taxes. Embassy Baghdad engages Iraqi government officials to ensure fair and equal treatment of U.S. companies under applicable laws and regulations, and has successfully negotiated faster processing of contractor residency visas and deliveries of food, fuel, and other essential supplies.

Question:

In December, your predecessor stated that the health incidents that our personnel have dealt with in Cuba were "targeted attacks." Yet, according to press reports, no one – including the FBI – has been able to prove what happened and who, if anyone, is culpable. What specific evidence can you point to that shows that these health incidents were "targeted attacks?" Have there been any additional verified health incidents for U.S. personnel in Havana since August 2017?

Answer:

There is still much we do not know about the health attacks in Cuba. No cause or culprit behind these attacks has been identified to date. Despite the inability to identify a specific attacker or mechanism of injury, the fact pattern of these reports indicated that the attacks appeared to be targeted at the U.S. diplomatic community. The investigation into various aspects of this matter is ongoing.

Question:

What will it take for the State Department's travel warning on Cuba to be reversed?

Answer:

The Level 3 Travel Advisory (reconsider travel), updated on March 2, 2018, is based on our assessment of the risk to travelers to Cuba – risks that were of such serious concern that we withdrew all but non-emergency personnel and family members from Cuba. As a result, we have limited ability to assist U.S. citizens with emergencies, particularly outside of Havana. We continue to investigate the cause of the injuries to U.S. personnel in Cuba. When we are confident it is safe for U.S. citizens to travel to Cuba and that we have the resources to assist U.S. citizens with emergencies, we will update the Travel Advisory, as appropriate.

Question:

As a result of the staff reduction at the U.S. Embassy in Cuba, the Trump Administration is extremely unlikely to meet our commitment under a 1994 immigration agreement with Cuba to

issue a minimum of 20,000 travel documents. This impacts average Cubans who seek to come to the United States. At the same time, in a recent *ProPublica* article, prominent Cuban dissident Marta Beatriz Roque said that the U.S. withdrawal had already had a “dramatic” impact on human rights advocates on the island, all but eliminating their access to American diplomats and making it much more difficult for dissidents to travel to the U.S. She said, “Basically, I would say the interaction with the U.S. Embassy right now for us is at a level of zero. The embassy is not getting the information it needs about the human rights situation in Cuba. Our contact before was frequent. Now there is no contact.” What impact has the U.S. diplomatic downsizing had on our human rights work in Cuba and our ability to process visas?

Answer:

Despite Embassy Havana’s limited staffing, we continue to monitor and advance human rights developments in Cuba, consistent with the June 2017 National Security Presidential Memorandum on Strengthening the Policy of the United States Toward Cuba. We raise our concerns with the Cuban government and in international fora, and, along with the U.S. Agency for International Development, administer the annual Congressional appropriation of economic support funds supporting democracy programs in Cuba. The Department also continues to call out the Cuban regime’s enduring repression of its citizens and its recent undemocratic leadership transition. Due to the drawdown, only diplomatic nonimmigrant visa applications and nonimmigrant cases for applicants with life-threatening illness may be processed at U.S. Embassy Havana. We anticipate scheduling immigrant visa interviews for Cuban nationals at U.S. Embassy Georgetown, Guyana, beginning in June. We support efforts by Cuban human rights defenders to obtain non-immigrant visas outside of Cuba.

Question:

Have you established criteria to determine when you will re-staff the embassy? When exactly will you re-staff the U.S. Embassy in Cuba?

Answer:

The Department is reviewing the threat situation presented by the health attacks against our diplomats in Havana. Once this review is complete, we can assess the staffing situation at Embassy Havana. A government-wide effort to find the cause behind the health attacks continues, as does the FBI criminal investigation. We continue to seek assurances from the Cuban government to resolve the threat to U.S. persons in Cuba – assurances which the Cuban government has declined to provide to date.

Question:

In the meantime, how are you maintaining critical monitoring of human rights?

Answer:

Despite Embassy Havana’s limited staffing, we have continued to support human rights defenders on the island, consistent with the June 2017 National Security Presidential Memorandum on

Strengthening the Policy of the United States Toward Cuba (NSPM). We monitor human rights developments in Cuba, continue to raise our serious concerns directly with the Cuban government and in international fora, and along with the U.S. Agency for International Development, administer the annual congressional appropriation of economic support funds supporting critical democracy programs in Cuba.

Question:

According to press reports, the Bureau of Intelligence and Research was forced to cancel an analytic panel on Cuba and the leadership of its new president, because its participants held analytical views that leaned too far towards engagement. Is this true? How can the INR Bureau effectively do its job if it is not given the freedom to listen to all points of view?

Answer:

The Bureau of Intelligence and Research (INR) is working to reschedule the event at a later date with a broad cross section of outside views on the issue at hand.

The event is one of roughly a hundred analytic exchanges that INR facilitates for U.S. policymakers every year on a wide variety of foreign policy and national security challenges. These analytic exchanges are fully consistent with IC Directive 205: Analytic Outreach, which mandates all Intelligence Community elements to conduct analytic outreach by engaging with individuals or organizations outside the Intelligence Community to explore ideas and alternative perspectives, gain insights, or generate new knowledge.

Question:

Last year, Mexico faced its most violent year on record, with more than 29,000 homicides documented nationwide. On top of this, with only 2 percent of crimes ending in conviction, Mexico ranked fourth on the 2017 Global Impunity Index, and first out of Latin American countries. Such widespread violence and impunity is exacerbated and, in many cases, can only be made possible by corruption. At least 14 former or current governors are currently under investigation for corruption, some of them for colluding with the organized crime groups that are largely responsible for rising violence. How should the United States engage with Mexico on these issues? What are your priorities for U.S. cooperation with Mexico?

Answer:

Through the Merida Initiative, we maintain strong cooperation with Mexico to disrupt transnational criminal organizations, combat the heroin-fentanyl epidemic, enhance border security to address irregular migration and trafficking in illicit goods, and build Mexico's capacity to investigate and prosecute crime. Our Merida funding is directed to these key priorities, identified jointly by our governments, and complements Mexico's investment in its own security. We emphasize disrupting the business models of transnational criminal organizations, which includes disrupting illicit revenue flows. Our cooperation strengthens Mexican institutions and the rule of law, increases transparency, and promotes strong communities to deter recruitment by transnational criminal organizations.

Question:

Corruption has had an enormous impact on democratic institutions and the rule of law in Central America. The United Nations International Commission against Impunity in Guatemala (CICIG) and the Organization of American States Support Mission against Corruption and Impunity in Honduras (MACCIH) are playing a critical role in stemming corruption and impunity in these countries. Will you commit to maintaining continued U.S. political support for CICIG and MACCIH?

Answer:

I am committed to providing support for efforts to combat corruption in Central America. The mission of organizations such as the UN International Commission Against Impunity in Guatemala (CICIG) and the OAS Mission Against Corruption and Impunity in Honduras (MACCIH) is important to countering corruption and impunity in Guatemala and Honduras. The Department, USAID, and the U.S. Mission to the United Nations (USUN) have met to discuss reform options to ensure appropriate oversight, accountability and transparency, which I look forward to reviewing. I am committed to working with Members of Congress to ensure appropriate oversight and reform of CICIG and MACCIH to ensure they can accomplish their mission to combat corruption and impunity in Guatemala and Honduras.

Question:

How would you support and strengthen the efforts of these hybrid mechanisms and how would you help ensure the full cooperation of the Guatemalan and Honduran governments?

Answer:

I will encourage the Guatemalan and Honduran governments to support the important missions of the UN International Commission Against Impunity in Guatemala (CICIG) and OAS Mission Against Corruption and Impunity in Honduras (MACCIH), respectively. These governments have an opportunity to dismantle the corruption networks that hinder their countries' ability to increase economic opportunities for all sectors of society and improve trust in public institutions to provide government services. As we work closely on the challenges of corruption and impunity, it is critical that there are appropriate accountability and reform structures in place to ensure organizations, such as CICIG and MACCIH, operate within their specific mandate and according to the rule of law.

Question:

ProPublica has reported on two specific incidents in Mexico involving State Department-funded and DEA-trained Sensitive Investigative Units (SIUs). First, in March 2011, gunmen from Los Zetas invaded the Mexican town of Allende, forty minutes from the U.S. – Mexico border, murdering between 60 and 300 civilians. This attack was sparked by a Mexican Federal Police SIU investigation aimed at taking down leaders from Los Zetas. A member of the SIU reportedly leaked information on these efforts, and the Zetas leaders ordered the attack on Allende as revenge

on the individuals who had given information to the SIU in the first place. Despite the fact that the unit had a poor record of keeping intelligence out of the hands of criminals, DEA agents in Mexico City allegedly passed information to the SIU which led to this tragic chain of events. Separately, in April 2010, individuals from Los Zetas stormed a Holiday Inn in Monterrey and took hostage five individuals who have not been seen since. At the time, the DEA and the SIU were carrying out an operation from the hotel but switched to a different hotel the night before the attack. Four hotel guests and a hotel manager were reportedly mistaken as SIU members and kidnapped. According to ProPublica, SIU members "used personal credit cards to secure their rental cars and hotel rooms," making it easy for the individuals from Los Zetas to track them down. What was the role of the State Department and the DEA in the Allende and Monterrey incidents? Was there any reporting by the State Department or DEA to headquarters and/or senior officials at the Departments of State and Justice following each of these incidents?

Answer:

I understand that these questions were submitted to the OIG and they are currently reviewing the request. The Department will fully cooperate with any inquiry by the OIG on this matter.

Question:

What practices, if any, were changed by INL or the DEA in Mexico or globally as a result of the SIU's activities?

Answer:

I understand that these questions were submitted to the OIG and they are currently reviewing the request. The Department will fully cooperate with any inquiry by the OIG on this matter.

Question:

What was the chain of custody of the information that was passed to the SIU in each of these incidents? Who approved passing this information to the SIU?

Answer:

I understand that these questions were submitted to the OIG and they are currently reviewing the request. The Department will fully cooperate with any inquiry by the OIG on this matter.

Question:

The Allende tragedy was precipitated by the leak of sensitive information provided to the DEA by a local source. This information was then shared by DEA with an SIU whose commander was rumored to have connections to Mexican drug trafficking organizations. I understand that the Mexican government refuses to allow U.S. vetting of commanders of these SIUs. Should the U.S. government share information with SIUs if we are unable to vet their leadership?

Answer:

I understand that these questions were submitted to the OIG and they are currently reviewing the request. The Department will fully cooperate with any inquiry by the OIG on this matter.

Question:

Did the State Department, DEA or any other U.S. government agency provide compensation or at least an explanation to any of the families of the victims of these incidents? What steps could the Departments of State and Justice take to ensure greater accountability for the DEA when innocent civilians are harmed as a result of its operations?

Answer:

I understand that these questions were submitted to the OIG and they are currently reviewing the request. The Department will fully cooperate with any inquiry by the OIG on this matter.

Question:

During your confirmation hearing, you committed to enforce our treaties with Russia. What are you doing to curtail Russia's cheating on its international commitments and encourage it to return to compliance?

Answer:

The Administration takes its arms control obligations seriously and expects the same from all others. This includes taking active measures to enforce compliance when other parties are in violation of their arms control obligations. The Administration is pursuing diplomatic engagement with Russia to pressure it to return to compliance with its Treaty obligations, closely coordinating and sharing information with regional allies and partners. For example, the Administration is implementing its Integrated Strategy in response to Russia's violation of the INF Treaty. In concert with diplomatic efforts, the Administration is also pursuing economic and military response measures to impose costs on Russia for its ongoing violation and place the United States in a stronger position to defend itself and its allies and partners should Russia fail to return to compliance. This includes a review of military concepts and options, including options for conventional, ground-launched, intermediate-range missile systems, which would enable the United States to defend itself and our allies, should the Russian Federation not return to compliance.

Question:

The Nord Stream 2 pipeline is a bad deal for the European Union, Ukraine, and the future of the NATO Alliance. During your confirmation hearing, you indicated that you would use every tool in your disposal to ensure that the Nord Stream 2 pipeline is not built. Can you please provide a status update of these discussions?

Answer:

We continue to work with allies and partners, both through diplomatic engagement and public diplomacy efforts, to oppose Nord Stream 2. The President has raised the issue publicly and privately with European heads of state and I have raised U.S. government concerns about the project with several European interlocutors. The State Department continues to encourage like-minded partners and allies to use the legal and regulatory tools at their disposal – both EU legislation and regulations and the legislation and regulations of individual states – to scrutinize the project. Due to our engagement, representatives of allied governments in increasing numbers, including recently the United Kingdom and Canada, have raised their nations' concerns about the project publicly.

The State Department fully supports the proposed amendment to the EU's Gas Directive – which would apply EU law fully to the Nord Stream 2 project and other gas transit pipelines entering Europe. The passage of legislation by Denmark's parliament that requires the Danish government to screen energy investments, including offshore pipelines, according to the foreign, security, and defense interests of Denmark is also an important development.

Question:

Please provide the Committee a detailed update on where we stand on additional security assistance and arms transfer plans for both countries. How are you coordinating this effort with the Defense Department and ensuring that adequate training as well as maintenance and spare parts are available to Ukrainian and Georgian soldiers?

Answer:

The United States will continue to assist Ukraine and Georgia in defending their sovereignty and territorial integrity by building the capacity of their respective armed forces to deter Russian aggression and to enhance overall border and internal security. U.S. assistance will continue to support defense reform, force modernization, institutional training capacity, military professionalization, and equipment upgrades and sustainment. In late 2017, the President authorized the provision and sale of the Javelin anti-tank missile system to Ukraine and Georgia, respectively. Regarding future assistance, we continue to evaluate the specific capability needs of the Ukrainian and Georgian armed forces, to include training, maintenance, and spare parts, in collaboration with the partner governments. We regularly collaborate with the Department of Defense and the U.S. European Command to ensure that U.S. assistance and arms sales are appropriate and effective. The Department of State will provide additional details regarding security assistance and arms sales to Ukraine and Georgia to the appropriate Congressional committees as part of the Congressional Notification process and my staff will be happy to provide additional briefings if desired.

Question:

Georgia's leaders have consistently driven the country down a path to bring it closer to the EU and NATO. They need America's help now to keep the momentum going in the face of significant regional challenges, including Russia's aggression and continued illegal occupation of Georgia's

territory. What is the State Department doing to increase efforts to support Georgia's integration with the West? What steps are being taken to demonstrate U.S. political and security commitments to Georgia?

