

**FLASHING RED: THE STATE OF GLOBAL  
HUMANITARIAN AFFAIRS**

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**HEARING**

BEFORE THE

**COMMITTEE ON FOREIGN RELATIONS  
UNITED STATES SENATE**

**ONE HUNDRED FIFTEENTH CONGRESS**

FIRST SESSION

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## **FLASHING RED: THE STATE OF GLOBAL HUMANITARIAN AFFAIRS**

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**WEDNESDAY, MARCH 22, 2017**

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

The committee met, pursuant to notice, at 10:02 a.m., in room SD-419, Dirksen Senate Office Building, Hon. Bob Corker, chairman of the committee, presiding.

Present: Senators Corker [presiding], Rubio, Young, Cardin, Shaheen, Markey, and Merkley.

### **OPENING STATEMENT OF HON. BOB CORKER, U.S. SENATOR FROM TENNESSEE**

The CHAIRMAN. The Foreign Relations Committee will come to order.

Last month, the U.N. High Commissioner for Refugees and the executive director for the World Food Program issued a warning regarding severe food shortages sweeping across Africa. Humanitarian crises are expanding with famine now inflicting South Sudan and others threatening Somalia, Nigeria, and Yemen.

Each of these is marked by misgovernance and conflict that worsens existing conditions and threatens to trigger the starvation and displacement of tens of millions of people.

In South Sudan, conduct by President Kiir and the failure of the region to effectively engage with the political leaders in South Sudan has led to famine and atrocities.

In Yemen, a country with chronic natural resource and food shortfalls, the crisis is aggravated by conflicts that have created severe obstacles to humanitarian access.

In Somalia, al-Shabaab created insecurity, and lack of governing structures continue to threaten millions of Somalis.

In Nigeria, Africa's largest country by population, millions in the northeast face starvation as Boko Haram violence has prevented most humanitarian access.

When we consider the ongoing wars elsewhere in the Middle East, Eastern Europe, and South Asia, the world has experienced historic levels of displacement and emergency needs. Last year, there was an unprecedented 65 million people displaced, stateless, or otherwise in the need of humanitarian assistance, the highest number ever recorded. And this year, it is expected to reach 70 million people. Unbelievable.

The fact that so many of these tragic situations are manmade demands that we look at how we use our policy tools to prevent and relieve such a catastrophe.

Today's hearing is an opportunity to understand how these crises affect U.S. interests and review how we might better work to sustain life, support stability, and help communities become more resilient. It is also imperative that we discuss ways to stretch our aid dollars further through food aid reforms and efficiencies, feeding more people with the same level of funding.

And I hope our committee can come together to support such reforms during next year's farm bill reauthorization.

Finally, we must look at the instruments of our diplomatic, development, economic, and defense power, and determine how we might best put them to use in reversing this trend that leads to instability and threatens our interests.

We thank our witnesses. I will introduce you shortly. And I want to turn to our distinguished ranking member, Ben Cardin.

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

Senator CARDIN. Well, Mr. Chairman, thank you so much for holding this hearing on the state of global humanitarian affairs.

Yesterday, I joined the chairman with our counterparts in the House of Representatives as we acknowledged the sixth anniversary of the Syrian war and the atrocities that have been committed there and humanitarian needs.

Today, we shift our attention, the same subject matter but to the 20 million people who are starving as a result of the famines in Yemen, Somalia, South Sudan, and Northern Nigeria.

And we saw the faces of children who were murdered in Syria. We now see the faces of children who are stunted and are suffering as a result of the atrocities and tragedies in these countries.

And we know that we have to do something about this. We know that America can do something about this.

So I look forward to our witnesses giving us the current status but also challenging us to do more to alleviate the humanitarian needs.

We know that these circumstances in these countries will lead to instability, breeding grounds for terrorists, and it leads to conflicts. So it is in our interests, not just from the humanitarian point of view, but from the national security issues, to do something about these circumstances.

The tragedy is even made worse because political leaders in these countries are denying humanitarian access. They are not only causing a problem for their people. Then they are denying the international community access to try to deal with the aftermath.

The South Sudanese Government recently said they want humanitarian workers to pay \$10,000 for a visa. That is outrageous, and the international community needs to speak out.

We also know that humanitarian convoys have been attacked as part of a conflict. That is a violation of war crimes, and it is a matter that cannot be allowed to continue.

So, Mr. Chairman, I just really want to underscore the need for U.S. leadership. When I look at what has happened internationally,

the status of select U.N. humanitarian appeals, global, we are at thirteen percent funded; Nigeria, 6 percent funded; Somalia, 21 percent funded; South Sudan, 18 percent funded; Yemen, 7 percent funded.

If the United States is not in leadership, the international community is not going to respond. And as you pointed out, this is a circumstance where the famine has been enhanced or made possible through human action. This is not nature. This is what humans have done, and we can change that.

So I look for U.S. leadership. But so far, what I have seen is President Trump being very silent on this issue. I have not heard very much. I have seen his executive order on immigration, which 100 national security experts, both Republican and Democrats, have condemned as being counterproductive to our national security and not befitting our great Nation.

I do look at a budget that he has submitted that has a 28 percent cut in foreign aid, and I am wondering how we can respond and show leadership and expect other countries to follow when the President has made our foreign assistance such a low priority.

Mr. Chairman, I might be incorrect in this, but I think there is only one other agency treated as badly as foreign assistance in the President's budget, and that is our environment. So it really does speak to our priorities. The international community is looking at us, saying where are America's priorities if the President is submitting this type of budget?

And then I just want to point out, as you have, that we can prevent these humanitarian disasters if we invest more in good governance, in anticorruption, in the building blocks so these countries can have stable governments that can help their own people, and we are cutting those programs in the President's budget.

So I do look forward to our witnesses as to how we can be more effective in dealing with the crisis in Northern Africa and how America's leadership can lead the world to help those that are in real danger of literally losing their lives.

The CHAIRMAN. Well, thank you. I had no idea that focusing on conflict in poor parts of the world would move to the direction that you just went. I think we all understand that these issues have been persisting for a long, long time, and we need to, certainly, show U.S. leadership.

I will say our government funds one-third of the World Food Program and will continue to. And my guess is, at the end of the day, by the time Congress gets through having its say, we are going to be very involved and appropriately involved throughout the world, as we have been for years.

I hope we will focus on the issue at hand. I do not think this has been created over the last 55 days and, certainly, I appreciate some of the sentiment, but, again, the issue is here we have millions of people that are starving due to conflicts in the region.

And as my staff has pointed out so well, once these people are malnourished for a period of time, it actually affects their ability to function for the rest of their lives, so what we have happening in these countries is people—really, we are stunting the next generation of people who might lead innovation and do the kinds of things that are necessary to cause these countries to be successful.

So for that reason, we certainly appreciate Mr. Gottlieb for being here. He is acting assistant administrator from USAID Bureau of Democracy, Conflict, and Humanitarian Assistance. Assistant Administrator Gottlieb manages the Office of Disaster Assistance and Food for Peace, two of the primary U.S. responders to international humanitarian emergencies with both food and nonfood assistance.

We thank you so much for being here and glad we have someone to actually come testify as you are today. We look forward to that. And if you could summarize in about 5 minutes, I am sure there will be many questions from the panel. Thank you.

**STATEMENT OF GREGORY C. GOTTLIEB, ACTING ASSISTANT ADMINISTRATOR, BUREAU OF DEMOCRACY, CONFLICT, AND HUMANITARIAN ASSISTANCE, UNITED STATES AGENCY FOR INTERNATIONAL DEVELOPMENT, WASHINGTON, DC**

Mr. GOTTLIEB. Chairman Corker, Ranking Member Cardin, members of the committee, thank you for your continued support for humanitarian assistance, including convening this hearing.

Today, we are confronted with massive humanitarian crises around the world, which demand immediate, substantial, and creative responses. There are more than 65 million people displaced today, numbers we have not seen since World War II.

We are also facing the most serious food security crisis in the modern era. Famine likely occurred in parts of Nigeria late last year and was declared in South Sudan this year. Somalia and Yemen are likely to be next.

Further complicating things, much of the humanitarian need today is manmade, a result of civil conflicts, instability, and a lack of solutions to political disputes.

I have worked in humanitarian assistance for more than 30 years in more than 40 countries across four continents, and I can say I have not seen anything of this scale in my career.