Answer:

I strongly support Georgia's EU and NATO integration, the country's democratic and economic development, and its sovereignty and territorial integrity within its internationally recognized borders. On May 21, the Georgian Prime Minister and I convened the seventh Strategic Partnership Commission plenary, where we discussed our already strong cooperation and ways we can best support Georgia's Western integration through strengthened trade and investment ties and strategic messaging to combat Russian malign influence. The United States consistently advocates for Georgia's integration into NATO and we look forward to a NATO Summit in July that recognizes Georgia's progress toward membership. The Department utilizes all of the tools at its disposal to help Georgia build further resilience to Russian aggression and propaganda and to promote effective, democratic governance and economic prosperity. This requires a focus on rule of law, an independent judiciary, political and media pluralism, accountable governance, and a level playing field for U.S. investors. It also requires support to a free media and a strong civil society. Through the recently-announced Georgia Defense Readiness Program, U.S. assistance is helping to strengthen Georgia's self-defense capabilities through training and institutional development.

Question:

The President, after nearly 1.5 years in office, has yet to name an Ambassador to the European Union. Why not? When will the Ambassador be nominated?

Answer:

On May 10, the White House nominated Gordon D. Sondland to be the U.S. Ambassador to the European Union. We believe Mr. Sondland will be an outstanding representative to the European Union for the United States and look forward to his swift confirmation so he can commence the important work of our mission there.

Question:

Is the Administration expressing concern to Belgrade about its statements and actions tilting to Moscow?

Answer:

The United States strongly supports Serbia's European integration path and to helping Serbia make progress towards its stated goal of membership in the European Union. We would like to see that progress accelerate going forward. We recognize that Serbia has sought to "balance" its relationships with the West and with Russia. We have not hesitated to call out actions and issues that concern us and that, frankly, should also concern Serbia. In particular, we have noted that Russia may use the Russian-Serbian Humanitarian Center in Nis for purposes beyond those that

could be deemed humanitarian. EU accession is the best framework for Serbia to develop as a stable, inclusive democracy and reliable partner for Western priorities. We believe Serbia is committed to this path, and we will work with those who share this goal to get there.

Question:

Are we demanding that President Vucic make good on his promises to the most senior US officials to bring to justice the murderers of the US citizen Bytyci brothers at the end of the Kosovo War?

Answer:

I share your disappointment with Serbia's lack of progress toward securing justice for the Bytyqi family. Administration officials in Washington and in Serbia have raised this case repeatedly with Serbian officials at the highest levels of government, including Serbian President Aleksandar Vucic. The State Department also maintains regular contact with the Bytyqi family. In March, Embassy Belgrade facilitated meetings between the Bytyqi family and government officials, including Serbia's Minister of Justice, Serbia's War Crimes Prosecutor, and the Chief of Serbia's War Crimes Investigation Police. We will continue to press for progress on the case as well as raise Serbia's obligations to resolve remaining cases related to the conflicts in the Balkans in cooperation with neighboring countries and the UN Mechanism for International Criminal Tribunals.

Question:

Does the Department of State intend to continue funding critical humanitarian demining and UXO removal programs in Kosovo at levels consistent with, or greater than FY17 funding given the budget authority by Congress in FY19? If not, does the Department intend to close demining and UXO removal programs in Kosovo and how does the Department justify closing any of these programs which represent key diplomatic tools, promote security, stability and economic growth, decrease the risk of terrorism, and counter Chinese and Russian influence in these regions?

Answer:

The United States remains committed to assisting the government of Kosovo with demining and unexploded ordinance (UXO) removal. UXO remediation efforts in Kosovo are funded through the Nonproliferation, Antiterrorism, Demining, and Related Programs subaccount for Conventional Weapons Destruction (NADR-CWD). This assistance focuses on further stabilizing Kosovo, recovering land for productive use, solidifying Kosovo's territorial integrity, and supporting the resettlement of populations. While the Department does not presently have a dedicated NADR-CWD bilateral operating unit for Kosovo, there is an ongoing program which has benefitted in recent years from centrally managed and reprogrammed funds. We will continue to examine all options to extend current UXO clearance efforts into CY 2019, including by reviewing the availability of global, regional, and prior-year NADR-CWD funding levels.

Questions for the Record from Representative Christopher Smith
 Strengthening American Diplomacy: Reviewing the State Department's Budget, Operations, and
 Policy Priorities
 May 23, 2018

Question:

Last October, the Vice President announced the Administration would direct assistance to Christians, Yazidis, and other religious and ethnic minorities ISIS targeted for genocide and other atrocity crimes. The foundation of this policy was to be funding indigenous Iraqi entities aiding these communities on-the-ground – a shift from the previous Administration's policy of ignoring these communities and the indigenous groups helping them. What is the State Department doing to ensure groups already working on the ground with strong ties to the genocide-relief community are receiving funds from the State Department and USAID?

Answer:

The United States is committed to assisting the world's vulnerable minorities, including religious and ethnic minorities. Since FY 2014, the U.S. government has provided more than \$1.7 billion to address the humanitarian needs in Iraq resulting from the conflict against ISIS, and a significant amount has gone to conflict-affected members of minority communities. With FY 2017 funds, more than \$100 million was committed to benefit these communities, including programs that promote respect for human rights, stabilization, and conflict mitigation. In FY 2017, the U.S. government has obligated over \$60 million to help clear the unprecedented level of explosive hazards left by ISIS in Iraq, including in the Ninewa Plains. We are fulfilling Vice President Pence's promise to fund new initiatives with outside parties to assist persecuted minorities in Iraq.

Question:

Congress, since 2012, has regularly requested a State Department report detailing the true number of Palestinian refugees displaced between 1946 and 1948 in order to properly distinguish between the authentic base population of refugees and their descendants. In contrast to the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR), the United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees in the Near East (UNRWA) explicitly confers refugee status on the descendants of refugees. This UNRWA policy inflates the numbers of individuals dependent on UN services and perpetuates an unrealistic hope of returning to Israeli territory. The Obama Administration in 2015 finally complied with the Congressionally mandated report, but submitted it in classified form, precluding an open debate about the merits of UNRWA's approach. Will the State Department, under your leadership, declassify this report? If not, please provide an explanation for the continued classification.

Answer:

I understand that the Department of State provided to Congress in 2015 the report requested in Senate Report 113-195. Public information was not sufficient to address all of the elements of the report; therefore, the State Department utilized non-public information to compile the 2015 report.

We are in the process of reviewing that classification determination and will be sure to keep Congress informed on our determination.

Question:

In response to a Congressional inquiry, the Government Accountability Office, last month, released a report on UNRWA's use of textbooks containing extremist messaging. Regrettably, the GAO report titled "West Bank and Gaza: State Monitors Textbook Content but Should Improve Its Reporting" (GAO-18-227C) was classified, hampering a public debate about its findings. GAO has stated that State Department required classification of the report. What role, if any, did the State Department play in this classification decision?

Answer:

The U.S. Government Accountability Office (GAO) notified the State Department in February 2017 that a report had been requested relating to U.S.-funded education assistance in the West Bank and Gaza and requested information from the Department. The Department cooperated fully with the GAO and provided relevant information; some of the information provided to the GAO was classified. The GAO issued its report, "West Bank and Gaza: State Monitors Textbook Content but Should Improve its Reporting to Congress" on April 26, 2018, which contains some of the classified information and, therefore, certain portions of the report are classified. The State Department has accepted all of the recommendations issued by the GAO.

Question:

In response to a Congressional inquiry, the Government Accountability Office, last month, released a report on UNRWA's use of textbooks containing extremist messaging. Regrettably, the GAO report titled "West Bank and Gaza: State Monitors Textbook Content but Should Improve Its Reporting" (GAO-18-227C) was classified, hampering a public debate about its findings. GAO has stated that State Department required classification of the report. Will the State Department, under your leadership, reconsider its request to declassify the GAO report? If not, please provide an explanation for the continued classification.

Answer:

The GAO issued its report, "West Bank and Gaza: State Monitors Textbook Content but Should Improve its Reporting to Congress" on April 26, 2018, which contains some classified information provided by the State Department in response to the GAO's requests for information, and, therefore, certain portions of the report are classified. The Department would be happy to offer a classified briefing for Members of Congress or their staff on the classified elements of the report.

Question:

There is currently a congressional hold on \$6 million of funds which were supposed to have been dispensed from the International Narcotics Control and Law Enforcement account to the International Commission against Impunity in Guatemala (CICIG). I strongly support such a hold,

which grew out of a hearing I chaired at the Helsinki Commission last month that uncovered bad acts by CICIG under the extremely questionable leadership of CICIG's Commissioner, Ivan Velazquez. Among other things, Velazquez allowed CICIG to be used as an instrument of Russia's Kremlin-controlled VTB Bank to persecute a Russian family, the Bitkovs. Velazquez is compromised and can no longer serve in his position. USUN as well as I believe the International Organizations Bureau at State also supports this hold, as it provides leverage to help enact meaningful oversight and accountability reforms at CICIG; career bureaucrats, principally at Western Hemisphere Affairs are nonetheless seeking to thwart Congressional oversight. Will you support Congress and the political leadership at State who have been tasked with upholding the Administration's policy objectives – in this case, reform of a wayward UN-created supranational entity – by maintaining the hold in the face of pressure from career bureaucrats at State?

Answer:

I am committed to working with Congress to ensure appropriate oversight and reform of CICIG so as to ensure it can accomplish its mission to combat corruption and impunity in Guatemala.

Question:

It has been a very bad year for human rights in Vietnam. President Trump reportedly did not raise human rights concerns during his visit to Vietnam and there is unwarranted enthusiasm from some in other agencies because of the Vietnamese government's stated concerns about China's encroachments in the South China Sea. Given the historic relationship between Hanoi and Beijing and geographic proximity, it is strategically risky for the U.S. to assume that the Communist government of Vietnam can ever be a reliable partner in a free and open Indo-Pacific region, however. Vietnam has one of Asia's worst human rights records, with some of world's highest restrictions on expression, Internet, religion, and labor advocacy. Given the growing scope of U.S.-Vietnam relations, siloing human rights discussions to an annual Human Rights Dialogue is insufficient and counterproductive, particularly given that the Vietnamese government has made some improvements on U.S. concerns when they are linked to economic and security cooperation. How will the State Department link human rights and rule of law advances to U.S. strategic and economic interests with Vietnam, particularly given that the government has made tangible changes in the past when pressed (religious freedom & CPC/labor agreement & TPP)?

Answer:

Human rights are an important pillar of our multi-faceted Comprehensive Partnership with Vietnam, which is a key element of the President's free and open Indo-Pacific strategy. During his November 2017 trip to Vietnam, the President and Vietnamese leaders "recognized the importance of protecting and promoting human rights." I am deeply troubled by the trend of increased arrests, convictions, and harsh sentences of peaceful activists in Vietnam, and will ensure that we continue to raise our concerns at all levels, including--but not limited to--our annual human rights dialogue. Only sustained progress on human rights, including religious freedom and labor rights, will allow the U.S.-Vietnam relationship to reach its full potential.

Question:

Further, how will human rights be integrated into the Administration's free and open Indo-Pacific region policy—there seem to be more detailed and tangible trade and security policies in place—will there be detailed and tangible human rights policies and goals put in place?

Answer:

Supporting democracy, good governance, and human rights is a top priority for the Administration and a core component of the Indo-Pacific strategy. In engagement across the region, including at the highest levels, we constantly stress the importance of an active civil society, protection of human rights and fundamental freedoms, and respect for the rule of law. We are also continuing to work with likeminded governments and NGO partners to sustain and expand programs to support embattled civil society organizations and provide them with the resources they need to continue their vital work.

Question:

Would you agree that countries that abuse of the rights and freedoms of their own citizens are those most like to oppose U.S. interests and are unlikely to be a trust partner with the U.S.?

Answer:

Absolutely. It is no accident that the worst human rights violators and abusers are generally also America's rivals and competitors. Promoting human rights is clearly 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. As laid out in the President's speech at the UN General Assembly last September and in the National Security Strategy, this administration is strongly committed to human rights.

Question:

Would you agree that research and experience has shown that where there is more religious freedom, there is more economic freedom, more women's empowerment, more political stability, more freedom of speech, and less terrorism? Thus, it would seem like a robust religious freedom policy would require a "whole of government" approach. What is the State Department doing now to create a robust religious freedom diplomacy that is integrated into US interests in stability, peace, and economic development?

Answer:

I agree that research has shown that more respect for religious freedom correlates strongly to a host of social benefits, including economic prosperity, women's empowerment, political stability, increased respect for freedom of expression, and less terrorism. A growing body of research reveals that when people are free to live their lives according to their conscience, they are less likely to resort to violent forms of redress and are more likely to be socially productive. It is for this reason that I have empowered the Department's Office of International Religious Freedom to

work closely with other government agencies to better inform all aspects of our foreign policy. Our upcoming Ministerial on Advancing Religious Freedom in July will also serve to rally world leaders and civil society around this important priority so like-minded countries can work together and speak as one to promote this universal freedom worldwide.

Question:

How is the State Department working to integrate religious freedom issues within our economic and security interests?

Answer:

As I said when I submitted the recent International Religious Freedom report, “The United States will not stand by as a spectator. We will get in the ring and stand in solidarity with every individual who seeks to enjoy the most fundamental of human rights.” This Administration has made promoting religious freedom a priority, and we cannot make it so without integrating these concerns into our economic and security efforts. I can report that Ambassador at Large for International Religious Freedom Sam Brownback has already met with counterparts at the Department of Defense and USAID to explore how to integrate religious freedom concerns into our defense and development strategies. We are determining how best to bring religious freedom to the forefront in these other foreign policy arenas and we will seek out partnerships from across the government on this key administration goal.

Question:

The Administration should be given credit for the maximum pressure policy on North Korea, which brought about the safe release of three American hostages. With regard to any future U.S.-North Korea summit:

Is it appropriate to also discuss the permanent closure of North Korea’s infamous prison labor camps and the release of an estimated 80,000 to 120,000 political and religious prisoners?

Answer:

Our commitment to achieving the complete, verifiable, and irreversible denuclearization of the Korean Peninsula does not negate our resolve to press the North Korean government to respect the fundamental freedoms and human rights of all individuals within its borders. Our strategy to promote human rights in North Korea focuses on three core objectives, including increasing international awareness; expanding access to information, voices of freedom and democracy, and visibility into the world outside; and promoting accountability for those responsible for human rights violations and abuses in North Korea. As such, we will continue to press the North Korean government to respect the fundamental freedoms and human rights of all individuals within its borders, including the dismantlement of the political prison camp system and unconditional release of all political prisoners.

Question:

Have you raised these issues in your discussion with Kim Jong-un?

Answer:

As I mentioned in my testimony, the issues surrounding human rights concerns in North Korea have been raised directly between me and Chairman Kim. These concerns will continue to be part of the discussions as we move forward. The North Korean government's human rights violations and abuses are among the worst in the world. Our commitment to achieving the complete, verifiable, and irreversible denuclearization of the Korean Peninsula does not negate our resolve to press the North Korean government to respect the fundamental freedoms and human rights of all individuals within its borders. We will continue to press the DPRK regarding its abysmal human rights record.

Question:

Will the U.S. condition any assistance or diplomatic recognition or the lifting of individual sanctions on North Korean officials on whether Kim Jong-un closes what are often described as "concentration camps" in North Korea?