Despite these challenges and thanks to generous support from Congress, the United States continues to be the world leader in humanitarian response. We at USAID strive to best utilize those resources to prevent, mitigate, and respond to humanitarian crises around the world. USAID leadership in this area demonstrates extraordinary global reach, influence, and impact.

Today, I would like to briefly walk through the major crises we face in 2017, the challenges we confront, and how USAID is responding.

In January, the Famine Early Warning System, FEWS NET, warned of possible famines in a record four countries this year. The first was declared just 1 month later in South Sudan.

More than 3 years of horrific violence in South Sudan has transformed the world's youngest nation into one of the most food insecure. Even before the famine declaration, many South Sudanese were dying of hunger and faced an impossible choice: Stay where they are and starve, or run for their lives, potentially into mortal danger.

USAID continues to feed more than 1.3 million people each month, but enormous needs remain: 5.5 million people, nearly half of South Sudan's population, will face life-threatening hunger in July.



In West Africa, the savagery of Boko Haram triggered a humanitarian crisis in Nigeria, displacing over 2 million people and leaving more than 10 million individuals in need of humanitarian assistance. More than 5.1 million people face severe food insecurity.

It is likely famine incurred in some inaccessible areas in 2016. As access improves, humanitarian agencies are encountering communities with dire levels of hunger and malnutrition, particularly among children. More than 450,000 children are severely malnourished in Northern Nigeria.

Nigeria is also a protection crisis. We hear reports of vulnerable women and girls forced to trade sex for food to keep their families alive, men and boys forcibly recruited into Boko Haram are killed, and children whose worlds have been shattered after months of captivity by Boko Haram. Meanwhile, the Horn of Africa is facing increasingly severe drought conditions that are quickly exceeding people's ability to cope.

The scope is so great that relief agencies estimate that up to 15 million people in Somalia, Ethiopia, and Kenya are facing food and water shortages. More than half of Somalia's total population currently requires urgent humanitarian assistance.

In Yemen, more than 17 million people, an astounding 60 percent of the country's population, are food insecure, including 7 million who are unable to survive without food assistance. This makes Yemen the largest food security emergency in the world, and it is also at risk for famine in 2017. In Yemen, more than 460,000 kids are severely malnourished.

Beyond these four likely famines, we are confronted with protracted crises in countries like Iraq and Syria, which have no clear end in sight. These emergencies are complex, dangerous, and require the majority of our personnel and funding.

In this time of unprecedented need, we are looking at all options available to us, finding ways to provide assistance efficiently and encouraging other donors to step up. USAID is also applying lessons from previous responses, making effective use of early warning and investing in resilience strategies to reduce the impacts of future shocks and stresses.

We remain committed to providing humanitarian assistance around the world as both a moral imperative and a direct benefit to the well-being of the United States.

I thank you for your time and support, and I look forward to your questions.

[The prepared statement of Mr. Gottlieb follows:]

#### THE PREPARED STATEMENT OF GREGORY C. GOTTLIEB

Chairman Corker, Ranking Member Cardin, members of the committee, thank you for your continued support and interest in humanitarian assistance around the world. Today, I want to highlight the unprecedented humanitarian needs globally and talk about how the U.S. government is working to save lives.

In 2017, we are confronted with massive humanitarian crises around the world, which demand an immediate, substantial, and creative response. In just over a decade, the number of people in need of humanitarian aid has more than doubled. There are more than 65 million displaced people today—numbers we have not seen since World War II. We are also facing the most serious food security crisis in the modern era. Famine likely occurred in parts of Nigeria late last year and was declared in South Sudan this year; Somalia and Yemen are likely to be next.

Much of the humanitarian need today is man-made—a result of civil war, instability, and unresolved political disputes within fragile states. In countries like Syria

and Iraq, violence and insecurity are causing a record number of internal and cross-border displacements, and aid workers are saving lives at great risk to their own.

Humanitarian funding requirements for 2017 are likewise higher, currently estimated at \$22.6 billion, more than double the funding requirements from just five years ago.

In countries experiencing conflict, humanitarian organizations cannot easily reach people in need because of ongoing violence, host countries' rules and regulations, unexploded ordnance, and limited communication and transportation infrastructure. These challenges are compounded by aid obstruction and attacks on relief convoys and aid workers. As a result, running an effective response has required ever-increasing flexibility, innovation, and efficiency on the part of the international humanitarian community.

Thanks to generous support from Congress, the United States has been the world leader in humanitarian response. The assistance we provide represents the best of America's values of goodwill toward those who suffer. Moreover, despite these challenges, USAID strives to make the best use of those resources, aiming to prevent, mitigate, and respond to humanitarian crises around the world. U.S. leadership in this area demonstrates extraordinary global reach and impact, helping to improve our national security by strengthening relationships with nations and people around the world, particularly in conflict-prone areas. Additionally, even as we respond to today's humanitarian crises, our strategy is also to prevent tomorrow's crises, by building up resilience and focusing on small interventions in fragile states before they become failed ones.

We respond to disasters by providing food, safe drinking water, shelter, emergency medical care, and the tools to rebuild. USAID's Office of Foreign Disaster Assistance alone responds to an average of 65 disasters in more than 50 countries every year. USAID serves as the United States' first responder to global crises and an iconic symbol of American compassion around the world. Recall the images in 2014, when USAID deployed a Disaster Assistance Response Team (DART) to West Africa to lead the U.S. response to the worst Ebola outbreak in history. Along with the U.S. military and the U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, the United States helped to bring an end to the epidemic. When Hurricane Matthew hit Haiti this past fall, USAID pre-deployed a DART prior to landfall to immediately provide food, water, and shelter, as well as scale up hygiene and sanitation interventions to mitigate the increased risks of cholera.

The United States is the single largest donor of humanitarian aid to the Syrian and South Sudanese people, and is feeding more than 1.3 million people in South Sudan each month. The U.S. government is also the largest single provider of humanitarian assistance to Nigeria and the Lake Chad Basin, where Boko Haram has driven more than a million people from their homes, creating one of the largest displacement crises in Africa. In Yemen and the Horn of Africa, USAID continues to mobilize robust responses to help families on the brink of starvation. Our assistance is saving lives and protecting important development gains.

Over the last 10 years, USAID has deployed 33 DARTs, including a record six DARTs deployed simultaneously in 2016. We currently have four DARTs deployed to meet urgent humanitarian needs in Iraq, South Sudan, Syria, and Nigeria. The extraordinary has sadly become the everyday.

Today, I'd like to briefly walk through the major crises we're seeing in 2017, describe the challenges we face, and talk about how USAID is responding.

#### SOUTH SUDAN

In Africa, despite seeing many development and global health gains from our investment in development, several countries remain of great concern. More than three years of horrific violence in South Sudan has transformed the world's youngest nation into one of the most food-insecure countries in the world. Despite our efforts throughout the conflict to stave off famine, in collaboration with the World Food Programme (WFP), UNICEF and others, conditions have continued to deteriorate and famine was declared in two counties on February 20. The United States is gravely concerned by the declaration of famine in parts of South Sudan and by the significant scale of humanitarian need throughout the country. An estimated 5.5 million people—nearly half of South Sudan's population—will face life-threatening hunger by July.

Even before the famine declaration, people were dying of hunger—driven from their homes by violence, and many forced to eat water lilies and wild grasses to survive. Innocent civilians are targeted by violence from armed actors on all sides of the conflict and have little to no access to basic services. The fighting has disrupted markets and harvests, and the South Sudanese people—having exhausted all their

resources—are left with little or nothing to survive. Many South Sudanese face a choice no one should have to face—stay where they are and starve, or run for their lives, potentially into mortal danger, so that they can find food.

As we have said repeatedly, this is a man-made crisis and the direct consequence of prolonged conflict. We hold all the warring parties—including the government, the opposition, and affiliated armed groups—responsible for the hostilities that upend and, even worse, target civilian lives and livelihoods. More than 3.5 million South Sudanese have been displaced from their homes, and the exodus of 1.6 million South Sudanese into neighboring countries—including into conflict areas of Sudan—shows the desperation they face as the geographic scale of the conflict spreads. Schools have emptied out leaving 1.8 million children out of school and 17,000 recruited into armies. In the month of January alone, more than 90,000 South Sudanese fled their country, many to neighboring Uganda. The Bidi Bidi refugee settlement, which did not even exist seven months ago, has rapidly swelled to become one of the largest refugee camps in the world, home to more than 750,000 South Sudanese refugees.

USAID did not wait for a famine declaration to intervene in South Sudan, and we will continue to respond to save as many lives as possible.

The United States has provided more than \$2.1 billion since 2013 to help the South Sudanese people. We deployed a DART in December 2013 to lead the U.S. humanitarian response to the crisis, which remained in place through the July 2016 violence. Throughout the crisis, and ramping up over the past six months, the U.S. has responded with comprehensive humanitarian assistance, including food, safe drinking water, emergency medical care, critical nutrition, as well as emergency shelter and relief supplies. So far in Fiscal Year (FY) 2017, we have provided nearly 100,000 metric tons of food assistance, at times using mobile teams to reach populations in famine, who are also under threat of violence.

Our health and sanitation interventions are critical because we know that people don't only die in large numbers from hunger, but from the diseases to which they succumb when hunger weakens their immune systems, leaving them susceptible to deadly but largely preventable diseases. Our assistance is also helping to provide psychosocial support to survivors of gender-based violence, give children a safe place to learn as an alternative to fighting, and reunify families separated by fighting.

However, significant challenges remain. Our partners continue to face security and access challenges that make our life-saving operations more dangerous and complex. Bureaucratic impediments, numerous checkpoints, weather-related obstacles, and limited communication and transportation infrastructure have restricted humanitarian activities across South Sudan. Additionally, aid workers have been harassed, attacked, or killed, and relief supplies are looted. According to the U.N., at least 72 aid workers have died in South Sudan since 2013. We call on all parties to allow safe, rapid, and unhindered access to people and places most in need. All parties to this conflict must stop impeding humanitarian response efforts and allow relief workers to save lives.

#### NIGERIA

The savagery of Boko Haram has triggered a humanitarian crisis in Nigeria and surrounding countries in the Lake Chad Basin region, displacing over 2 million people and leaving more than 10 million individuals in need of humanitarian assistance.

Food assistance and nutrition continue to be the most critical needs in northeast Nigeria. More than 5.1 million people face severe food insecurity in northeastern Nigeria, particularly those displaced in Borno State, where famine already likely occurred in 2016. Though insecurity limits access and information gathering, there are signs that a famine may be ongoing in parts of the state that humanitarian actors are unable to reach. As access improves, humanitarian agencies are encountering communities with dire levels of hunger and malnutrition, particularly among children.

This crisis involves numerous other tragedies and protection issues. We hear reports of families without shelter and on the brink of starvation, vulnerable women and girls forced to trade sex for food to keep their families alive, men and boys forcibly recruited into Boko Haram or killed, and children whose worlds have been shattered after months of captivity by Boko Haram. We have had reports of girls as young as eight years old being used as suicide bombers. Yet, the severe and heart-breaking needs of these vulnerable communities far exceed the resources available to help them.

Since late 2016, the U.N. and NGOs have scaled up emergency operations. Agencies, such as WFP and UNICEF, have begun using rapid response mechanisms to

conduct faster needs assessments and deliver supplies. In January, WFP reached more than 1 million people in northeast Nigeria with in-kind food assistance or cash-based transfers—quadrupling their September 2016 caseload. Relief organizations have also expanded nutrition programs, including activities that train community volunteers to help screen and refer malnourished children to health centers.

Despite clear progress, the global emergency response is still not meeting all of the widespread needs due to the scale of the crisis and the persistent insecurity that thwarts humanitarian operations. Faced with threats of ambushes, suicide attacks, gender-based violence and improvised explosive devices, our partners are bravely putting themselves in danger to deliver aid to those who need it most. They must be allowed to continue their important work without fear of violence. As we scale up our humanitarian response to this crisis, we must work with the Government of Nigeria and the governments around the Lake Chad Basin to do more to open up access to the communities that have been most impacted by the fight against Boko Haram.

#### HORN OF AFRICA DROUGHT AND POTENTIAL SOMALIA FAMINE

The Horn of Africa is facing increasingly severe drought conditions that are quickly exceeding many people's ability to cope. The scope of these conditions are so great that relief agencies estimate that up to 15 million people in Somalia, Ethiopia, and Kenya are facing food and water shortages.

The U.S. government is most concerned about Somalia, where decades of conflict have compounded the effects of drought. Six years ago, nearly 260,000 Somalis died in a famine triggered by the Horn of Africa's worst drought in 60 years—half of them children under five.

Today, experts are warning that famine is again possible in the coming months if drought conditions persist, purchasing power continues to decline, and insecurity prevents relief actors from reaching populations in need. An estimated 6.2 million people—more than half of Somalia's total population—currently require urgent humanitarian assistance.

Against this backdrop, it is important to recognize there are important differences between the region's 2011 food security crisis and now. Today, host governments—primarily Ethiopia and Kenya—are actively coordinating their national response efforts, with international support now required primarily to finance the scale of the government-led responses. Families are now more resilient and better able to cope with the effects of the drought. Humanitarian actors have greater access to vulnerable communities.

This is thanks in part to the long-term investment the U.S. government has made in East Africa to help households, communities, and countries become more resilient to droughts and extreme weather shocks through programs that expand economic opportunities, strengthen natural resource and drought cycle management, and improve health and human capital. A 2012 study by the UK's Department for International Development (DFID) in Kenya and Ethiopia estimated that, over a 10-year period with two large droughts, every \$1 invested in resilience would result in \$2.90 in economic benefits consisting of reduced humanitarian spending, avoided asset losses, and increased development benefits.

Nonetheless, multiple consecutive years of severe drought have overwhelmed many communities' local response capacity and ability to cope. Most significantly in Somalia, preventing famine now requires an immediate, rapid scale-up of international assistance.

Our investments are aligned with country-led efforts such as the Government of Kenya's Ending Drought Emergencies initiative and Ethiopia's Productive Safety Net Programme. We are already seeing dividends, including in the way these governments are proactively responding to and managing the current drought.

We are also ramping up support to host governments' drought-relief efforts by utilizing existing development resources to complement emergency assistance. In addition to providing immediate food assistance, malnutrition treatments, and water, sanitation, and hygiene support, we have modified long-term development activities and injected additional resources to further mitigate the drought's impacts.

I plan on traveling to the region, including Somalia, in the coming weeks to better understand the situation so that we are in a stronger position to respond should the crisis worsen.

#### YEMEN

Further, the U.S. is gravely concerned about the risk of famine in Yemen, where the scale of food insecurity is staggering. More than seventeen million people—an astounding 60 percent of the country's population—are food insecure, including

seven million people who are unable to survive without food assistance. This makes Yemen the largest food security emergency in the world.

The primary driver of this food crisis is the ongoing conflict that broke out in March 2015. Commercial trade has also been hampered by the fighting, which is particularly devastating in a country that imports 90 percent of its food and most of its fuel and medicine. The food that does make it to markets continues to be increasingly expensive, with some foods doubling in price, as supplies dwindle. For one of the poorest countries, these price increases dramatically affect people's ability to buy food and are further exacerbating the food security situation.

Two years of conflict has disrupted more than Yemen's food supply. Two million people have been forced to flee from their homes and nearly 70 percent of the country is in need of humanitarian assistance. The ongoing fighting makes it that much harder for Yemenis to find good health care, safe drinking water, and adequate nutrition. To reach people in need, our humanitarian partners are navigating active conflict, checkpoints and other access constraints, bureaucratic impediments, and heavily damaged infrastructure. Together, this increases the risk for malnutrition—particularly for children. Currently, the U.N. estimates that more than 460,000 children are severely malnourished.

Despite these obstacles, USAID and our partners are able to reach millions of people with life-saving aid, and USAID continues to mount a robust humanitarian response. Last month, USAID partner WFP reached nearly five million people with emergency food assistance. Our programs provide food vouchers and nutrition services. Mobile health clinics bring much-needed emergency medical services in a time when nearly 15 million people lack access to basic health care. We are also providing hygiene kits, safe drinking water, and improved access to sanitation services to fight malnutrition and stave off disease. For children especially, the toll of conflict can have lasting effects. Our mobile protection teams provide treatment to children throughout the country.