Answer:

The United States and North Korea have been holding direct talks in preparation for a summit. A comprehensive, whole-of-government effort in support of the President is underway. We are not interested in granting concessions for every North Korean action and we will maintain the pressure campaign until North Korea denuclearizes.

The North Korean government's human rights violations and abuses are among the worst in the world. Our commitment to achieving the complete, verifiable, and irreversible denuclearization of the Korean Peninsula does not negate our resolve to press the North Korean government to respect the fundamental freedoms and human rights of all individuals within its borders.

Question:

What will be the Administration's policy on dealing with human rights, refugee, and humanitarian issues moving forward?

Answer:

The United States remains deeply concerned about the well-being of the North Korean people. Governments that respect the rights of their citizens remain the best vehicle for prosperity, security, and peace. Our strategy to promote human rights in North Korea focuses on three core objectives, including increasing international awareness; expanding access to information, voices of freedom and democracy, and visibility into the world outside; and promoting accountability for those responsible for human rights violations and abuses in North Korea. We also continue to press all governments in the region to respect the principle of non-refoulement and to provide protection to

North Korean asylum seekers. In doing so, we work closely with and continue to support the North Korean defector community.

Question:

Earlier this month, the Foreign Affairs Committee marked-up Rep. Ted Yoho's BUILD Act, or HR 5105. The BUILD Act would create a new standalone development finance institution (DFI) that would modernize development finance and counter rogue nations, such as China, and their problematic activities in the developing world. Does the State Department have a position on the BUILD Act and specifically the provision which allows the DFI to issue non-dollar denominated loans?

Answer:

The State Department supports the BUILD Act, including the provision which would allow the DFI to issue non-dollar denominated loans. I understand that the draft legislation is broadly consistent with the President's Fiscal Year (FY) 2019 Budget, which proposed the creation of an institution to enhance America's global competitiveness and help drive economic growth in the developing world. We believe that the DFI should have the flexibility, under certain conditions, to extend foreign currency loans in order to avoid adding to the foreign currency debt burden of developing countries in which we have a strategic interest. USAID's Development Credit Agency (DCA), which would be subsumed by the DFI, currently has the ability to lend in foreign currency. We note that DFI foreign currency loans would be extended to developing countries in which the local currencies are not realistic alternatives to the USD as a reserve currency. This tool should be used sparingly, employing all prudent means to manage and mitigate foreign currency risk, and under the supervision of the DFI's Board of Directors. We believe that the BUILD Act should stipulate that the Secretary of State chair the board to ensure that foreign currency loans and other DFI tools are extended in a manner consistent with U.S. foreign policy interests including national security, commercial and development policy goals.

Question:

Does the State Department have a clear policy on the importance of retaining the dollar as the world's reserve currency? If not, why not?

Answer:

The United States benefits from the dollar's role as the world's primary reserve currency. This status stems from the depth of our financial markets and also from the strength of the United States economy. The State Department promotes a strong American economy by ensuring a level-playing field for American companies doing business around the world and attracting foreign investors to create jobs in America. In pursuing these objectives, we coordinate closely with the Treasury Department, which is the lead agency on issues pertaining to the dollar.

Question:

What steps will you take with the new DFI to ensure that U.S. policy reflects the importance and overall strategic interest of retaining the dollar as the world's reserve currency?

Answer:

The State Department will use its position on the DFI board to ensure that its development finance strategy is wholly consistent with U.S. foreign policy objectives. The majority of DFI lending would be transacted in U.S. dollars and would also help to advance U.S. commercial interests in developing markets. In terms of scale, DFI transactions would not have a material effect on the strength of the USD or on the decision-making process of the international community with regard to reserve currencies.

Question:

It is the long-term strategic objective of China to exercise hegemonic influence over and chip away at the independence of its much smaller neighbors in the South China Sea, which it effectively claims as its own territory. This strategy, known as "Finlandization," clearly violates international norms and acts in direct contradiction to the interests of the United States. Just recently, China has set up missile sites on some of its outposts and landed bombers on one of its artificial islands. The growing militarization of the region, in which trillions of dollars in world trade flow each year, should undoubtedly be of great concern to the United States. What is the State Department doing to counter China's activities at the diplomatic level?

Answer:

We continue to call out, publicly and privately, Chinese policies and actions that run counter to U.S. national interests. Specifically, we make clear that China's militarization activities should be reversed, in keeping with President Xi's 2015 commitment not to militarize the Spratly Islands. We continue to urge all parties, including China, to clarify all maritime claims in accordance with international law, as reflected in the Law of the Sea Convention. We also are calling attention in ASEAN-related meetings and elsewhere to efforts by China to promote huge maritime claims that are contrary to international law. These include China's claims to maritime zones based on a collective grouping of South China Sea islands and Beijing's assertion, made for the first time after the July 2016 Permanent Court of Arbitration tribunal decision (in response to the case that the Philippines brought against China in 2013), that China has "historic rights" in the South China Sea. The Department of State's actions are part of a whole of government effort and we will work across the U.S. government in order to counter China's excessive maritime claims.

Question:

It is the long-term strategic objective of China to exercise hegemonic influence over and chip away at the independence of its much smaller neighbors in the South China Sea, which it effectively claims as its own territory. This strategy, known as "Finlandization," clearly violates international norms and acts in direct contradiction to the interests of the United States. Just recently, China has

set up missile sites on some of its outposts and landed bombers on one of its artificial islands. The growing militarization of the region, in which trillions of dollars in world trade flow each year, should undoubtedly be of great concern to the United States. With which countries is the U.S. working most closely to counter these destabilizing activities?

Answer:

The United States works with our treaty allies and partners in the region, as well as with interested nations around the world, to uphold freedom of navigation and overflight, and other lawful uses of the sea in the South China Sea. This includes both diplomatic engagement and flying, sailing, and operating wherever international law allows. Together with our allies and partners, including many ASEAN Member States, we have made increasingly clear our shared concerns over China's militarization of the region. We have conveyed to China and others that such destabilizing behavior will have short and long term consequences.

Question:

What can you say about the effectiveness of the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN) as a partner? Has it been infiltrated too much by Chinese influence?

Answer:

As the primary multilateral institution in Southeast Asia, ASEAN has political weight greater than the sum of its parts, especially on contentious issues like the South China Sea. The Administration is committed to ASEAN centrality, as ASEAN-centered institutions like the East Asia Summit, ASEAN Defense Ministers Meeting Plus, and the ASEAN Regional Forum constitute the centerpieces of the Indo-Pacific's regional architecture. ASEAN's continued call for enhanced U.S. engagement is clear, in part because of China's influence in the region, but also because ASEAN sees the United States as a partner of choice in promoting regional stability and prosperity.

Question:

What about countries such as the Philippines?

Answer:

The United States and the Philippines are longstanding friends and allies with extensive economic, defense and security ties. The U.S.-Philippines alliance remains strong after 67 years and we continue to deepen relations in areas such as counterterrorism. The United States seeks a free and open Indo-Pacific region where nations are free from coercion and able to protect their sovereignty. The United States supports improvements in Philippines-China relations that maintain regional stability and serve to uphold the rules-based order.

Question:

Will the U.S. continue to conduct freedom of navigation exercises in defiance of China's claims?

Answer:

The United States will continue to conduct Freedom of Navigation Operations (FONOPs) in the South China Sea and will continue to operate in the Indo-Pacific region on a daily basis. All FONOPs are designed in accordance with international law and demonstrate that the United States will fly, sail, and operate wherever international law allows. That is true in the South China Sea and in other places around the globe. The FONOP program supports the longstanding U.S. national interest in the freedom of the seas by allowing us to challenge excessive maritime claims in order to uphold the rights, freedoms, and uses of the sea and airspace guaranteed to all nations under international law as reflected in the Law of the Sea Convention.

Question:

Do you see a role for Japan, India, and Australia (together with the U.S.—the so-called “Quad”) in countering China in the South China Sea?

Answer:

Countries throughout the Indo-Pacific, and more broadly, share an interest in ensuring freedom of navigation and overflight, protecting the free flow of commerce, and upholding a free and open rules-based order. The United States consults frequently with countries across the region, including Australia, Japan, and India, as well as with regional institutions such as ASEAN, and we work together to strengthen respect for the free and open rules-based order, including in the South China Sea.

Question:

Former Secretary of State Rex Tillerson prioritized a Redesign reform initiative for the State Department and the U.S. Agency for International Development (USAID) during his tenure, which was not a bad concept in theory, though the devil is always in the details. What are your plans for Redesign now that you are Secretary of State?

Answer:


I want to ensure that State Department and USAID employees have the training, tools and experience needed to carry out our mission and advance U.S. national security. I also want to ensure that we are managing our resources as effectively and efficiently as possible, consistent with the President’s Management Agenda. The Redesign and Impact Initiative developed a number of proposals designed to improve efficiency and strengthen the tools available to our staff, including IT modernization and operational efficiencies. The projects are being transferred to relevant bureaus and offices for next steps.

Question:

How do you intend to partner with USAID Administrator Mark Green going forward to ensure that both U.S. foreign policy objectives and longer-term development objectives are achieved?

Answer:

I will work closely with Administrator Mark Green and the U.S. Agency for International Development (USAID) to achieve mutually reinforcing foreign policy and long-term development objectives, articulated in the *National Security Strategy* (NSS) and the Department of State-USAID *Joint Strategic Plan* (JSP), including increasing American influence and prosperity. Long-term, sustainable development progress expands global partnerships; boosts the U.S. economy, and creates more trading partners; and supports peace, stability, and prosperity. The NSS and JSP provide frameworks for our institutions' shared goals, and Administrator Green and I will effectively coordinate and use all the tools at our disposal to achieve both U.S. foreign policy and longer-term development objectives.



Questions for the Record from Representative Albio Sires

Strengthening American Diplomacy: Reviewing the State Department's Budget, Operations, and Policy Priorities
May 23, 2018

Question:

During the U.S.-China Summits held last April in Florida and last November in Beijing, President Trump did not raise the question of respect for human rights and the rule of law in China and in 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. Would you publicly call on the Chinese President to address the grievances of the Tibetan people through dialogue with the Dalai Lama?

Answer:

I share your concerns about the lack of respect for human rights and rule of law in Tibet. I will urge Chinese authorities to engage in meaningful and direct dialogue with the Dalai Lama or his representatives without preconditions to lower tensions and resolve longstanding differences.

Question:

The Reciprocal Access to Tibet Act is bipartisan legislation that aims at implementing the principle of reciprocity in U.S.-China relations when it comes to access to Tibet for U.S. citizens including diplomats, NGO workers, and journalists. Will you commit to ensuring that the Chinese authorities provide access to Tibet for American officials and citizens, just as Chinese citizens get access to the United States?

Answer:

I am committed to pushing for reciprocity regarding the open access China and many other countries enjoy in the United States and to raising concerns about the lack of regular access to the Tibetan Autonomous Region (TAR) for U.S. journalists, diplomats, academics, and others. I am working to ensure that U.S. journalists, legislators, scholars, and members of civil society have unimpeded access to all areas China, including the Tibet Autonomous Region and Tibetan areas.

Question:

Hundreds of Tibetan political prisoners, according to the Congressional Executive Commission on China, are in prison as we speak and any form of expression of Tibetan identity, be it religious, linguistic or cultural, can be easily criminalized by the Chinese authorities due to the adoption of a patchwork of regulations that deny fundamental and basic human rights. What will your Administration do for the release of the Tibetan political prisoners?

Answer:

I am urging China to cease restrictions on the human rights of Tibetans as well as on their religious, linguistic, and cultural traditions and practices. I am committed to pressing for respect for human rights, including freedom of religion and belief, in my conversations with Chinese officials, and to advocating for the release of Tibetan political prisoners.

Question:

China's censorship and information and communication blockade, specifically in Tibet, prevents reporters from investigating the reality of the situation in Tibet. What steps will you take with the Chinese authorities to ensure that American journalists will be able to freely access Tibet just as Chinese journalists are able to do so in the United States?

Answer:

President Trump has regularly stated his desire for reciprocity in the U.S.-China relationship. I am committed to pushing for reciprocity regarding the open access China and many other countries enjoy in the United States, including for U.S. journalists seeking to visit the Tibet Autonomous Region and Tibetan areas of China.

Question:

Will you commit to meeting the Dalai Lama, whether in the United States or during your travel, and to express to him the United States support to his peaceful struggle for Tibetan rights?

Answer:

I am fully committed to implementing the Tibetan Policy Act. State Department officials should meet with Tibetan leaders whenever appropriate, including the Dalai Lama in his capacity as an important spiritual leader of the Tibetan people.

Question:

Daniel Ortega is following the path of Nicolas Maduro by enriching his family and his cronies at the expense of the people. We have seen how these brave young students are protesting to have their democracy restored as well. What is your assessment of the situation on the ground?

Answer:

I am very concerned with the ongoing violence against peaceful protesters, including students. The Government of Nicaragua must stop using government-controlled thugs to attack peaceful protesters. Those responsible for killings and other human rights abuses and violations must be brought to justice. The international community and the citizens of Nicaragua have repeatedly urged the Nicaraguan government to order its police and thugs to stop the violence, respect human

rights, and create conditions for a peaceful path forward. I support peaceful and inclusive negotiations that address broader demands for democracy to resolve the crisis.

Question:

How do you think countries in the region can help support the Nicaraguan people in the face of violent oppression from Ortega and his associates?

Answer:

The Department has worked closely with partners in the region and around the world to coordinate our response and increase international pressure. The Organization of American States' (OAS) independent Inter-American Commission on Human Rights (IACHR) has played a leading role in drawing attention to the human rights violations and abuses and subsequent recommendations to resolve Nicaragua's ongoing crisis. We call on the government of Nicaragua to immediately fulfill all of the IACHR's recommendations. The European Union and other regional allies, including Argentina, Brazil, Canada, Colombia, Chile, Mexico, Paraguay, and Peru, have also put out timely statements condemning the violence urging the Nicaraguan people and government to resolve their differences peacefully. This coordinated pressure continues to show the Nicaraguan people that we will not stand idly by and emphasizes our support for a peaceful resolution.

Question:

What is the U.S. doing in response?

Answer:

Through public statements and coordination with international partners, I have been pushing a targeted message strongly condemning the violence and emphasizing that the Nicaraguan government should immediately implement the May 21 recommendations of the independent Inter-American Commission on Human Rights (IACHR) preliminary report, pursue justice for victims of the violence, and engage in good faith negotiations to provide a democratic future for all Nicaraguans. The Department and USAID are providing assistance to human rights defenders and working with civil society organizations to protect freedom of speech and access to information.

Question:

The Trump Administration proposed a 31% cut to U.S. assistance to Colombia, where over 90% of cocaine consumed in the United States originates. The Administration has repeatedly said combatting drug trafficking is a high priority and used that as the rationale to end protections for DREAMers, build a wall, and alienate immigrants in the hemisphere. If combating drug trafficking is a top priority for the Administration, then why did you propose eliminating one-third of the security assistance to Colombia intended to interdict narcotics and capture drug traffickers?