There is no doubt that our humanitarian programs are saving lives. According to the Famine Early Warning Systems Network, without the large-scale, international humanitarian assistance currently being provided to partners in country, the food security situation would be significantly worse across Yemen.

#### SYRIA

Now entering its seventh year, the Syrian conflict is the largest and most complex humanitarian emergency of our time, driving record levels of displaced persons. One in five people displaced globally is Syrian. The emergence of the Islamic State in Iraq and al-Sham (ISIS) exacerbated an already protracted crisis in Syria, where the Assad regime has waged an unrelenting campaign of bloodshed against its own people for over six years.

Inside Syria alone, more than 80 percent of the population—or 13.5 million people—need humanitarian assistance. According to the U.N., roughly seven million people are unable to meet basic food needs, and one in three children are out of school, risking a lost generation of talent, innovation, and entrepreneurship.

The United States has been working to help Syrians and the communities that host them since the crisis began. There are approximately 4.8 million Syrian refugees in neighboring countries, placing incredible strain on our Arab, Turkish, and European allies and partners. The United States has provided nearly \$6 billion to date, in addition to development funding for Syria's neighbors.

At great personal risk, our heroic partners are doing everything possible to meet the immediate needs of Syrians across borders and conflict lines—reaching millions of people across all 14 governorates of Syria.

USAID is working through its partners to provide monthly food assistance to approximately five million Syrians, including four million beneficiaries inside Syria and one million refugees in Egypt, Iraq, Jordan, Lebanon, and Turkey.

In times of crisis, shelter and safe drinking water are critical to survival. In fiscal year 2016, USAID improved water and sanitation for more than two million people across Syria. During the winter months, we provided blankets, plastic sheeting, and other supplies to help families brave the cold. In the midst of daily barrel bombs, more than five million patients were treated at nearly 400 U.S.-supported medical facilities across Syria over the past two years. We're also supporting protection programs to help prevent gender-based violence, reunify families, and provide psychosocial support to children who have witnessed the horrors of war.

Our partners continue to face significant security and access challenges that make our life-saving operations more dangerous and complex. One of our longest-standing partners in Syria, the White Helmets, has lost more than 140 of its volunteers since they began emergency search and rescue operations across the country. Syria also

remains one of the most dangerous environments for aid workers to do their jobs. Despite these challenges, we continue to do everything possible to help Syria's most vulnerable people.

#### IRAQ

Bordering Syria, the humanitarian crisis in Iraq is one of the largest and most volatile in the world, Iraq continues to face challenges in its fight against ISIS, most recently with the ongoing Iraqi-led campaign to retake the city of Mosul. As of March 19, more than 283,000 people had fled the city and surrounding areas, and aid groups are anticipating even more displacement as the front lines shift toward more densely populated residential areas.

Iraq is one of the fastest growing displacement crises in the world, with more than three million people forced from their homes and 11 million in need of assistance—almost one-third of the country's population. WFP estimates that at least 2.4 million people in Iraq require food assistance. Civilians are getting caught in the crossfire, and trauma casualty rates are high, especially in Mosul, where more than 750 people have been treated for conflict-related injuries within a two week period.

Working alongside the Government of Iraq, USAID has provided more than three million internally displaced Iraqis with critical relief commodities, safe drinking water, improved hygiene, sanitation interventions, and emergency shelter materials. Our partner WFP reaches 1.4 million Iraqis with food assistance every month. To help people caught in the violence, USAID is supporting 17 mobile medical clinics, as well as the first fully equipped surgical trauma hospital near the Mosul frontlines. We're also supporting psychosocial programs to help survivors of gender-based violence and families fleeing the brutality of ISIS.

In addition to responding to urgent humanitarian needs, USAID's disaster experts have been preparing for future disasters by closely monitoring the Mosul Dam, which faces a serious and unprecedented risk of failure with very little warning, putting millions of Iraqi lives at risk. Since November 2015, USAID has been working with the Iraqi government on the development and installation of an early warning and national notification system to help at-risk communities get out of harm's way. We've also supported trainings and public awareness campaigns to raise awareness of the risks of a dam breach.

#### CROSSCUTTING & INSTITUTIONAL CHALLENGES

Throughout the hotspots highlighted, several concerning themes emerge. Protracted, complex crises are taking up increasing amounts of resources, causing unprecedented population movements, and presenting unique challenges, including to U.S. national security.

To address these challenges, we are adapting to increasingly complex environments, and finding ways to provide assistance ever more efficiently and safely, in order to save more lives. USAID is continually seeking ways to make our dollars stretch further, to reach the most people with the assistance they urgently need. This includes everything from providing newly displaced families in Syria with smaller, more portable food packages to using geolocation technology to track assistance all the way to the beneficiary; from introducing retinal scans to verify the right assistance is going to the right person, to making sure our internal operations—including staffing, oversight and implementation—are the best they can be.

We have also worked with our international partners to identify strategic opportunities to make global humanitarian assistance more effective and efficient, including prioritizing needs and reducing duplication and costs. This will make every dollar the U.S. provides work even harder and help more people.

USAID also seeks to prevent and mitigate the impact of conflict and political instability in the recognition that prevention is equally important in addressing the causes of humanitarian crisis and more cost-effective in the long run. These efforts include continuing to improve coordination within the U.S. government, for example, to implement development programs that work with host governments and local communities, in partnership with other donors and the private sector, to build resilience, to support reconciliation, to strengthen responsive governance, and to support peaceful, democratic transitions of power.

What we cannot do is provide a humanitarian solution to a political problem, and we must work in concert with our colleagues at the Department of State, our partners around the world, and the international community to continue to press for cessations of hostilities and enduring political solutions that bring conflicts to an end. Only then can we move away from the dire human cost of these conflicts and towards prosperity and stability.

Some donors have begun increasing their contributions to address the growing humanitarian needs, but much more can and must be brought to bear. I recently traveled to donor conferences in Oslo and London, where the United States again urged other countries to step up. Further, our commitments to humanitarian efforts also enable us to push for greater transparency and improved efficiencies in the international system, including in the U.N. Agencies. Having a seat at the table lets us influence the direction of a response, and hold others accountable for the efficient use of resources.

USAID estimates that in FY 17 over half of our humanitarian funding will be allocated towards the six major emergencies alone. And as the U.S. government's lead in international disaster response, we must also expect the unexpected, whether from rapid onset natural disasters, disease outbreaks or greater suffering from expanding wars.

We remain committed to providing humanitarian assistance around the world as both a moral imperative and as a direct benefit to the well-being of the United States. As provided in the President's Budget Blueprint, the FY 18 Budget will allow for significant funding of humanitarian assistance. We do expect that we would focus resources on the highest priority areas and continue our efforts to make humanitarian assistance more efficient and effective, while also asking the rest of the world to do more.

I thank you for your time, and look forward to answering your questions.

The CHAIRMAN. Thank you very much.

We have a constant tension, if you will, between the short-term emergencies that are so important and affecting so many people and longer term issues. How do USAID and other donor nations manage the evolution between short-term emergency interventions with long-term development needs for communities displaced for years, like we are seeing right now?

Mr. GOTTLIEB. As you pointed out, Senator, we never fully reach the maximum support for all appeals, and that has meant that we have always made tradeoffs in how we approach different emergencies.

I do think, over time, what we have managed to do is draw a much tighter linkage between our emergency programs and our development programs, and there is no better place to look right now, I think, than in Kenya and Ethiopia. Both countries recognized about 5 years ago that they needed to do something about drought. And so during that particular drought in 2011–2012, we began to work together to draw those programs together to make sure that our development programs were located where we were spending the bulk of our humanitarian assistance.

We have spent billions of dollars in those countries to address drought. Now we have moved much of our development program into that area to support those communities so that they are better equipped to deal with the droughts that will come. The droughts will come, but we hope not the emergency side of things.

And I will say, in support of those countries, the Kenyans themselves have put up almost \$1.6 billion of their own funding toward this. So I think we are beginning to get a grip in those countries of repeated droughts.

In conflict areas, of course, it is much more difficult because while we had a development program in Yemen for many years, we no longer have that program there because of the conflict and the inability to really stay for the long-term in communities.

So I think these crises, as they abate, it will be very important for us to bring the kinds of development programs that target those communities and understand the problems so that, should we have

another crisis, whether it is drought or conflict, those communities are better able to cope.

The CHAIRMAN. And I guess the governance issues are keeping us in these other conflict areas from being able to do what you just said, correct?

Mr. GOTTLIEB. Yes.

The CHAIRMAN. Let me digress for a moment. You know, look, this appeal that is going out and the lack of response is disturbing. At the end of the day, the United States will provide one-third of the food assistance around the world.

I mean, I am proud of us for doing that, and I know we will continue to do that. At the same time, it is still not meeting all of the needs. And we look at countries like China and others who are just doing a pittance—a pittance—as it relates to these kinds of issues.

We have had discussions like this around NATO. All of us strongly support NATO, and at the same time, we want our partners to step up.

We strongly support helping people with famine and disaster like this. Our heart goes out to these people, knowing they could be our neighbors, and yet they are perishing by the thousands, in some cases daily.

What is it we can do to build support from other countries, other well-developed countries, to support this type of effort when it is needed?

Mr. GOTTLIEB. One of the things that we have done over the years is we have supported the number of donor groups to draw in other countries to the work. Right now, actually, I am the chair of the OCHA donor support group, the Coordinating Office for Humanitarian Assistance in the U.N.

And one of the things that we have done over the last several years is we have reached out to numerous donors, whether it is the South Koreans, whether it is the Turks, the UAE, Qatar. And those groups, when we first started the group some years ago, were not participants. They are participants now.

We endeavor to bring more countries in. I will leave next week and go talk to the Saudis about additional assistance that they can bring.

We have had assistance from many countries around the world, but what we are trying to do is to bring that into a system that is more systematic, that is more coordinated.

And also, you are right that we believe that there are other donors out there that can do much more to support the systems that we support.

The CHAIRMAN. And just briefly, one of the pet issues for me is we have each year, it is unfortunate, but the ag community continues to handle the food program in the manner they do. We know there is no way, for instance, to get U.S. agricultural products into places like Syria. It is impossible.

And yet, the ag community, and I have talked to many of the ag constituents, they do not even know this is taking place and do not care. It does not help them in any way. It is a small pittance of what they sell each year.

But the ag community, for some reason, wants to hold onto this commodities program as it is, and that means that, between them



and the maritime industry, which is a small group of folks with vessels that are of no use whatsoever to our country, of no use—they are extorting us. They are extorting us.

So we have the ag community, which is not even aware that these things are existing. It is actually just taking place here in Washington. People who are the ag community itself do not care about this. As a matter of fact, I think they are embarrassed by this.

Then we have the maritime industry that is extorting us over shipping these goods in the way they are. We could feed 4 million to 6 million more people each year if that were not the case. Is that correct?

Mr. GOTTLIEB. You are correct in this. We appreciate the flexibility that has been given to us by this committee and Appropriations. We are now able to do, you know yourself, we are able to do a combination of food commodities and cash.

There are times when we need commodities because we cannot even access them out there. And, as you know, we still ship American commodities. We just did it for Somalia, two large tranches recently, 37,000 tons. And because of our good use of early warning, we are able to plan ahead and move those commodities.

At the same time, our use of cash, vouchers, other things, has increased greatly with your support, and it has enabled us to do a lot more. And we think that we could feed another, with additional flexibility, we could feed another 5 million people with the budget we have.

The CHAIRMAN. Before I turn to the ranking member, we did some great things last year, thanks to this entire committee, on a bipartisan basis. But to know that legislation, which does not cost the American people one penny, could be passed to feed 5 million more people a day, and we are sitting here with 70 million people starving today, to me, is unbelievable.

And I just hope that, somehow, we will overcome the special interests here in our country that really are not even representing the entire industries that they supposedly represent. I hope somehow or another we will overcome that so that we ourselves can pass simple legislation to allow 5 million more people each year to have food with the same amount of money.

But anyway, thank you, and I will turn to the ranking member.

Senator CARDIN. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

As has been pointed out, this is a manmade problem, so we need to work on a dual track. We need to work on the root causes, and that, to me, is a critically important part of the State Department's function. It is not the subject of today's hearing, but it is very much involved. If we want to save the needs for humanitarian assistance, let's deal with the root causes. And we should be putting more resources into governance.

And I just do not know how, if the President's budget were to become real, how America would be responding to that need.

The other area is how you deal with the humanitarian crisis. And here, U.S. leadership is critically important.

So, Mr. Gottlieb, let me ask you first, the United Kingdom is hosting the ministerial meeting in May for Somalia, to deal with

the crisis. Now, ministerial meetings are normally attended by the Foreign Minister or Secretary of State.

Can you tell us what role the United States will play in the UK ministerial meeting and what commitments we are prepared to make in regards to Somalia?

Mr. GOTTLIEB. Senator, it is hard for me to speak for where the State Department or where the Secretary might be for that particular meeting. But what I can tell you is, and I think perhaps what the committee is concerned about is, how we are responding to what is happening in Somalia.

Senator CARDIN. No, I am interested in what is happening this May in the UK and where the United States is going to be at that meeting in the UK.

Mr. GOTTLIEB. Right. And what I can tell you before I talk a little bit about that is that, just recently, we held another meeting in the UK, and this was on the operational side for people like me and others at my level who looked at the practical side of how we can move our money to Somalia.

So what happened in that meeting was donors sat around the table and said what they were going to commit up to now. What I heard at that meeting was donors committing around \$500 million. We ourselves, through the end of April, we will have moved \$225 million of our own funding to Somalia for just 2017.

Senator CARDIN. Do you believe the UK meeting is important or not?

Mr. GOTTLIEB. I think it is important.

Senator CARDIN. Are we going to be represented?

Mr. GOTTLIEB. Yes, we will be, I am sure.

Senator CARDIN. Will the Secretary be there or you do not know that?

Mr. GOTTLIEB. I cannot speak to who will represent us.

Senator CARDIN. Do you know what the goal is of this meeting? It is coming up.

Mr. GOTTLIEB. The goal will be, I think, to draw more donors into responding to the situation in Somalia.

Senator CARDIN. Will the U.S. be prepared to be part of that increased commitment to Somalia?

Mr. GOTTLIEB. Certainly, that will be a discussion that we will have up until then. As I said, what we have budgeted so far for this year, we will have moved by the end of April.

Senator CARDIN. I know you are in a tough position on answering these questions, and I appreciate that, but we have responsibility in Congress. And we appreciate the UK's leadership in calling this ministerial meeting for Somalia, which normally means that we would have the foreign ministers present, and from what we understand, our foreign minister will not be present.

Mr. GOTTLIEB. I cannot speak to that, Senator. I do not know if he will or will not.

Senator CARDIN. Okay. Let me get to the budget for one moment, as to whether you have adequate resources to deal with the need.

I do not know whether the President's budget—and I appreciate what Chairman Corker is saying. I do not believe we will pass the President's budget. I think Democrats and Republicans will reject

the deep cuts that have been suggested in the State Department, because we recognize the importance of our programs.

But I am trying to get how you are going to operate. And Senator Corker is correct. Last year, with Senator Corker's leadership and Senator Casey's leadership, and others, we were able to pass the Global Food Security Act, which deals with the Feed the Future initiative.

But the President's budget cuts the funding in that program, I do not know the exact number, but I am told it could be as high as 36 percent, maybe 28 percent. We know it is a cut.

And I just want to know, do you have too much resources there for Feed the Future that you think it is right for us to reduce our share in the Feed the Future program?

Mr. GOTTLIEB. I am not currently overseeing Feed the Future. I was there at the beginning of it. I can say we really appreciate that the Global Food Security Act was passed.

I do not know where that budget is going to end up. I mean, what I can say—

Senator CARDIN. Do we have too much money in that program? What is your observation?

Mr. GOTTLIEB. There was a very substantial sum that was given to Feed the Future in the beginning. Like with many programs, we will look at whatever that budget is and we would adjust to whatever that budget is.

Senator CARDIN. You are here before this committee. I am asking your view on this.

We know also that the administration wants to prioritize for counterterrorism. We know that many, many, many of the countries receiving Feed the Future funds would not fall into that category. So their cut could be even deeper than 36 percent.

I am trying to get your assessment as to whether the U.S. role here in Feed the Future, which has bipartisan support, whether the funds need to be increased or not.