Answer:

We are deeply concerned about the dramatic increase in coca cultivation and cocaine production in Colombia since 2013. We are working with the Colombian government to reduce coca cultivation and cocaine production in Colombia to 50 percent of current levels by 2023. Foreign assistance to Colombia will be particularly important to achieving this goal as the U.S. government will seek to help the incoming Colombian government increase the full range of its counternarcotics efforts, especially forced eradication. Our FY 2019 budget request for Colombia reflects the Administration's focused approach to foreign assistance but contains important resources to advance shared counternarcotics priorities.

Question:

The U.S. Strategy for Central America has had broad, bipartisan support in Congress, and I am pleased that it is finally up and running. Unfortunately, the President's immigration policies run counter to everything that the State Department and USAID are doing in the region. On one hand, you are addressing the root causes of child migration in Guatemala, Honduras, and El Salvador. On the other hand, the President is planning to send TPS holders back to El Salvador and Honduras and DREAMers back to all three countries.

- a. If the President is able to move forward with his deportation policies, how would that impact your work in Central America? How, if at all, are you planning for this possibility?
- b. Additionally, how would deporting young adults back to Central America impact transnational criminal organizations' recruitment efforts? Are these young people vulnerable to being recruited by gangs and other criminal groups?

Answer:

The United States' support for Central America remains unchanged. A secure and stable Central America contributes to a safer and more prosperous United States by helping to secure our borders, protect U.S. citizens, and increase opportunities for U.S. and other businesses. The multi-year Central America strategy addresses the underlying economic development, security, and governance challenges that contribute to illegal immigration. We will continue to work with Central American governments to help them dismantle transnational criminal organizations, combat drug trafficking, halt illegal immigration, and promote sustainable economic growth. We will also continue to work with the governments to strengthen their ability to reintegrate migrants.

Through our Central America strategy, the Department of State implements programs to empower youth by supporting educational, social, and employment opportunities for at-risk and disadvantaged youth and violence prevention activities. The U.S. government is committed to helping Central American governments reduce gangs and violence through law enforcement and community policing efforts such as the Model Police Precinct program, and through prevention programs such as the Gang Resistance Education and Training (G.R.E.A.T.) and Police Athletic League (PAL) programs. G.R.E.A.T. is a core prevention program with an established record and broad acceptance in the United States. G.R.E.A.T. is a school-based, life-skills competency program taught by uniformed law enforcement officers and helps youths foster positive attitudes

toward law enforcement, avoid conflict, resist peer pressure, and develop a strong sense of personal responsibility. The U.S. government also supports Police Athletic Leagues (PAL) in the region that offer at-risk youth sports and other after school activities. By organizing police-led after school programs, G.R.E.A.T. and PAL keep youth off the streets and in secure environments where police are role models and trustworthy figures. I will work with our in-country partners to continue these and other similar programs to address gang recruitment of youth.



Questions for the Record from Representative Paul Cook

Strengthening American Diplomacy: Reviewing the State Department's Budget, Operations, and
Policy Priorities
May 23, 2018

Question:

The U.S. has long ignored the Western Hemisphere and countries in our own neighborhood in favor of crises around the world. This is to our detriment, as our friends in the region are looking to others to fill the vacuum of leadership that we have left. Mr. Secretary, how do you envision increasing U.S. engagement with our partners in the Western Hemisphere to underscore that we are their preeminent partner?

Answer:

I will continue engaging with partners across the Americas and the Caribbean and reinforce our commitment to being the partner of choice as we work together to promote prosperity, strengthen democracy, and improve the security of our citizens. I will take advantage of the momentum created by the Summit of the Americas, as well as our longer-term regional initiatives such as the Strategy for Central America, the Merida Initiative, Caribbean 2020, the Caribbean Basin Security Initiative, and our engagement in Colombia. The United States remains committed to continuing our robust and constructive dialogues in the region, conducted on the basis of reciprocity and mutual respect.

Question:

The U.S. has long ignored the Western Hemisphere and countries in our own neighborhood in favor of crises around the world. This is to our detriment, as our friends in the region are looking to others to fill the vacuum of leadership that we have left. What are the Department's priorities for the Western Hemisphere to strengthen cooperation with our regional partners to combat transnational threats and corruption and promote prosperity and democracy? What is the U.S. doing in response?

Answer:

I am committed to advancing democratic governance, security, and economic prosperity and to strengthening our work with partners in the region. Corruption and poor governance erode prosperity and undermine security in this region and around the world.

The Department of State and USAID provide assistance to catalyze economic development, bolster the rule of law, dismantle transnational criminal organizations that send narcotics and illicit goods across our borders, and strengthen democratic institutions. We are working with civil society organizations to protect freedom of speech and access to information. The multi-year Central America strategy addresses the underlying economic development, security, and governance challenges that contribute to illegal immigration and illicit trafficking.

Question:

The Venezuelan crisis has devolved into a serious humanitarian crisis for the Venezuelan people and for countries in the region. What efforts is the Department taking to work with regional partners to acknowledge and address Cuba's role in sustaining the illegitimate Maduro regime?

Answer:

The Department is coordinating with like-minded democracies and regional organizations, including the Lima Group, to intensify pressure on the Maduro government to peacefully restore Venezuela's democracy and quickly resolve Venezuela's political, economic, social, and humanitarian crises. We continue to monitor Cuba's longstanding role in supporting Maduro's authoritarian government. Furthermore, we will continue to highlight in appropriate venues Cuba's support for the Maduro regime.

Question:

Under the Trump Administration's FY2019 budget request, Colombia would be the only country in the Western Hemisphere to receive foreign military financing. I believe foreign military financing is a critical tool that the United States can use to build partner capacity, increase mil-to-mil cooperation, and work to make ourselves the defense partner of choice amidst the competing interests of Russia and China. There are many countries in the region like Peru that are interested in purchasing U.S. military equipment. What can the Department do to increase its Foreign Military Financing for countries in the Western Hemisphere?

Answer:

The Department is focused on how to best address national security priorities using limited Foreign Military Financing (FMF). The investments the Department is making in Colombia are critical to securing our southern borders from illegal narcotics trafficking. Beyond security assistance, the Department encourages partner nations to purchase U.S.-origin equipment through regular outreach in country; standing political-military dialogues with Brazil, Peru, and Chile; and a variety of informal meetings throughout the region. The Department will continue working closely with our embassy teams and interagency partners to address the priority needs in the Western Hemisphere that can be met through global FMF provided in the FY 2019 budget.

Question:

Under the Trump Administration's FY2019 budget request, Colombia would be the only country in the Western Hemisphere to receive foreign military financing. I believe foreign military financing is a critical tool that the United States can use to build partner capacity, increase mil-to-mil cooperation, and work to make ourselves the defense partner of choice amidst the competing interests of Russia and China. There are many countries in the region like Peru that are interested in purchasing U.S. military equipment. To what extent might the decline in the Department's Foreign Military Financing be offset by increased support from the Department of Defense?

Answer:

In the current constricted budget environment, the State Department must make hard choices when it comes to providing Foreign Military Financing (FMF) to our partners around the world. The State Department will certainly coordinate on any partnership capacity building efforts undertaken by the Department of Defense in the region to ensure they are in line with our overall foreign policy objectives.

Question:

Nicaragua: Daniel Ortega and his wife Rosario Murillo have established a one-party state built on widespread corruption and the undermining of democratic institutions. The Nicaraguan people have finally stood up to the Ortegas and are in the midst of a critical turning point in Nicaragua's democratic history. What is the U.S. approach to the situation in Nicaragua and how can the U.S. and Congress best demonstrate our support for the Nicaraguan people and the reestablishment of democracy?

Answer:

I am deeply concerned about the ongoing crisis in Nicaragua and condemn the recent violence perpetrated by government-controlled thugs. Those responsible for killings and other human rights abuses and violations must be brought to justice. The Nicaraguan government must create the conditions for a peaceful solution to the crisis, starting with the cessation of all violence. I urge Nicaragua's government to negotiate a democratic future for all Nicaraguans in good faith to resolve the current conflict and restore respect for human rights. My steadfast support remains with the Nicaraguan people.

Question:

Nicaragua: What is the Administration's current stance on the NICA Act, currently sitting in the Senate, that would cut off multilateral funding to Nicaragua?

Answer:

The Department of State supports the goals of this bill. To address these important concerns, we are carefully reviewing international financial institutions' proposed loans to Nicaragua on a case-by-case basis. Such reviews are intended to ensure these loans are not benefiting the central government of Nicaragua, while ensuring that efforts to address the basic human needs of the Nicaraguan people are not negatively affected.

Question:

Nicaragua: How is the U.S. addressing the increasing presence of Russia in Nicaragua?

Answer:

Russia has provided security sector assistance to Nicaragua and Russian state news services such as RT broadcast in Spanish on Nicaraguan cable. I will remain vigilant regarding Russian involvement in the security sector and intent to expand Russian-sponsored disinformation campaigns, including in Nicaragua.

Question:

Is there more that we could be doing to strengthen Haiti's border security, and should the State Department continue and expand its support to programs that address revenue collection?

Answer:

I believe it is vital the Haitian government be able to control its borders. USAID has an ongoing Customs Support project – a \$4 million initiative helping to modernize Haiti's customs service processes for revenue collection, traveler processing, and contraband interdiction. This program is assisting the Haitian government to meet many of its objectives to increase revenue collection. Additionally, the Partnership Encouragement Act of 2006 (HOPE), the Food Conservation and Energy Act of 2008 (HOPE II), and the Haiti Economic Lift Program of 2010 (HELP) legislation explicitly call for U.S. Customs and Border Protection to provide technical assistance to Haitian customs.

Question:

What will the Administration do going forward to encourage and support enhanced border control measures and a crackdown on contraband trade?

Answer:

I will continue to encourage the Haitian government to do everything it can to strengthen border control measures to limit contraband trade and ensure transnational criminal organizations are not able to operate freely along Haiti's border. I will support continued U.S. cooperation with Haiti's customs, immigration, and national police authorities and will promote training with appropriate U.S. agencies to strengthen Haiti's capacities.

Question:

What will the Administration do to encourage the Government of Haiti to invest in the necessary border infrastructure and train additional security personnel?

Answer:

The United States will continue to work with Haiti's customs, immigration, and police agencies to improve border security. I will continue to stress to the government of Haiti that, in addition to our assistance programs, it is critical Haiti make its own long-term investment in its border security

agencies. We will continue support to the Haitian National Police, which includes border police and counternarcotics units, to strengthen Haiti's readiness to address border security issues.

Question:

How will the Administration ensure the Haitian government actually places adequate security personnel on the border and builds the technology and infrastructure essential for effective border control?

Answer:

The United States will continue to work with all entities working on the border to improve border control measures. USAID's Customs Support project is helping to strengthen revenue collection, traveler processing, contraband interdiction, and targeting; increasing the government of Haiti's ability to boost economic development through the collection of revenues on importations; increasing commercial activity at the Port of Cap-Haitien; and leaving behind a knowledge infrastructure that allows Haiti's customs administration, the Administration Generale des Douanes, to sustain these processes and maintain its self-sufficiency.

Question:

Haiti's uncontrolled border with the Dominican Republic raises several international security concerns. There are reports of drug, arms, and human smuggling over the border. There are also concerns that international terrorists can use the uncontrolled border to gain access to third countries. What do you see as key security concerns with respect to the Haitian-Dominican Border?

Answer:

Smuggling and trafficking in persons, illicit narcotics, and illegal contraband pose significant security concerns along the Haitian-Dominican Border, threatening the security of the United States and our partners in the region. The Department of State's Bureau of International Narcotics and Law Enforcement Affairs (INL) is building the capacity of the Haitian National Police, including promoting cross-training between Dominican and Haitian units, to combat these and other transnational crime threats. In the Dominican Republic, INL's assistance strengthens the capacity of Dominican law enforcement at border crossings through training and technical assistance. INL's efforts in both countries complement those of USAID and are essential to assisting Dominican and Haitian partners to secure their shared border. The Department of State also facilitates negotiations between both governments to establish a framework for strengthened cross-border collaboration.

Question:

Haiti's uncontrolled border with the Dominican Republic raises several international security concerns. There are reports of drug, arms, and human smuggling over the border. There are also concerns that international terrorists can use the uncontrolled border to gain access to third

countries. How can we expect programs like the Caribbean Basin Security Initiative to successfully combat security threats in the Caribbean that could impact the safety of American citizens at home and abroad if the Haiti-Dominican border is uncontrolled and lawless?

Answer:

Through support provided under both the Caribbean Basin Security Initiative (CBSI) and bilateral programming in Haiti, we are prioritizing efforts to combat transnational organized crime, including crime and insecurity along the Haitian-Dominican border. The Department of State's Bureau of International Narcotics and Law Enforcement Affairs (INL) supports training and coordination between the Dominican Republic and Haiti on border-related issues. Through the International Organization for Migration, INL supports stronger border controls by providing logistical assets to the Haitian National Police's Border Police (POLIFRONT), which provides training and essential equipment to ensure the POLIFRONT base in *Morne Casse* is fully operational.



Questions for the Record from Representative Gerry Connolly

Strengthening American Diplomacy: Reviewing the State Department's Budget, Operations, and
Policy Priorities
May 23, 2018

Question:

What efforts are planned or underway to resume the repatriation from North Korea of members of the U.S. armed forces missing or unaccounted for during the Korean War? Does the Administration consider the repatriation of remains a humanitarian issue?

Answer:

The United States considers accounting for our missing to be an important humanitarian effort and one of our highest enduring priorities. This includes the approximately 5,300 unaccounted for remaining in North Korea. The Departments of Defense and State closely coordinate actions related to Korean War remains recovery operations. In particular, we work closely with our Defense POW/MIA Accounting Agency (DPAA) colleagues on this issue. We do not link this important humanitarian effort to any political or security issues and have consistently urged North Korean officials to be responsible stewards of U.S. remains.

Question:

Why has the Administration failed to impose sanctions under **Sec. 224** of the Countering America's Adversaries Through Sanctions Act (CAATSA, P.L. 115-44) to punish Russia and deter it from future interference in American elections? When does the President plan to impose sanctions under this section? Has the Administration been unable to identify persons or entities subject to the sanctions under these sections?

Answer:

Together with the Department of the Treasury, the State Department is implementing CAATSA to impose costs on Russia for the totality of its malign behavior. We remain committed to the comprehensive implementation of CAATSA to achieve this end. Since January 2017, the U.S. government has sanctioned 205 individuals and entities for their involvement in Russian malign activities; 136 of these designations were made under sanctions authorities codified in CAATSA 222.

On March 15, Treasury designated five entities and 19 individuals under relevant authorities, including CAATSA Section 224 as well as E.O. 13694, "Blocking the Property of Certain Persons Engaging in Significant Malicious Cyber-Enabled Activities," for interference in the 2016 U.S. election and other malicious cyber-enabled activities.