Mr. GOTTLIEB. Senator, it is hard for me to assess from my perch, where I am, as to what Feed the Future or what the Bureau for Food Security needs in its budget. It is hard for me to say what they need or how they can adjust their budgets.

I talk to my colleagues, certainly—

Senator CARDIN. So you do not think that is an important part of Democracy, Conflict, and Humanitarian Assistance?

Mr. GOTTLIEB. I do think the programs are vitally important. I was there to help set them up. And I do not know. I am not there now, so it is hard for me to say how they have adjusted the programs.

I am not saying they are not important. I am just saying it is hard for me to answer.

Senator CARDIN. You are losing at least my—I just have to say, the chairman is usually very direct. I am going to be direct.

You play a very important role, and I expect, when you testify before our committee, you will give us your views. And I find it somewhat shocking that you cannot answer a simple question about whether the United States' Feed the Future program is important. And your role and the resources we are making available, the number of countries, the type of cuts that are being suggested,

what impact that would have your role. I find that very disappointing.

Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

The CHAIRMAN. Okay, if I could, I would say that, because of concerns that we all have about the budget and our strong support for things like Feed the Future and PEPFAR and global efforts like that, we have arranged next week at 11:30, all of us, to have the opportunity—I hope everyone will come—to meet with Tillerson.

It is next Thursday, right?

Senator CARDIN. It is tomorrow.

The CHAIRMAN. Okay, tomorrow.

So to Mr. Gottlieb, I am sure that Senator Cardin and others will have the opportunity to ask these questions very directly tomorrow. I have let Secretary Tillerson know there is a lot of concern about the budget issues. I know he wants to talk a little bit about his trip to Asia but also concerns about Russia and that he should be prepared to answer those questions.

But just for what it is worth to committee members, because of the known concerns about the President's budget, I asked that this meeting be set up and to give us all an opportunity to see where the Secretary of State actually is on these issues. And I think it will give us a good sense of where we go from there.

So I just want to make people aware that have not seen their emails that that is occurring tomorrow. We are going to have an opportunity to be very direct and ask questions that we care about.

Senator CARDIN. And I appreciate that. And, obviously, the Secretary of State is the critically important person in regards to the State Department, and I am looking forward to that.

I would just hope that when we have witnesses that come before our committee, that they are prepared to testify as to their views and are not as restricted as I just heard this reply.

The CHAIRMAN. And if I could, I know we all know this. Feed the Future is more of an economic development program than it is an issue relative to the thing today, but still important, and I appreciate your emphasizing that issue.

Todd Young?

Senator YOUNG. Thank you, Chairman, Ranking Member.

I want to thank you for your service, Mr. Gottlieb. I believe in the mission of USAID, and I want to continue to be a fulsome supporter of that mission. But for me to advocate on behalf of USAID, I need to ensure that you are the best possible steward of resources so that I can explain that support to my constituents.

The general accountability office lists 53 recommendations and 12 priority recommendations that have not yet been implemented or fully implemented by USAID, and some of these open recommendations go back to the year 2013.

Mr. Gottlieb, do you agree that it is important that this committee have full visibility on the status of these open recommendations? Yes or no, hopefully.

Mr. GOTTLIEB. Yes.

Senator YOUNG. Okay. Well, I agree. That is why I, along with Senators Menendez, Coons, Rubio, introduced legislation, S. 418, the Department of State and United States Agency for International Development Accountability Act of 2017.

Do you commit to providing to my office and this committee without delay a detailed, written, unclassified update regarding the status of all open USAID recommendations from GAO?

Mr. GOTTLIEB. Yes.

Senator YOUNG. Okay, thank you. And for any recommendation USAID has decided to adopt, please provide a timeline. Is that okay?

Mr. GOTTLIEB. Yes.

Senator YOUNG. Okay. And for any recommendation USAID decides not to adopt, could you provide a full justification for that in great detail?

Mr. GOTTLIEB. We will.

Senator YOUNG. All right. Thank you.

I would like to turn to the issue of resilience. I gather it has already been invoked some here today.

In her prepared statement, Ms. Lindborg, who we will hear from on the next panel, cited Amartya Sen's book, *Development as Freedom*, and the assertion that no famine has ever taken place in the history of the world in a functioning democracy because democratic governments "have to win elections and face public criticism, and have strong incentive to undertake measures to avert famines and other catastrophes."

We have discussed, again, the principle of resilience.

Mr. Gottlieb, if Sen's assertion is correct, is not the ultimate resilience measure a functioning democracy?

Mr. GOTTLIEB. Certainly, Sen's book is a remarkable book, and he has done a fantastic job of pointing out the importance of having stable government. I think the programs—the crises we look at now are mostly manmade.

We do have, I think, when we look at Ethiopia and Kenya, we still have crises. We do not have famine yet, which is good because there is more stability there. So it sort of gives proof, I think, to some of Sen's work, that, with stability, you can avoid famine.

I think for us, right now, we would wish that there would be better governance in the places in which we are working. But unfortunately, we do not have that.

Senator YOUNG. Well, as one of your core tasks, USAID lists promoting democracy, and you cited a couple examples around the world where, to varying degrees, we have seen some success.

How do you measure success with respect to advancing that aim of promoting democracy?

Mr. GOTTLIEB. Oftentimes, we would measure it through the transparency, transparency lens, how honest and forthright is government in indicating to its population what it does; transparency in the way it budgets; transparency in the way that its armed forces or police treat people; in the way that, like in our case, transparency in how they spend their money. And I think a lot of those things—and how they conduct their elections is another area of transparency.

So when I look at our democracy programs, often, many of those programs are targeted exactly at those things.

Senator YOUNG. That makes some sense. Transparency leads to trust. Trust is an essential mortar of social and political capital that can lead to stable democratic governance.

If you have any addendum to that answer, I would certainly welcome it.

Lastly, in the little bit of remaining time here, I just want to note the importance of private sector development. Eight-four percent of all donors' total economic engagement with the developing world is through private financial flows.

Now, it is essential that we maintain our international affairs budget, from this Senator's standpoint. But we need to understand and facilitate legitimate private sector development. This too is one of the core tasks of USAID, fostering private sector development.

Perhaps you could very briefly speak to how you measure USAID's success in this area? And if there are particular statutory, regulatory, or other obstacles that exist to legitimate private sector development, I would certainly welcome those.

Mr. GOTTLIEB. What I can say is I think one of the things we have done in USAID, particularly over the last several years, is to reach out strongly to the private sector.

I will go back to, actually, Feed the Future, the Bureau for Food Security. One of the things that we did in that bureau was we set up a whole section just to deal with the private sector. We realized that to develop agriculture, we needed to link strongly with the private sector. So over the last several years, several very I think important partnerships have been developed to have private business come into agriculture.

But there are also other things. Like, for instance, I spent the last couple years in Pakistan. We had a number of programs where we used OPIC and we used the private sector to foster energy programs. We do it all over Africa now.

I think USAID as an agency is extremely aware of the importance of finding partnerships, because, as you point out, 50 years ago, the amount of money that flowed from official sources was 80 percent. Now it is completely the opposite.

Senator YOUNG. Out of respect for the chairman, I am going to pass this back to him. If there are any barriers to advancing that core task, kindly submit those to me.

Thank you.

The CHAIRMAN. Thank you so much.

Senator Shaheen?

Senator SHAHEEN. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Mr. Gottlieb, thank you for being here this morning and for your many years of service to USAID. I have to say I share the concerns that are being raised about the budget outline that we have seen from the administration, what the impact on our aid programs would be, especially at a time when we know there is so much humanitarian need in the world, especially in the four countries we are talking about today.

And I appreciate very much the chair's and ranking member's comments about the bipartisan support that has existed on this committee for humanitarian efforts, and that we expect that the budget, as it has been presented, is probably not the budget that will go through Congress. I share those sentiments.

I do believe, as David Miliband said last week, that American leadership in the world on these efforts is absolutely critical, if we

are going to get other countries to ante up what they need to do in order to contribute.

I would also like to point out that one of the challenges that is contributing to what we are seeing in so much of sub-Saharan Africa is climate change, that the droughts that are being affected are being affected because of our changing climate. And for us to ignore the scientific information that is available and suggest that we should not participate in addressing that with the rest of the world I think is just naive and very shortsighted.

So let me ask you, because I appreciate that you do not want to respond on the budget issues, but let me ask about what is happening with women's health, because you referred to that, the challenges that women are facing in these humanitarian crises.

And we know that pregnancy-related deaths and instances of sexual violence soar in times of upheaval, that in 2015, the U.N. estimated that 61 percent of maternal deaths took place in humanitarian crises and fragile settings where health services were not available to women.

In South Sudan, for example, a woman's risk of dying from pregnancy-related causes is about one in eight compared to the United States where it is one in 3,500.

So what is USAID doing to ensure that the needs of women in these crises are being met?

Mr. GOTTLIEB. Thank you, Senator.

Just 2 weeks ago, I was in Maiduguri, Northern Nigeria, and I visited a maternity ward in one of the camps in that city. I was incredibly impressed. I mean, it was a very simple facility, but I was incredibly impressed by the effort that the women made, the nurses and attendants.

They recognize the challenges for those women. Many of those women probably have a better ward there in that camp than they would have out in their village.

Nevertheless, in all, whether it is in Maiduguri or whether it is in South Sudan or wherever we are, women's health is one of the primary things we look at. We understand what is happening with women in these conflicts. The incidents of rape, I certainly got that in very graphic detail when I was in Maiduguri. And that has become an important element, not just what we do on the health side but what we do in trying to deal with the effects of that gender-based violence.

You know, I have seen the clinics where women can get counseling, where there is special medical attention paid to the problems they have had, and we have seen those problems over the years. Many years ago, when I worked in eastern Congo, it was the same, issues of fistula and that kind of thing.

So we have become, I think, acutely aware of it and made it a major part of what we fund in every humanitarian program.

Senator SHAHEEN. So are we working with the U.N. Population Fund and the World Food Program and other U.N. Agencies and NGOs who are working to address these issues?

Mr. GOTTLIEB. Yes. We work with UNFPA. We work with the World Food Program. We work with UNICEF, in particular, and a host of NGOs. You heard from David Miliband. In fact, the clinic in Maiduguri was by IRC. So a host of groups, yes.

Senator SHAHEEN. Thank you. And can you talk about, if there are budget cuts, whether some of these programs that are particularly targeted to women and girls would be more adversely affected?

Mr. GOTTLIEB. It is hard to say how they would be affected. For us, this is a core part of what we do. As I mentioned earlier, we have to look at priorities. And feeding people and bringing people health and water, sanitation, has been the core of our programs.

So my own sense is that we would continue to prioritize the health of women and girls in conflict.

Senator SHAHEEN. Thank you.

Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

The CHAIRMAN. Thank you.

Senator Merkley?

Senator MERKLEY. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

And I appreciate your testimony. Can you elaborate a little bit on the Food for Peace program, whether that is in the target sites of the administration? And if so, what your concerns might be or how that might impact the ability to assist folks in distress around the world?

Mr. GOTTLIEB. Thank you, Senator.

What I have seen in what is termed the skinny budget, the language is that humanitarian assistance would be largely maintained. So from that language, I am hopeful that we will maintain the robust humanitarian assistance that the United States has provided over the last many years, and that will allow us to remain in a leadership position, so that gives me hope.

Senator MERKLEY. Okay. And there have been various conversations about how to make that aid more effective, give it more flexibility, one of which has been a proposal some years back to spend up to a certain percent of the funds either locally or on food vouchers or on cash transfers that would not necessarily follow the well-established model of buying American food and shipping it overseas.

Is this something that you would advocate for, more flexibility in this program?

Mr. GOTTLIEB. We have appreciated the flexibility we have gotten in recent years to be able to use cash to reach people. It has allowed us to buy locally, and it has allowed us to develop, as you mentioned, these voucher programs where we can move money electronically to people. We can put it on a debit card. We can make it a lot easier for people to obtain food.

And by buying locally, we are able to save considerable money. I will say this, that there are times when having the ability to buy food from the United States and ship it is advantageous because sometimes local prices are so high that we can do better by buying here and shipping it, actually.

Senator MERKLEY. How much flexibility have you had in recent years? What percent of Food for Peace has been in the form of more flexible onsite vouchers, cash transfers, or purchases?

Mr. GOTTLIEB. I think it is around 50/50 right now.

Senator MERKLEY. Really?

Mr. GOTTLIEB. Yes.



Senator MERKLEY. Okay. That surprises me. I did not think it was that high.

One of the other issues has been the issue of monetization, and there is a bit of a dilemma here. When food is distributed for free, it can undermine the success of local farmers whose prices then plummet. On the other hand, when it is sold, if it is sold, it can be inaccessible to the poorest who need the help the most.

What are your insights on that challenge?

Mr. GOTTLIEB. I think, first, when we ship food into a country, one of the analyses we have to do is, what is the economic impact of bringing that food in? And so I think we are very cautious about trying not to disrupt local markets. Usually, we are bringing food in because there are inadequate amounts of food on the market, so we feel like we are not impacting prices.

In terms of the monetization, part of that is to sell the food into the market to raise funds so that the implementing partners can then do a project that may or may not be a food security project. It could be a health project. It could be any other kind of project.

But usually, if we are going to do that, we also have to do the market analysis to make sure that we are not disrupting those local markets.

Senator MERKLEY. And to make sure that food gets to those who may have no money to be able to purchase food.

Some organizations have sworn off doing monetization. What is their thinking? And what is the opposing argument?

Mr. GOTTLIEB. I think the opposing argument is that we can use monetization to raise funds to do other kinds of development programming that may complement, may help those who are food insecure.

Senator MERKLEY. Under the existing program, is this completely at the discretion of the implementing organization?

Mr. GOTTLIEB. Do you mean in terms of the project they do?

Senator MERKLEY. Yes, in terms of monetization?

Mr. GOTTLIEB. It would be a discussion with our missions in the field and with our folks back here at Food for Peace.

Senator MERKLEY. Thank you.

The CHAIRMAN. Thank you.

I share Senator Shaheen's respect for your service, and I appreciate you coming up. I know you have received somewhat of a hard time for not answering questions. I will say that you might go back to the State Department—and we welcome nominations at any time and would be glad to process them and maybe you are up for one of these posts. That would be great.

But we do thank you for filling in as acting person in this time of tremendous need around the world. I think it is hard for most Americans to get a grip on the fact that 70 million people today are starving. We have a great country, and we have been generous, and we help lead the world in those efforts, and I think you know that we want to continue to do so.

I know the President's budget has been certainly discussed today. I will say that in the decade that I have been here, I have never seen a President's budget become law, and we all have a lot of work to do over the course of the next several months to make sure that we maintain our leadership.

But at the same time, even with all that we do and the great citizens of our country do to help others, the need is still not being met. I hope, to a degree, this hearing will raise that issue, and I hope that other countries will join us.

And, again, the conflicts, what is unusual about what is happening right now is the fact that it is being generated in these four areas because of conflict. That is a very unusual situation, a very unstable world, and brings even greater importance to the bipartisanship that we have on this committee in helping to resolve those.

So thank you so much for coming, and we will move to the next panel.

Mr. GOTTLIEB. Thank you.

The CHAIRMAN. Our first witness today on the second panel is the Honorable Nancy Lindborg, who we all know well. She is president of the United States Institute of Peace. Ms. Lindborg previously managed the Bureau of Democracy, Conflict, and Humanitarian Assistance from 2010 through 2015. Prior to that, she was president of Mercy Corps for 14 years.

We thank you and appreciate your very distinguished career. Thank you so much.

Our second witness is Mr. Yves Daccord. Did I pronounce that right, sir?

Mr. DACCORD. Yes.

The CHAIRMAN. Thank you so much.

He is director general of the International Committee of the Red Cross.

Thank you for what you and your organization do.

Mr. Daccord is a former journalist who joined the ICRC in 1992, working in such places as Sudan, Yemen, and Georgia, eventually moving up the ranks of leadership until finally becoming the director general in 2010.

Thank you for your leadership, both of you, and for your testimony. I think you both know you can summarize in about 5 minutes, and all of our panelists look forward to questioning. Thank you so much.

Nancy, if you would begin?

**STATEMENT OF THE HON. NANCY LINDBORG, PRESIDENT,  
UNITED STATES INSTITUTE OF PEACE, WASHINGTON, DC**

Ms. LINDBORG. Thank you, Chairman Corker, Ranking Member Cardin, and members of the committee. I really appreciate the opportunity to be here with you today. And your focus and attention to these issues is more important than ever.