In coordination with the interagency, we continue to review potentially sanctionable activity and make appropriate determinations under mandatory provisions of CAATSA and related authorities.

Question:

Why has the Administration failed to impose sanctions under [Sec. 225, 226, 227, 228, 233, and 234] of the Countering America's Adversaries Through Sanctions Act (CAATSA, P.L. 115-44) to punish Russia and deter it from future interference in American elections? When does the President plan to impose sanctions under this section? Has the Administration been unable to identify persons or entities subject to the sanctions under these sections?

Answer:

Together with the Department of the Treasury, the State Department is implementing CAATSA to impose costs on Russia for the totality of its malign behavior. We remain committed to the comprehensive implementation of CAATSA to achieve this end. Since January 2017, the U.S. government has sanctioned 205 individuals and entities for their involvement in Russian malign activities; 136 of these designations were under sanctions authorities codified in CAATSA 222. This number includes the most recent action on April 6, in which Treasury designated seven Russian oligarchs and 12 companies they own or control, along with 17 senior Russian government officials. In addition, on March 15, Treasury designated five entities and 19 individuals under relevant authorities, including CAATSA Section 224 and E.O. 13694, "Blocking the Property of Certain Persons Engaging in Significant Malicious Cyber-Enabled Activities," for interference in the 2016 U.S. election and other malicious cyber-enabled activities.

In coordination with the interagency, we continue to review potentially sanctionable activity and make appropriate determinations under mandatory provisions of CAATSA and related authorities.

Question:

How will the ongoing diplomatic negotiations with North Korea address the threats posed to U.S. national security by the DPRK's biological, chemical, and conventional weapons programs? Does the State Department, or specialized international organizations of which the United States is a member, have the capacity to assess the complete, verifiable, and irreversible dismantling of such weapons of mass destruction programs? If so, who is responsible for such activities?

Answer:

As the President has said, North Korea's weapons of mass destruction programs must be addressed. Removing DPRK chemical and biological weapons would be a whole-of-government effort and will draw on the expertise of all relevant organizations within the U.S. government and the appropriate international partners.

Question:

Who is responsible for global health security at the Department of State? Is that individual responsible for coordinating government-wide policy on global health security? If not, who is responsible for coordinating government-wide policy on global health security?

Answer:

Achieving a world safe from infectious disease threats is a State Department priority advanced by staff domestically and at U.S. foreign missions. Principal Deputy Assistant Secretary Judith G. Garber, currently the senior ranking official in the Bureau of Oceans and International Environmental and Scientific Affairs, leads the Department's global health security activities, including implementation of the Global Health Security Agenda (GHSA). In accordance with E.O. 13747, these activities include health security diplomatic outreach, coordination of U.S. programmatic activities, and engagement with non-governmental stakeholders. The NSC coordinates government-wide policy on global health security and serves as Chair of the GHSA Interagency Review Council.

Question:

How much has the State Department spent on the "redesign" effort, which entities received payments, and how much did each entity receive? What, if anything, has the redesign achieved?

Answer:

As of May 30, 2018, the State Department has spent \$12.07 million on contract support to the Listening Survey and Redesign work. This includes \$883,514 to the consulting firm Insigniam in FY 17 for the Listening Survey and Report, and \$11,195,084 to consulting firm Deloitte in FY 17 and FY 18. Insigniam was a sub-contractor to Deloitte in the second contract. The Redesign and Impact Initiative developed a number of proposals designed to improve efficiency and strengthen the tools available to our staff, including IT modernization and operational efficiencies. The projects are being transferred to relevant bureaus and offices for next steps.

Question:

Please describe the nature of the dialogue between the U.S. and Turkey regarding rule of law, freedom of the press, and detention of American citizens and American embassy employees in Turkey.

Answer:

We support Turkey's efforts to bring those responsible for the attempted coup to justice, but in so doing it must ensure rule of law, freedom of the press, freedom of speech, human rights, and fundamental freedoms for the entire population. These tenets are essential to democratic societies and represent the same principles the Turkish people so courageously defended during the coup attempt. The prolonged state of emergency threatens these very principles and causes rifts with key allies and partners. Both in private and in public, we urge the government of Turkey to end the state of emergency and rely on its democratic institutions, which are sufficiently strong to address the threats and challenges Turkey faces.

The detention of human rights officials, journalists, academics, prosecutors, judges, opposition politicians, and U.S. citizens is very concerning. The State Department has no higher priority than the welfare and safety of U.S. citizens and is deeply concerned about the continued detention of U.S. citizens and local staff on scant evidence under the state of emergency. We frequently remind the Turkish government of the importance of respect for transparent and fair proceedings and individual rights, as enshrined in the Turkish Constitution and consistent with Turkey's international obligations and commitments. Non-governmental organizations, dissenting voices, and a robust civil society are essential elements of a strong democracy.



Questions for the Record from Representative David Cicilline

Strengthening American Diplomacy: Reviewing the State Department's Budget, Operations, and
Policy Priorities
May 23, 2018

Question:

What specific steps are you and others at the State Department taking to translate the wish list set out in your speech on Iran on May 21 into achievable policy goals? Aside from sanctions, what immediate steps are you taking to combat Iran's malign activity throughout the Middle East region?

Answer:

We will bring financial pressure on the Iranian regime through robust sanctions to bring Iran back to negotiations. We will ask international partners to join us in this political and economic pressure campaign. We are working to shore up Iraq's unity and blunt Iran's influence in Iraqi politics. We also are continuing to pursue sustainable and genuine political solutions in Syria and Yemen. We are working extensively with our Gulf partners and Israel to deter and disrupt Iranian threats. Examples of such cooperation include military and diplomatic efforts to prevent Iranian weapons shipments into Yemen. We also have numerous domestic authorities to counter Iran's support for terrorism and its destabilizing activities in Iraq, Syria, and Yemen.

Question:

Will you, as Secretary of State, do what so many other secretaries have not and recognize the genocide perpetrated by the Ottoman Empire against its Armenian citizens during World War I? If not, why not?

Answer:

The U.S. government acknowledges and honors the memory of the one and a half million Armenians who were massacred, deported, or marched to their deaths in the final days of the Ottoman Empire. The horrific loss of life of Armenians and other victims during the final years of the Ottoman Empire resulted in one of the worst atrocities of the twentieth century and remains a great source of pain for all of us who value human rights. President Trump honored the victims and expressed solidarity with the Armenian people when he issued his Remembrance Day statement on April 24, 2018.

Question:

Palestinian Assistance: For the last several months, U.S. assistance for the Palestinians in West Bank and Gaza has been on hold and under review. What is the goal of this review and when do you expect to conclude it? What issues is the review working to address? Has the Administration conveyed any specific requests to UNRWA about reforms necessary to restart funding?

Humanitarian assistance, democracy assistance and people-to-people exchanges have been on hold because of this review. The World Food Program is expected to run out of money to feed people in the West Bank at the end of the month and in Gaza at the end of next month. What U.S. interests are served by holding up humanitarian assistance, democracy assistance and people-to-people assistance?

Answer:

U.S. assistance to the Palestinians, including UNRWA, remains under review; no decision has been made. The Administration routinely conducts reviews of foreign assistance to ensure it is meeting our national security interests, achieving our policy objectives, and providing value to U.S. taxpayers. The Department of State will brief Congress on the conclusions of this review. We have long voiced the need for UNRWA to seek out new voluntary funding streams and increase burden-sharing among its donors. We have repeatedly asked UNRWA to undertake more fundamental reforms that will put it on a more sustainable financial footing. It is essential that we create a fairer, more equitable, and more predictable funding mechanism for UNRWA.

Question:

North Korea: What steps are you taking in light of the cancellation of the June Summit to prevent North Korea from developing a nuclear weapon?

Answer:

The June 12 U.S.-DPRK Summit is currently scheduled to occur. North Korea has confirmed to us its willingness to talk about denuclearization. I support the President's decision to create the conditions so that the President and Kim Jong Un can sit together to begin to resolve this incredibly complex and difficult challenge. This will set us down the course of achieving a diplomatic outcome that America and the world are seeking. The President has also stated that current pressure will be maintained on North Korea until denuclearization.

Question:

Human Rights: As you know, fundamental human rights have been the guiding principles behind our national and international policy for generations, under multiple administrations of both parties. Are you committed to promoting the protection of human rights as a key pillar in U.S. foreign policy?

Answer:

Absolutely. Promoting human rights is clearly 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. As laid out in the President's speech at the UN General Assembly last September and in the National Security Strategy, this Administration is strongly committed to human rights.

Question:

China: Can you explain President Trump's sudden reversal on ZTE and his eagerness to help President Xi retain jobs? Will you encourage the President to divest himself of his business interests? If he does not, how can you possibly know if the policy positions you are being directed to take are intended to help the President's own financial interests rather than those of the American people?

Answer:

The new agreement with ZTE addresses concerns about the company's previous behavior and protects U.S. national security interests. For further information about the Administration's response to ZTE, I refer you to the Department of Commerce. For information on the President's financial interests, I refer you to the White House.

Question:

Do you support lifting the Arms Embargo on the Island of Cyprus? Would you support a reevaluation of this decades-old policy?

Answer:

The United States and the Republic of Cyprus have a shared interest in combating terrorism, enhancing maritime and border security, and promoting regional stability. I support exploring options for expanding security cooperation with the Republic of Cyprus.

Question:

Do you believe it is still in the U.S. interest to sell F-35s to Turkey? If Turkey purchases the S400 system from Russia would that cause you to re-evaluate whether the F-35 sales are still appropriate?

Answer:

Turkey is a key NATO Ally and critical partner in the Coalition to Defeat ISIS. It is in the interest of the United States to maintain Turkey's Western orientation. Continuing Turkey's status as a partner in the F-35 program is part of that effort. However, we have made clear to Turkey the negative consequences of acquiring the S-400 system, including the potential impact on its procurement of the F-35. We have also pointed Turkey to an alternative and better package of NATO-compatible systems.

Questions for the Record from Representative Ami Bera

Strengthening American Diplomacy: Reviewing the State Department's Budget, Operations, and Policy Priorities
May 23, 2018

Question:

Who is the lead person at the State Department coordinating our diplomatic efforts to respond to the Ebola outbreak?

Answer:

Principal Deputy Assistant Secretary Judith G. Garber, currently the senior ranking official in the Bureau of Oceans and International Environmental and Scientific Affairs (OES), and Acting Assistant Secretary for African Affairs (AF) Donald Yamamoto lead diplomatic efforts to respond to the current Ebola outbreak. OES convenes the State Department's Public Health Working Group (PHWG) weekly to ensure a coordinated Department-wide response. Following the 2014-2016 West Africa Ebola outbreak and the 2016 Zika outbreak, the Department established the PHWG (co-chaired by OES and the Bureau of Medical Services) to facilitate a fast, effective Department response to public health emergencies.

Question:

Who is the senior-level official responsible at the State Department for implementing the Global Health Security Agenda (GHSA)?

Answer:

Achieving a world safe and secure from infectious disease threats is a State Department priority advanced by staff domestically and at U.S. foreign missions. Principal Deputy Assistant Secretary Judith G. Garber, currently the senior ranking official in the Bureau of Oceans and International Environmental and Scientific Affairs, leads the Department of State's implementation of the Global Health Security Agenda (GHSA). U.S. Chiefs of Mission oversee implementation of GHSA activities abroad.

Question:

How often is the State Department meeting with USAID and the CDC to coordinate our response?

Answer:

My staff in Washington and Kinshasa communicate daily with USAID and the CDC to provide a coordinated response to this outbreak. In addition to surge deployments, USAID and CDC have permanent staff in country under the authority of the Chief of Mission, who coordinates the overall U.S. response on the ground. Both Washington and Kinshasa-based staff participate in weekly NSC-led interagency coordination calls and contribute to regular situational updates.

Question:

Also, under what conditions would the administration reconsider the proposed rescission of the Ebola response funds?

Answer:

The Administration has taken swift action in response to the current Ebola outbreak in the DRC, and on May 22, Secretary of Health and Human Services Alex Azar II announced up to \$8 million towards interventions to help prevent the spread of this deadly disease, including \$3 million from Global Health Security Agenda funds at USAID and \$5 million that I authorized to be made available from the Emergency Reserve Fund to respond to the severe threat to human health posed by this outbreak. We commend the efforts of the Congolese and our international partners to confront this outbreak to prevent a global health emergency, and welcome immediate contributions from other donors, as well as long-term investments under the Global Health Security Agenda aimed at preventing future crises. With respect to the proposed \$252 million rescission of prior year supplemental funds to combat Ebola, Congress originally provided these funds in response to the West Africa Ebola crisis, which the World Health Organization declared over in 2016. Congress has generously provided other resources, including the Emergency Reserve Fund, that enable us to respond quickly to emergency needs like the current outbreak in the DRC, if needed, separate from the funds proposed for rescission.

Question:

How is the United States working with other donors and NGOs to advance the global health security agenda?

Answer:

The United States continues to encourage other countries to make sustained commitments to build health security capacity through the Global Health Security Agenda (GHSA). The United States engages donor countries such as Australia and the Republic of Korea to build capacity in countries of mutual interest. Additionally, the United States works with non-governmental organizations through the GHSA Consortium to accelerate progress in achieving GHSA objectives. Raising public awareness of GHSA priorities through effective messaging is a key component of this effort.

Question:

Finally, what is the status of the annual GHSA nongovernmental outreach status that State Department is supposed to be coordinating, based on the 2016 Executive Order on the Global Health Security Agenda?

Answer:

The Department regularly engages Global Health Security Agenda (GHSA) non-governmental stakeholders, including the Private Sector Roundtable, GHSA Consortium, and the GHSA Next Generation network. Staff in the Bureau of Oceans and International Environmental and Scientific Affairs are planning an annual meeting with non-governmental stakeholders later in 2018. Staff from the National Security Council and the GHSA Interagency Review Council closely collaborate with State Department staff on non-governmental engagements.

Question:

Family Planning: I am very disappointed to see that international family planning and reproductive health has been cut by over 50% and that the only type of family planning method that is mentioned in the budget proposal is “fertility awareness.” This is not only one of the least effective methods, but in order to ensure that our programs are based in voluntarism and informed consent the U.S. has a responsibility to promote and provide a full range of methods of family planning. Can you assure us that U.S. funded programs will continue to support and supply a full range of (modern) contraceptive methods in order to ensure that women have access to the information, counseling, and methods best suited to their needs?

Answer:

I support the Administration’s efforts to support the health and voluntary family-planning needs of women around the world. Enabling couples to determine whether, when, and how often to have children is vital to safe motherhood and healthy families. The U.S. Agency for International Development funds programs that help individuals make a free and informed choice about having children by providing access to and information about a variety of voluntary family-planning options.

Question:

I am disturbed by the proposed budget cuts to critical, life-saving development programs and the potential diminishment of USAID – our lead development agency – as part of this administration’s reorganization efforts. It is vital that USAID remain independent and fully capable of achieving our aid objectives abroad. Do you believe that USAID should remain an independent agency separate and distinct from the State Department?

Answer:

As noted by Deputy Secretary John Sullivan before this Committee and affirmed by USAID Administrator Mark Green, there is no intention or plan to fold USAID into the State Department. We will continue to work together in close coordination to achieve the Administration’s foreign policy-objectives and implement the President’s *National Security Strategy*.

Question:

I am disturbed by the proposed budget cuts to critical, life-saving development programs and the potential diminishment of USAID – our lead development agency – as part of this administration’s reorganization efforts. It is vital that USAID remain independent and fully capable of achieving our aid objectives abroad. How will you engage in administration’s FY 2020 budget request to ensure that USAID’s programs and mission are supported?

Answer:

The State Department and USAID are committed to critical and life-saving development programs that further the national security and development objectives of the United States. The President’s FY 2020 budget request will reflect months of conversations between the State Department and USAID, including embassies and missions overseas, and other members of the interagency. As in prior years, the USAID budget is considered an important component of the Administration’s foreign assistance budget request, and will be in line with the President’s priorities.

Question:

I am disturbed by the proposed budget cuts to critical, life-saving development programs and the potential diminishment of USAID – our lead development agency – as part of this administration’s reorganization efforts. It is vital that USAID remain independent and fully capable of achieving our aid objectives abroad. What plans, if any, are there to combine USAID and State Department missions, roles and responsibilities? Please describe any current or planned efforts in each of those three categories.

Answer:

As noted by Deputy Secretary John Sullivan before this Committee and affirmed by USAID Administrator Mark Green, there are no plans to combine the existing missions, roles, or responsibilities of the USAID and State Department. I want to ensure the employees of both organizations have the training, tools, and experience needed to advance the Administration’s foreign policy objectives and U.S. national security.

Question:

I am disturbed by the proposed budget cuts to critical, life-saving development programs and the potential diminishment of USAID – our lead development agency – as part of this administration’s reorganization efforts. It is vital that USAID remain independent and fully capable of achieving our aid objectives abroad. Related, Secretary Tillerson was determined to “reform and redesign the State Department” in order to more effectively and efficiently run it. The FY19 budget even puts forth proposals for how to reform and modernize processes and policies at the State Department and USAID. What is your position on this effort and will you continue or undertake similar efforts?

Answer:

I will continue the effort to reform and modernize processes and policies at the State Department, and I will work to ensure employees at the State Department and USAID have the training, tools, and experience needed to carry out our mission and advance U.S. national security. I also want to ensure we are managing our resources as effectively and efficiently as possible, consistent with the President's Management Agenda.

Questions for the Record from Representative Lois Frankel

Strengthening American Diplomacy: Reviewing the State Department's Budget, Operations, and Policy Priorities
May 23, 2018

Question:

Mexico City Policy Impact: As long as the Mexico City Policy is in place, will you commit to conducting comprehensive and annual reviews that study impacts on people's health, such as maternal well-being, incidence of HIV/AIDS, and infectious diseases, instead of merely looking at implementation?

Answer:

The United States is a leader in assistance for global health, including in its monitoring, evaluation, and use of data for learning. I will continue to support robust efforts to review and evaluate programming.

Question:

Where there are service disruptions due to the Mexico City Policy, will you commit to review any requests for exemptions and what criteria will you use to determine potential exemptions?

Answer:

I will review any requests received. Criteria that may be considered for exemptions include, but are not limited to, the existence of a public health emergency that impacts global health assistance; the possibility of extreme and irreversible service disruption if the exemption were not granted; whether there are other partners qualified to execute the program; or other extenuating circumstances that warrant granting an exemption.

Question:

Will you also commit to making all stakeholder comments public – not just those that support the Mexico City Policy?

Answer:

In conducting the six-month review, we welcomed comments from all sides of the issue. We do not plan to release stakeholder comments, as we did not inform stakeholders that their comments would be made public when they submitted them. Stakeholders, however, are free to make their own comments public.

Question:

How much funding is impacted by the 4 prime recipients who refuse to comply with the Mexico City Policy?

Answer:

Two organizations publicly indicated they will decline U.S. government global health assistance because of the Protecting Life in Global Health Assistance policy: the International Planned Parenthood Federation and Marie Stopes International. In FY 2016, the International Planned Parenthood Federation and Marie Stopes International received global health assistance under central awards in the amounts of \$9.37 million and \$15.44 million, respectively. The third organization that declined to agree to the PLGHA policy was obligated \$100,000 in USAID global health assistance in FY 2016.

The fourth declining organization was a Department of Defense prime partner that declined to sign in one country, though it signed in others. This organization's unsigned grant totaled \$151,000.

Federal departments and agencies reprogram to other organizations any U.S. government global health assistance funding they would have awarded to NGOs that do not agree to the conditions set on the acceptance of U.S. funding under the PLGHA policy.

Question:

How many people did the 4 prime recipients who refuse to comply with the Mexico City Policy previously serve, and what measures are you taking to ensure the same number of women and girls receive life-saving health services?

Answer:

Most of the primes with which we work have multiple funding streams, so the number of people they served previously is not solely reflective of U.S. funding. The United States remains committed to helping women and children thrive, particularly in countries where the need is greatest. When an NGO has declined to agree to the policy, affected departments and agencies work to transition to other partners the activities that that would have been undertaken by the organization with our funding. This policy does not affect the total amount of U.S. government funding for global health programs. When departments and agencies reprogram funds to other organizations, the amount of funding directed to respective recipient countries remains the same and we remain focused on our goals. The Department will conduct a subsequent review of the policy to gauge its impacts and is committed to ensuring any transition of activities minimizes disruptions of health service delivery.

Question:

Human Rights Report: Why did the State Department remove information and data on barriers to maternal health, contraception and reproductive rights from the Human Rights Report this year?

Answer:

In the 2017 Country Reports on Human Rights Practices, the “Reproductive Rights” subsection was renamed “Coercion in Population Control” in accordance with the requirement of U.S. law that we report on, “wherever applicable, practices regarding coercion in population control, including coerced abortion and involuntary sterilization.” Additional material on maternal mortality, contraception, and similar issues is available via hyperlink in the text of each country chapter and in an appendix to the Reports.

Question:

Do you believe that denying women lifesaving services, like contraception and maternal care, are human rights violations?

Answer:

In the 2017 Country Reports on Human Rights Practices, the “Reproductive Rights” subsection was renamed “Coercion in Population Control” in accordance with the requirement of U.S. law that we report on, “wherever applicable, practices regarding coercion in population control, including coerced abortion and involuntary sterilization.” Additional material on maternal mortality, contraception, and similar issues is available via hyperlink in the text of each country chapter and in an appendix to the Reports.

I support the Administration’s efforts to promote the maternal health and voluntary family-planning needs of women around the world. The United States remains the largest donor to women’s health around the world, and the President’s Budget Request for FY 2019 includes \$302 million for voluntary family-planning programs.

Question:

Do you believe that denying abortion care for rape survivors is a human rights violation?

Answer:

In the 2017 Country Reports on Human Rights Practices, the “Reproductive Rights” subsection was renamed “Coercion in Population Control” in accordance with the requirement of U.S. law that we report on, “wherever applicable, practices regarding coercion in population control, including coerced abortion and involuntary sterilization.” Additional material on maternal mortality, contraception, and similar issues is available via hyperlink in the text of each country chapter and in an appendix to the Reports.

Question:

If we are no longer monitoring the full range of reproductive rights in this report, how will we address actors that curtail women's rights and commit acts of violence against them?

Answer:

In the 2017 Country Reports on Human Rights Practices, the "Reproductive Rights" subsection was renamed "Coercion in Population Control" in accordance with the requirement of U.S. law that we report on, "wherever applicable, practices regarding coercion in population control, including coerced abortion and involuntary sterilization." Additional material on maternal mortality, contraception, and similar issues is available via hyperlink in the text of each country chapter and in an appendix to the Reports.

We advocate that governments have an obligation to protect, respect, and uphold the dignity and fundamental freedoms of all people.

Question:

It is my understanding that Foreign Service Officers around the world worked hard to compile and analyze data regarding access to contraception and maternal health for the most recent report, but it was not included in the Human Rights Report. Can you publicly release this information?

Answer:

In the 2017 Country Reports on Human Rights Practices, the "Reproductive Rights" subsection was renamed "Coercion in Population Control" in accordance with the requirement of U.S. law that we report on, "wherever applicable, practices regarding coercion in population control, including coerced abortion and involuntary sterilization." Additional material on maternal mortality, contraception, and similar issues is available via hyperlink in the text of each country chapter and in an appendix to the Reports.

Question:

Where are U.S. contributions to UNFPA fiscal years 2017 and 2018 being reallocated to, and which programs are these funds supporting? Will all transferred funds go to our existing international family planning and reproductive health programs?

Answer:

As required by section 7082(b) of the FY 2017 Department of State, Foreign Operations, and Related Programs Appropriations Act (SFOAA), the Department of State transferred the \$32.5 million earmarked for UNFPA in the FY 2017 International Organizations and Programs account affected by the March 2017 Kemp-Kasten determination to USAID's Global Health Programs account. As required by the 2017 SFOAA, USAID will make the FY 2017 funds available for family planning, maternal, and reproductive health activities, subject to the regular notification

procedures of the Committees on Appropriations. The Secretary of State also submitted a report to the Committees on Appropriations in March 2018 informing them that the Kemp-Kasten Amendment was invoked pursuant to the FY 2018 SFOAA; however, those funds have not yet been transferred to the Global Health Programs account.

Question:

Has there been a lapse in reallocating UNFPA funding to other family planning programs? If so, what is the health impact?

Answer:

There has not been a lapse in reallocating UNFPA funding to other family planning programs. As required by the FY 2017 Department of State, Foreign Operations, and Related Programs Appropriations Act (SFOAA), USAID will make the FY 2017 funds available for family planning, maternal, and reproductive health activities, subject to the regular notification procedures of the Committees on Appropriations.

Question:

Do you believe that candidates for this post should be committed to gender equality and advancing the rights and opportunities of women and girls?

Answer:

The Secretary's Office of Global Women's Issues (S/GWI) leads the Department's work to empower women and girls socially, politically, and economically in the communities and societies in which they live. I am committed to working with the President to ensure that a qualified person who is committed to the advancement of gender equality and the empowerment of women and girls is nominated to serve as the next Ambassador-at-Large for Global Women's Issues and hope, once nominated, the candidate will be confirmed as quickly as possible.

Question:

Do you believe that candidates for this post should have a track record of advancing women's empowerment?

Answer:

The Secretary's Office of Global Women's Issues (S/GWI) leads the Department's work to advance the status of women and girls across the globe. As I stated in my confirmation hearing, I remain committed to finding a qualified person to serve as the Ambassador-at-Large for Global Women's Issues and getting him or her confirmed as quickly as possible.

Question:

Do you believe that candidates for this post should have experience working in international affairs and a solid understanding of U.S. foreign policy?

Answer:

The Secretary's Office of Global Women's Issues (S/GWI) leads the Department's work to empower women and girls socially, politically, and economically in the communities and societies in which they live. I am committed to finding a qualified person to serve as the Ambassador-at-Large for Global Women's Issues and getting him or her confirmed as quickly as possible.

Question:

Do you believe that candidates for this post should be committed to supporting women's decision making over their bodies and their lives?

Answer:

I believe that countries are more stable, prosperous, and secure when women and girls are afforded equal opportunity to fully and freely participate in all spheres of society. Through the Office of Global Women's Issues, the Department works to empower women and girls as leaders, peace-builders, and formal wage-earners in the communities and societies in which they live. Once nominated and confirmed, the Ambassador-at-Large for Global Women's Issues will work to advance these goals among others.

Question:

Last year, former Secretary of State Rex Tillerson communicated a plan to downgrade the Office of Global Women's Issues from the Secretary's Office to one that instead reports to the Undersecretary for Civilian Security, Democracy, and Human Rights. Do you plan to keep the Office of Global Women's Issues within your office?

Answer:

The State Department remains committed to improving gender equality globally and recognizes the direct impact these efforts have on our national security and foreign policy objectives of stability, prosperity and security. The Office of Global Women's Issues will continue to work within the Department and interagency to empower women and girls socially, politically and economically in the communities and societies in which they live. The empowerment of adolescent girls, women's political and economic empowerment, women's participation in peace and security processes, and the prevention of and response to gender-based violence continue to be areas of focus where we will remain steadfast in our efforts.

Question:

In November 2017, more than 200 national security professionals signed an open letter about sexual harassment and assault in the industry. State Department employees have reported limited transparency around policies and procedures, insufficient training, and a lack of accountability for perpetrators. Has the State Department been conferring with former and current employees about their concerns? What changes need to be made to the State Department's policies for preventing and addressing sexual harassment and assault?

Answer:

In January, the Deputy Secretary spoke to employees in a panel discussion and engaged leaders of Executive Women @ State, one of the Department's employee affinity groups, on the issue as part of a larger discussion on diversity. All Department employees are subject to 3 FAM 1525 and 1526, which prohibit sexual and discriminatory harassment. These policies also make it mandatory for all supervisors and responsible management officials to report potential incidents of harassment to the Department's Office of Civil Rights for disposition and further action. These policies are strong, but as a matter of course they are continually reviewed to identify how they can be further strengthened. The Office of the Inspector General is currently assessing these policies and procedures, and I look forward to receiving their input.

Questions for the Record from Representative Robin Kelly

Strengthening American Diplomacy: Reviewing the State Department's Budget, Operations, and Policy Priorities
May 23, 2018

Question:

Were you briefed on statistics at the State Department regarding sexual harassment? Are you willing to share those numbers with Congress?

Answer:

In FY 2017, 483 reports of sexual or discriminatory harassment were submitted, leading to 112 inquiries. The other 371 reports did not meet the threshold for further action. Not all reports alleged sexual harassment; the second most common protected basis raised was national origin. Sixty-four completed inquiries were forwarded for possible disciplinary action, and 48 remained ongoing at the end of the fiscal year. So far in FY 2018, 520 reports have been received. The increase may be partially attributable to the Department's preventative efforts to inform about the Department's anti-harassment reporting requirements and to employees feeling more comfortable about reporting harassment.

Question:

Secretary Tillerson wanted all State employees to undergo sexual harassment training by June 1. What percentage of employees have received the training? Will ambassadors have to undergo training?

Answer:

Assistant Secretaries, chiefs of mission, directors of passport offices, and principal officers have certified that their employees received the training. The previous Secretary as well as many of his Assistant Secretaries and Under Secretaries received the training in person. Equal Employment Opportunity and harassment awareness training are also embedded in over 25 National Foreign Affairs Training Center courses, including the ambassadorial and deputy chief of mission/principal officer seminars and training for supervisors and human resources professionals. In addition, every year several overseas posts or domestic offices receive in-person training. The Department will also develop online harassment awareness training that will be mandatory for all employees.

Question:

What changes are you looking to make to the State Department's sexual harassment policy?

Answer:

All Department employees are subject to Foreign Affairs Manual (FAM) 1525 and 1526, which prohibit sexual and discriminatory harassment. These policies also make it mandatory for all supervisors and responsible management officials to report potential incidents of harassment to the Department's Office of Civil Rights for disposition and further action. These policies are

strong, but as a matter of course they are continually reviewed to identify how they can be further strengthened. The Office of the Inspector General is currently assessing these policies and procedures. I will not tolerate discrimination or harassment in any form, and those who participate in such behaviors will be held accountable.

Question:

The Administration has made a negative Kemp-Kasten determination against the United Nations Population Fund, known as UNFPA, without a single visit to UNFPA programs or face-to-face meeting with UNFPA staff prior to this decision. As a result, \$32.5 million appropriated for UNFPA will be transferred from the International Organizations Bureau to USAID. Our investments in UNFPA have helped support the health and lives of millions of women, children, and families and while I think it is clear that no one can replace the vital work of UNFPA in some of the world's most challenging settings, I want to make sure we are going to continue to support programs like these with these additional funds at USAID. • While we know we won't be able to reach as many women as UNFPA is able to because UNFPA works in three times as many countries around the world as USAID, and in places that the U.S. cannot operate, can you share where this funding has been reallocated and what programs it is supporting?

Answer:

The U.S. government continues to prioritize healthcare in emergencies and has worked to identify other humanitarian partners and donors to continue supporting the type of previous funding through the UN Population Fund (UNFPA). In terms of FY 2017 humanitarian funding, USAID and the Department of State worked with other UN agencies and NGOs to expand their programming to provide maternal and neonatal healthcare, including emergency obstetric care, and services for survivors of gender-based violence in emergency settings previously performed by UNFPA with U.S. government funds. USAID was able to reprogram all funding intended for UNFPA in Iraq, Yemen, Nigeria, Somalia, Sudan, and South Sudan; however, the ongoing conflict inside Syria has created access constraints that made it difficult for NGO partners to implement all of the programs previously supported by UNFPA in that country.

Question:

Can you assure us that any transferred funds will be going to our existing international family planning and reproductive health programs that support access to contraceptives and work to combat child marriage, gender-based violence, and female genital mutilation?

Answer:

As required by Section 7082(b) of the FY 2017 Department of State, Foreign Operations, and Related Programs Appropriations Act (SFOAA), the Department of State transferred the \$32.5 million earmarked for the UN Population Fund (UNFPA) in the FY 2017 International Organizations and Programs account affected by the March 2017 Kemp-Kasten determination to the Global Health Programs account at USAID. As required by the 2017 SFOAA, USAID will make the FY 2017 funds available for voluntary family planning, maternal, and women's health activities, subject to the regular notification procedures of the Committees on Appropriations.

Questions for the Record from Representative Dina Titus

Strengthening American Diplomacy: Reviewing the State Department's Budget, Operations, and
Policy Priorities
May 23, 2018

Question:

The State Department's International Disability Rights Policy recognizes that discrimination against the 15% of the world's population that has a disability hinders economic development, limits democracy, and erodes societies. However, American leadership in international disability rights is declining... There is also no longer a Special Advisor for International Disability Rights at the State Department to lead the International Disability Rights team, elevate their work on the global stage, and signal a strong U.S. commitment to the human rights of persons with disabilities. This office also has fewer employees than it did under the previous administration when led by the Special Advisor, overburdening their workload and making it difficult, perhaps intentionally, to continue to focus efforts on international disability rights and engage with multilateral agencies.

Do you intend to appoint a Special Advisor for International Disability Rights?

Answer:

I am deeply committed to maintaining disability rights as an integral part of U.S. foreign policy and foreign assistance, increasing knowledge of disability rights among State Department and USAID personnel, and ensuring that issues or concerns related to persons with disabilities are reflected into all aspects of our work. I am still considering whether the portfolio requires a titled appointed position. Our comprehensive strategy to promote and protect the rights of persons with disabilities internationally aligns staff positions and support costs to the Bureau of Democracy, Human Rights and Labor, where policy experts and bureau leadership continue to advance disability rights as committed by the Administration. The Department will continue to meet its mandate to identify and address challenges and barriers persons with disabilities face, encourage foreign governments to do the same, and mainstream these issues across the State Department.

Question:

Is America's diminishing leadership on global disability rights a strategic choice, or the result of unfilled positions and staffing restrictions?

Answer:

The United States is the global leader in promoting, protecting, and advancing human rights – including the rights of persons with disabilities. As President Trump called for in his 2017 statement for the International Day of Persons with Disabilities, we continue to set the global standard, working with other nations to ensure people with disabilities receive the respect all people deserve.

Under my leadership, the Department continues to advocate that governments have an obligation to uphold the dignity, human rights, and fundamental freedoms of persons with disabilities. Around the world, we encourage and assist governments to learn about the development and effective implementation of laws to protect the rights of persons with disabilities. We do this by linking U.S. expertise and technical assistance developed through our implementation of laws like the Americans with Disabilities Act. We also continue to support civil society in other countries, including disabled persons' organizations that work tirelessly to protect human rights and fundamental freedoms.


Question:

How, as Secretary of State, will you give a voice to people with disabilities, particularly through global democracy and governance programs?

Answer:

USAID shares the Committee's commitment to giving voice to people with disabilities, and the President's FY 2019 budget request included funding for activities directed at supporting them. USAID is committed to maximizing our resources to further inclusive development practices and ensure people with disabilities are not neglected. We are also striving to be more efficient and effective with our resources, and continuing to work to leverage funding from other sources.

USAID works to ensure our programming across all sectors – not just in democracy, human rights, and governance programs – is inclusive. Approaches to achieve this include disability-related provisions required for contracts and grants, disability-inclusive sector strategies and programming, the development and dissemination of training materials, and designated expert staff who serve as a resource to the whole agency on these important issues. USAID will review and update its longstanding Disability Policy during 2018.



Questions for the Record from Representative Brad Schneider
 Strengthening American Diplomacy: Reviewing the State Department's Budget, Operations, and
 Policy Priorities
 May 23, 2018

Question:

What specifically is the Administration doing to counter Iran's influence in Syria and prevent Iran from expanding its presence there?

Answer:

The support the Assad regime has received and continues to receive from Iran has enabled it to avoid seeking a constructive, negotiated end to the conflict. We are working to counter Iran's destabilizing activities in the region. The United States has imposed sanctions on Iran's Islamic Revolutionary Guard Corps-Quds Force and its Ministry of Intelligence and Security for their support to the Assad regime. Lasting regional stability will also require the withdrawal of Iranian military forces and proxy militias from Syria, and we call on Moscow to use its influence over Tehran to encourage this withdrawal.

Question:

What is the Administration doing to thwart Iran's effort to establish permanent bases in Syria?

Answer:

Since taking office, the Trump Administration has moved forward with several rounds of new sanctions designations targeting Iran's support for terrorism, ballistic missile activity, and human rights abuses. The Administration has demonstrated that it will hold the Iranian government accountable for its actions. We will continue to apply sanctions on Iran's malign behavior in the region, including in Syria, and continue to work with likeminded partners to ensure a genuine political resolution of the conflict. We will continue to consult with Congress as we move forward.

Question:

What is the Administration doing to thwart Iran's development of an indigenous missile making capability in Syria and Lebanon?

Answer:

We have used our sanctions authorities to target Iran's Islamic Revolutionary Guard Corps, a key supporter of Lebanese Hizballah and the Assad regime. We will continue to exercise these authorities to the fullest extent possible and encourage our partners around the world to enhance their own efforts. We will continue to engage with the UN Interim Force in Lebanon (UNIFIL) and encourage closer cooperation between UNIFIL and the Lebanese Armed Forces, with the intention that both will be able to take concrete steps to curtail such Iranian activities. We

consistently press the government of Lebanon to reaffirm Lebanon's commitment to its regional disassociation policy and to UN Security Council Resolutions 1559 and 1701.

Question:

Specifically, how is the Administration supporting Israel, our greatest ally in the Middle East, and pushing back on Iran's activities on Israel's northern border?

Answer:

We recognize the serious security concerns Iran's current force posture in Syria poses for our interests as well as Israel's security. We are pressing for a strict schedule for the withdrawal of all Iranian forces, including Lebanese Hizballah and foreign militias under Iranian command. A settlement to the Syria conflict is a necessary step to deny Iran and its proxies a justification for their continued presence in Syria. Consistent with the President's strategy for Iran, we will use all authorities, including economic and financial sanctions, to disrupt Iran's funding for the Assad regime and Lebanese Hizballah and deter Iran's use of Syrian territory to threaten Israel.

Question:

How is this Administration cracking down on Iran's support for Hizballah?

Answer:

To curb Iranian support to Lebanese Hizballah, the Department of State and the Department of the Treasury have used their respective sanctions authorities to target Iran's Islamic Revolutionary Guard Corps, a key supporter of Lebanese Hizballah. We support the Government of Lebanon to provide more effective services to increase public support for the state and its institutions and to degrade the influence of Lebanese Hizballah. We will continue to support exercising these authorities to the fullest extent possible and encourage our partners around the world to enhance their own efforts to degrade Lebanese Hizballah's capabilities and dismantle its global financial network.

Question:

What is the Administration doing to stop the flow of Iranian arms to Hizballah and disrupt the missile production supply chain?

Answer:

We have used our sanctions authorities to target Iran's Islamic Revolutionary Guard Corps, a key supporter of Lebanese Hizballah. We will continue to exercise these authorities to the fullest extent possible and encourage our partners around the world to enhance their own efforts to degrade Lebanese Hizballah's capabilities and dismantle its global financial network. In Syria, we are working with key partners to prevent the establishment of a "land-bridge" to supply Lebanese Hizballah and other Iranian proxies in the Levant. Additionally, we continue to support the Iraqi

government in implementing its plan to right-size, integrate, and professionalize the Popular Mobilization Forces and in restoring a capable border security presence.

Question:

Given the Administration's new Iran strategy you announced earlier this week, how will the Administration address Iran's malign behavior, missile proliferation, and nuclear program?

Answer:

Iran remains subject to a comprehensive U.S. trade embargo, and we have numerous authorities to target Iran's support for terrorism, ballistic missile development, human rights abuses, and destabilizing activities in the region. This Administration has already announced dozens of such sanctions designations. We are also working extensively with likeminded countries, including members of the multilateral export control regimes, our Gulf partners, and Israel to deter and disrupt Iranian threats. Examples of such cooperation include military and diplomatic efforts to prevent Iranian weapons shipments into Yemen and efforts to interdict ballistic missile technology destined for Iran.

Question:

How is this different from actions by previous Administrations?

Answer:

The Trump Administration's policy towards Iran incorporates the use of diplomatic, political, and economic pressure to a greater degree than the previous administration, focusing comprehensively on Iran's malign conduct. Since the start of this Administration, we have designated nearly 200 individuals and entities that support the Iranian regime's malign activities, proliferation of weapons of mass destruction, support for terrorism, and human rights abuses. We will assemble an international coalition to bring unprecedented economic and political pressure to bear against the Iranian regime. The President also intends to seek a new deal that permanently ensures the Iranian regime can never develop or obtain a nuclear weapon.

Question:

How does this Administration's goals differ?

Answer:

The Obama Administration believed the Iran nuclear deal would spur Iran to stop its destabilizing regional actions and conform to international norms. The Trump Administration is now pursuing a more comprehensive security plan that will counter not only Iran's nuclear and proliferation threats, but also its other destabilizing activities – including Iran's ballistic missile development efforts, support for terrorism and regional proxies, and grievous human rights abuses. I described the 12 goals for our Iran policy. Broadly, Iran must stop its proliferation-sensitive nuclear and

missile activities, end its unjust detention of American and foreign citizens, and stop its threatening behavior against its neighbors and support for terrorism.

Question:

How will this Administration measure things differently- i.e. compliance and achieving the goal that Iran never achieves a nuclear weapon?

Answer:

The President has been very clear that Iran will face severe consequences if it expands its proliferation-sensitive nuclear activities beyond their current levels. We also continue to support the IAEA and insist that it be able to conduct robust inspections and monitoring of Iran's nuclear program to ensure that Iran meets all of its international obligations and commitments. We are confident the IAEA will continue to exercise its authorities to the fullest extent possible, including at any appropriate safeguards-relevant locations newly identified using information recently presented by Israel.

Question:

What is the Administration's plan if Iran rejects the demands you laid out during your speech on Monday, May 21?

Answer:

We believe it is in Iran's interests to find a new framework with us that addresses our concerns about its nuclear program and its destabilizing behavior in the region. We know that re-imposed U.S. sanctions will be powerful tools that can incentivize Iran to change its behavior. We and our allies share a common assessment that the Iranian regime poses a threat to our collective security that must be jointly addressed. Our allies are committed to never letting Iran acquire a nuclear weapon. They share our concerns about Iran's expanding missile development activities, destabilizing actions in the region, and human rights abuses. We will continue to work with our current partners to address these issues and with new partners who share our concerns.

Question:

What is the Administration doing to make sure Russia cannot interfere once again in our elections?

Answer:

The Department of State works closely with other departments and agencies to protect our nation against potential interference in our election processes. As the lead foreign policy agency, we have the unique role of communicating to the Russian government when its behavior is unacceptable, working with our interagency partners to impose costs in response, and building international coalitions to actively deter malign Russian activities—including those carried out through cyberspace—and to share best practices. While the Department's mandate is to lead on foreign

policy, we will continue to support the efforts of the Departments of Homeland Security and Justice and, as appropriate, state and local officials to secure our elections, leveraging all necessary and available Department resources to counter Russian efforts to interfere.

Question:

What actions has the Administration taken since the 2016 election?

Answer:

The Department of State works closely with other departments and agencies to protect our nation against potential interference in our election processes. As the lead foreign policy agency, we have the unique role of communicating to the Russian government when its behavior is unacceptable, working with our interagency partners to impose costs in response, and sharing best practices with partners and allies. The Department has used exchanges with partners and allies who are also building their own resiliency to share approaches and best practices, again working on an interagency basis. We have also taken actions against the Russian diplomatic presence in the United States in response to Russian interference in the 2016 elections and have worked with the Treasury Department to impose significant sanctions against Russians that undertake destabilizing activity.

Question:

What actions still need to be taken?

Answer:

As the lead foreign policy agency, the Department of State will continue to support the efforts of the Departments of Homeland Security and Justice and, as appropriate, state and local officials to secure our elections, leveraging all necessary and available Department resources to counter Russian efforts to interfere. The Department of State has made it clear to the Russian government at the highest levels that any efforts to interfere in the 2018 midterm elections will not be tolerated and will be met with severe consequences. We will continue to send this strong message to the Russians in order to deter any attempts to interfere and, in coordination with other agencies, take additional, restrictive actions against Russia as appropriate.

Question:

The Global Engagement Center (GEC) has not used the \$120 million available since 2016 because the Department failed to act on its transfer authority. How are you going to fix these problems so the GEC will have sufficient funding and staff to stand up to and counter malicious efforts by Russia to interfere in our democracy?

Answer:

I agree that the Global Engagement Center (GEC) needs sufficient funding and personnel to counter foreign state-sponsored propaganda and disinformation, including that emanating from Russia. I assure you that supporting the GEC's mission is a priority.

On May 15, I lifted the Department hiring freeze. GEC has been granted authority to hire critical new staffers and is in the process of doing so. That is an initial step in the right direction.

I understand that DoD recently began providing the congressional reprogramming notifications required to transfer the \$40 million, and we are prepared to utilize those funds upon their receipt. However, the timing of these congressional notifications and any required approvals will impact how quickly the funds can be transferred and applied to project and personnel. The Department stands ready to use the transferred funds effectively once received.

Question:

How will you ensure the GEC can effectively lead the inter-agency process with DOD and the intelligence community to counter propaganda from foreign states?

Answer:

The Global Engagement Center (GEC)'s mandate is to counter foreign propaganda and disinformation that undermines U.S. national security interests by leading and coordinating interagency efforts, which it does by convening interagency stakeholders through a series of regular fora. The GEC needs sufficient funding and personnel to counter foreign state-sponsored propaganda and disinformation, including that emanating from Russia. Additional funding and personnel will allow the GEC to undertake additional programming and coordinate the interagency to conduct its mission as mandated by Congress.

Question:

I previously submitted a question for the record to Deputy Secretary of State John Sullivan regarding my concern that Secretary Tillerson violated U.S. law, specifically the Child Soldiers Prevention Act (CSPA), when he did not list Afghanistan, Burma, and Iraq as countries who used or supported the use of child soldiers in 2016. The Child Soldiers Prevention Act requires the State Department to list any country – even if it believed the countries were making progress – that used child soldiers during the year without exception. I understand the State Department's Office of the Legal Adviser and every relevant regional and functional office and bureau cleared the recommendation that the Secretary include these three countries in the 2017 CSPA list. Was it appropriate for Secretary Tillerson to not list Afghanistan, Burma, and Iraq, given the input of experts in the department, as part of the CSPA process?

Answer:

I understand the value of using the annual Child Soldiers Prevention Act (CSPA) list to focus international attention on the unlawful recruitment and use of child soldiers. I hope to work closely with Congress as we continue our efforts to combat the recruitment and use of child soldiers.

Question:

Recently, we have seen across the globe LGBTQ people targeted, tortured, and killed for just being who they are. On May 17, 2018, the International Day Against Homophobia, Transphobia, and Biphobia you stated that “Around the world, far too many governments continue to arrest and abuse their citizens simply for being lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender or intersex (LGBTI).” And, “The United States firmly opposes criminalization, violence and serious acts of discrimination...directed against LGBTI persons.” Given your statement, what specifically will this Administration do to help ensure the safety of LGBTQ people around the globe?

Answer:

As I affirmed in my statement on the International Day Against Homophobia, Transphobia and Biphobia, “the United States stands with people around the world in affirming the dignity and equality of all people regardless of sexual orientation, gender identity or expression, or sex characteristics. Human rights are universal, and LGBTI people are entitled to the same respect, freedoms, and protections as everyone else.” Under my leadership, the State Department will continue to use a range of public and private actions to counter violence and severe discrimination against LGBTI persons, including through bilateral and multilateral channels, by offering emergency assistance to LGBTI persons and organizations at risk, and by imposing visa restrictions and economic sanctions, as appropriate, against those who violate their human rights.

Question:

What will you do to ensure those who have committed crimes against LGBTQ people are held accountable for their actions?

Answer:

As I affirmed in my statement on the International Day Against Homophobia, Transphobia and Biphobia, “the United States stands with people around the world in affirming the dignity and equality of all people regardless of sexual orientation, gender identity or expression, or sex characteristics. Human rights are universal, and LGBTI people are entitled to the same respect, freedoms, and protections as everyone else.” Under my leadership, the Department will continue to use a range of public and private actions to counter violence and severe discrimination against LGBTI persons, including through bilateral and multilateral channels, by offering emergency assistance to LGBTI persons and organizations at risk, and by imposing visa restrictions and economic sanctions, as appropriate, against those who violate their human rights.

Question:

There have been reports that the Administration is still considering eliminating all or part of the Bureau of Population, Refugees, and Migration (PRM) and shifting its responsibilities to the Department of Homeland Security (DHS) or USAID. Is this change to PRM still being considered?

Answer:

The Bureau of Population, Refugees, and Migration, which manages U.S. refugee policy, assistance, and resettlement, is an integral part of State's foreign policy efforts to prevent and respond to crises and conflict and promote regional stability. As part of E.O. 13781, the Administration is in the process of reviewing agencies throughout the executive branch in pursuit of increased efficiency, effectiveness, and accountability. In response E.O. 13781, the Department of State is working with USAID to optimize our overall humanitarian assistance efforts.

Question:

If so, what is the justification for such a change?

Answer:

E.O. 13781 calls on agencies throughout the executive branch to conduct reviews in pursuit of increased efficiency, effectiveness, and accountability. In response to E.O. 13781, the Department of State is working with USAID to optimize our overall humanitarian assistance efforts.

Question:

How would such a change account for the role PRM plays in ensuring that refugee resettlement and humanitarian assistance jointly leverages U.S. foreign policy interests?

Answer:

The Bureau of Population, Refugees, and Migration (PRM) fulfills a critical role in providing humanitarian aid and working toward durable solutions for refugees, conflict victims, and stateless people around the world and is an integral part of State's foreign policy efforts to prevent and respond to crises and conflict and promote regional stability. PRM's work strengthens our worldwide diplomatic influence and gives the United States great leverage in shaping global humanitarian responses to conflict. In response to E.O. 13781, the Department of State is working with USAID to optimize our overall humanitarian assistance efforts.

Question:

How many refugees does the President plan to admit this next fiscal year?

Answer:


The President is expected to make the determination on the FY 2019 refugee admissions ceiling in September 2018. The President authorized the admission of up to 45,000 refugees in FY 2018. Over the last year and a half, U.S. government agencies have worked to strengthen the U.S. Refugee Admissions Program's security measures. While necessary to improve national security and public safety, these reviews and enhancements have lengthened processing times for some cases, initially slowing the rate of admissions. In addition, the United States is focusing resources on the domestic asylum backlog, which is more than 300,000 cases and growing.

Question:

How does the current admissions ceiling compare to the historical average since the 1980 Refugee Act?

Answer:

The FY 2018 refugee admissions ceiling is 45,000. The historical average ceiling during the period from 1980 to 2018 is 79,250, ranging from a low of 45,000 this year to a high of 217,000 in 1980. During the period 1980-2017, actual arrivals averaged 80,212, ranging from a low of 27,110 in FY 2002 to 207,116 in 1980. Over the last year and a half, U.S. government agencies have worked to strengthen the U.S. Refugee Admissions Program's security measures. While necessary to improve national security and public safety, these reviews and enhancements have lengthened processing times for some cases and thus initially slowing the rate of admissions. In addition, the United States is focusing resources on the domestic asylum backlog, which is over 300,000 cases and growing.



Questions for the Record from Representative Ted Lieu

Strengthening American Diplomacy: Reviewing the State Department's Budget, Operations, and Policy Priorities
May 23, 2018

Question:

What specific steps has the Department taken to prepare for the U.S.-North Korea Summit between President Trump and Chairman Kim? Please describe how the preparation has been tasked out, which bureaus and offices have been involved, and all Department engagements with officials from the Democratic People's Republic of Korea, the Republic of Korea, and the People's Republic of China.

Answer:

North Korea has confirmed to us its willingness to talk about denuclearization. I support the President's decision to create the conditions so that the President and Kim Jong Un can sit together to begin to resolve this incredibly vexing, difficult challenge. This will set us down the course of achieving a diplomatic outcome that the United States and the world are seeking.

In addition to the President's recent meeting with Vice Chairman Kim Yong Chol and my meetings with Chairman Kim Jong Un, I have teams in Panmunjom and Singapore working on the details of summit preparation. We are engaged in a whole of government planning effort.

Question:

Have State Department lawyers raised concerns, internally or through official channels, regarding U.S. support for the Saudi-led coalition in Yemen since 2015? Please describe those concerns and how they were communicated.

Answer:

We take all credible reports of civilian casualties resulting from the operations of the Saudi-led Coalition seriously and are proactively engaging with the Coalition to reduce the likelihood of harm to civilians and civilian infrastructure. Through diplomatic and military-to-military engagements, we regularly emphasize to Saudi Arabia the strategic importance and legal obligation to comply with the law of armed conflict, including the obligation to take feasible precautions to reduce the risk of harm to civilians.

Question:

In recent weeks, multiple media outlets have reported that the administration has informally notified congressional leadership of a massive PGMs transfer to Saudi Arabia, numbering as many as 60,000 munitions. For context, the previous PGM transfer released by the administration to Saudi Arabia last June was for roughly 16,000 munitions. Because Saudi Arabia is primarily using these munitions in Yemen, the size of this transfer suggests that the Saudi-led coalition is preparing

to continue the war indefinitely. The conflict's extension, however, goes against stated U.S. policy, per the State Department, the Defense Department, and the White House, that the United States supports a negotiated settlement to the conflict, that the war cannot be won militarily, and that military pressure is unlikely to bring the Houthis to the negotiating table. How does the transfer of tens of thousands of new PGMs support the U.S. strategy in Yemen to resolve the conflict politically, which [Acting Assistant] Secretary Satterfield laid out for the committee last month?

Answer:

While the Department does not generally publicly discuss potential arms transfers prior to formal Congressional notification, I can say that our military support to the Saudi-led Coalition supports important U.S. national security and diplomatic objectives. The Houthis have repeatedly used Iranian ballistic missile technology to target Riyadh's international airport and Aramco facilities. We have open and ongoing dialogue with Saudi Arabia and other regional partners on efforts to achieve a political solution to the conflict.

Question:

Won't this sudden influx of air-to-ground munitions incentivize the Saudi-led coalition to continue its air war, rather than make good faith efforts to negotiate for peace?

Answer:

The Administration firmly believes that the only possible solution to the conflict in Yemen is a negotiated political settlement under UN auspices. To this end, the Administration strongly supports and is working closely with UN Special Envoy for Yemen Martin Griffiths to revive political negotiations on an accelerated timeline. He has our full support, and we will continue to engage with key regional partners, including the Saudis and Emiratis, to reinforce the Envoy's work. Saudi and Emirati leadership have met with the Special Envoy and have consistently affirmed their support for his efforts.

Question:

Mr. Secretary, in your recent address to the Heritage Foundation, you stated that "Iran's support for the Houthi militia fuels a conflict that continues to starve the Yemeni people and hold them under the threat of terror," while stating that Iran must "end its military support for the Houthi militia and work towards a peaceful political settlement in Yemen." The administration's new strategy for confronting Iran is based on the notion that overwhelming economic sanctions will force Iran to withdraw support for militia forces across the region--to this end, the Treasury just announced sanctions on five Iranian individuals with links to the Houthis. Yet in Yemen, Iran is spending very little to support the Houthis; former CIA analyst Bruce Riedel has reported that Iran is spending maybe "a few million dollars a year" in support of the Houthis, while Saudi Arabia has spent tens of billions on its intervention.

How will sanctions deter the Iranian government from spending a relative pittance to support Houthi militia activity in Yemen, particularly when the cost-differential between the two sides is so substantial?

Answer:

The President's Iran strategy will address the totality of Iran's malign behavior, using a whole-of-government approach. It will bring unprecedented economic pressure on Iran through the vigorous application of our various sanctions authorities. We also will work closely with our international and regional partners to place enormous diplomatic and political pressure on Iran and expose its malign activity in Yemen and throughout the region. We continue to work extensively with our Gulf partners and Israel to deter and disrupt Iranian threats, including military and diplomatic efforts to prevent Iranian weapons shipments from going into Yemen. We remain committed to pursuing a sustainable and genuine political solution in Yemen.

Question:

The Yemeni port of Hodeidah is a critical lifeline for humanitarian and commercial shipments of food, fuel, and medicine for over 22 million Yemeni civilians. Despite warnings by the UN and humanitarian groups that an attack on Hodeidah would make the humanitarian situation – which the UN already calls the worst humanitarian crisis in the world – significantly worse, there are growing indications that forces aligned with Saudi Arabia and the United Arab Emirates are preparing to attack Hodeidah, perhaps as soon as next month. The new UN Special Envoy, Martin Griffiths, has said that an attack on Hodeidah also would “in a single stroke, take peace off the table” in Yemen. David Satterfield, your Assistant Secretary of State for Near East Affairs, told the Senate Foreign Relations Committee last month that the Trump Administration did not support an attack on Hodeidah by our Saudi and Emirati allies, and said that U.S. position had been conveyed to the Saudis and Emiratis. Does the United States oppose an attack by the Saudi- and Emirati-led coalition on Hodeidah?

Answer:

The United States supports the efforts of UN Special Envoy for Yemen Martin Griffiths to end hostilities and opposes any actions that would impede his efforts. Hudaydah port is an essential point of entry for both humanitarian and commercial goods into Yemen. More than 70 percent of Yemen's population lives in areas served by Hudaydah port. We continue to call on all parties to the conflict to allow unimpeded access through all Yemen's points of entry and throughout the country for humanitarian relief and commercial goods to reach the people of Yemen. We continue to oppose a military operation at this time to take Hudaydah port and have conveyed this to our Coalition partners.

Question:

What is the Department's assessment of the impact of such an attack on Yemen's supply of food, medicine and fuel?

Answer:

We have expressed to the highest levels of the Saudi-led Coalition our deep concern about the humanitarian crisis in Yemen. More than 70 percent of Yemen's population lives in areas served by Hudaydah port. Historically, as much as 80 percent of humanitarian aid and 70 percent of commercial traffic reached Yemen through Hudaydah port. These imports are critical to avert famine and help the 22 million people in Yemen who are in need of humanitarian assistance. For this reason, we will continue to call on all parties to the conflict to allow unimpeded access through all Yemen's points of entry and throughout the country for humanitarian relief and commercial goods to reach the people of Yemen.

Question:

What diplomatic pressure is being used with Saudi Arabia and the United Arab Emirates to ensure they do not undertake or support an attack on Hodeidah?

Answer:

We continue to oppose and consistently tell the Saudis and Emiratis at the highest levels that they should refrain from military operations that could exacerbate Yemen's humanitarian crisis. The Administration continues to assert that all parties must prioritize the UN Special Envoy's efforts to revive political negotiations on an accelerated timeline. A negotiated political settlement is Yemen's only viable option for long-term stability.