We have heard from your summations and Greg Gottlieb the depth of the issue. You have my full testimony, so let me use my time to summarize a few key points and recommendations. As we have covered, we have an urgent and very grave humanitarian threat with the potential of four concurrent famines and the prospect of 20 million people, disproportionately children, starving to death in the next 6 months. That is as if the entire State of Florida, all the people in Florida, were at risk of starvation. That is the urgent threat.

These four crises also represent a political and a security threat. Each crisis has a regional cascading effect disrupting markets and

economies of the countries around them. Millions of refugees are seeking safety and assistance across borders. They are straining infrastructures. They are disrupting markets and politically destabilizing the regions because of the numbers. And they join a historic number of 65 million refugees that are already straining the global humanitarian system and politically destabilizing our EU allies.

And just to give you a sense of scale, the 1.4 million people who have been displaced just from Nigeria's Borno State are only about 40 percent of those that have reached Europe by boat in 2015.

As we have discussed, famines are manmade. There are certainly natural disasters that intertwine with existing situations, but these are fundamentally manmade crises. And each of the four nations currently facing famine—Nigeria, Somalia, South Sudan, and Yemen—have distinct and complex issues, but they share important attributes.

Each Nation is characterized by weak governance at the national and local levels, ineffective institutions, high levels of corruption, periods of prolonged and intense armed conflict, a breakdown of domestic political order, and vast humanitarian needs with assistance often blocked either because of lack of infrastructure or government obstacles, which is to say that all these countries are mired in fragility. They lack the institutional capacity and the political legitimacy to withstand the shocks of conflict and natural disaster.

So what should we do? First and foremost, by the time famine is declared, it is already too late for many. Many of the deaths happen far before the famine declaration. We have already had the declaration, a famine in South Sudan. Three more are on the horizon.

We have to, urgently and quickly, lean in to this response now. U.S. Government and international donors need to respond quickly to the urgent needs to provide lifesaving assistance, and U.S. leadership is essential to catalyze other donors to give.

Our contributions will meet basic needs. We will also ensure others contribute, and responding to this extraordinary level of suffering is a reflection of who we are as Americans and will make the difference between life and death for millions.

Secondly, as you discussed with Greg Gottlieb, we need to build on the important progress that has already been made to make our aid smarter, more effective, and more efficient. There has been significant headway in building resilience, as we have seen in places like Kenya and Ethiopia, resilience to recurring climatic and natural disaster shocks. We need to sustain that effort with greater support for local actors, early action to early warning by bridging the gap between relief and development action, and looking at more innovative financing options.

We have made great progress. We need to continue it.

Ultimately, we will not be able to address these four famines or the other humanitarian crises with humanitarian responses alone. A decade ago, 80 percent of our humanitarian assistance, global assistance, went to victims of natural disasters. A decade later, that percentage has flipped, and 80 percent of global humanitarian assistance goes to victims of violent conflict.

We need to use all of our tools—humanitarian assistance, development assistance, diplomacy, and security—in a very strategic, selective, systemic, and sustained way to address the drivers of these grave humanitarian crises. Countries like Yemen, South Sudan, Somalia, and the northeast region of Nigeria have all been trapped in multiple cycles of conflict. So without addressing these deeper drivers, we can be assured that there will be additional needs of humanitarian assistance in the future.

Let me conclude by noting that yesterday, at the U.S. Institute of Peace, we hosted a conversation with Martti Ahtisaari, one of the great mediators and negotiators of his generation. He recounted his experiences of helping to resolve some of the protracted, complicated crises of his time, Angola, Namibia, Aceh. And he reminded us of two things: first, that these seemingly intractable conflicts are solvable; and, secondly, that he could not have accomplished anything without U.S. support.

These are generational issues, but they are not insolvable. They have been resolved, and they can be in the future, including the four crises before us today.

And as we like to say at the U.S. Institute of Peace, peace is possible.

Thank you.

[The prepared statement of Ms. Lindborg follows:]

#### THE PREPARED STATEMENT OF NANCY LINDBORG

##### INTRODUCTION

Chairman Corker, Ranking Member Cardin, and members of the Committee, thank you for the opportunity to testify before you today on the looming threat of four concurrent famines. Your continued attention and concern for these crises is more important than ever.

I testify before you today as the president of the United States Institute of Peace (USIP), although the views expressed here are my own. USIP was established by Congress more than 30 years ago as a bipartisan, national institute dedicated to the proposition that peace is possible, practical and essential to our national and global security. USIP works directly in conflict affected countries to provide partners with the practical tools, analysis, training and resources they need to prevent, manage and resolve violent conflict. We know there will always be conflict, and when it is managed well, conflict can actually be transformative. Only when it becomes violent does conflict become destructive, tearing apart communities and countries, creating regional and international security threats, and as we are talking about today, pushing millions of people into famine.

##### IMPLICATIONS OF FAMINE

The international community is faced today with the gut wrenching specter of four concurrent famines. An estimated 20 million people are already at risk of starving to death within the next six months in north-eastern Nigeria, Somalia, Yemen and South Sudan, where famine was declared just over a month ago. This is equivalent to the entire state of Florida at risk of starvation. According to U.N. authorities, \$4.4 billion in international humanitarian assistance is needed by July “to avert a catastrophe.”

It is important to underscore that as used today, “famine” is a highly technical designation based on specific metrics. It is not used lightly. In order for the United Nations to officially declare a famine, three important conditions must be met. Twenty percent of the population must have fewer than 2100 kilocalories of food available per day; more than thirty percent of children must be acutely malnourished; and two deaths per day in every 10,000 people or four deaths per day in every 10,000 children must be being caused by lack of food.

By the time these metrics are met, death is already pervasive. According to the U.N. Food and Agricultural Organization (FAO), nearly half of starvation deaths during the 2011–2012 Somali famine occurred before famine was declared. Children

under five years old made up the largest percentage of casualties, accounting for more than 29,000 deaths. For those children who survive, chances are very high that they have experienced severe malnutrition and will suffer irreversible harm to their cognitive and physical capabilities.

By the time the international community declares a famine, it is essentially issuing a declaration that a humanitarian disaster has already occurred.

Famine is rarely if ever caused by food shortages. In the 1980s, economist Amartya Sen challenged long held assumptions in *Democracy as Freedom* with the assertion that, “No famine has ever taken place in the history of the world in a functioning democracy,” arguing that democratic governments “have to win elections and face public criticism, and have strong incentive to undertake measures to avert famines and other catastrophes.”

Instead, famine occurs in fragile states that are vulnerable to natural disasters and highly prone to violent conflict. An estimated 1.2 billion people currently live in countries affected by violent conflict, poverty and increasingly violent extremism. Starvation has been used as a weapon of war in conflicts across time. Instances of armed groups seizing or killing livestock, destroying food stocks, dismantling markets and employing siege tactics span history, including in each of these four countries.

Twenty years ago, one of my great mentors, Ells Culver, described to me the horror of watching women and children literally crawl across the border from Ethiopia into Kenya to reach assistance during the Ethiopian famine of 1984, vowing he would dedicate his life to preventing that from happening again.

In 2011, when the worst drought in 60 years brought devastation once again to the Horn of Africa, it was only Somalia—a dysfunctional government locked in a protracted armed conflict with the terrorist group Al Shabaab, which controlled large swaths of territory and denied humanitarian access—that tipped into famine. I remember with terrible clarity the Saturday in July 2011, when I got a call from a colleague telling me that famine was being declared in Somalia. It was a gut wrenching moment, and I thought a lot about Ells.

I have worked in the humanitarian field for more than 20 years, and each passing year confirms for me the imperative of getting ahead of these crises and focusing on how to prevent, mitigate and resolve violent conflict, which is the distinct congressionally mandated mission of the U.S. Institute of Peace. Even as we respond with immediate help, we must urgently address the causes of these famines.

#### FAMINE AND CONFLICT

The four nations currently facing famine, Nigeria, Somalia, South Sudan and Yemen, are each distinct and complex in their own way, but they share important attributes. Each nation is characterized by:

- Weak governance at the national levels and/or local levels;
- Ineffective institutions;
- High levels of corruption;
- Periods of prolonged and intense armed conflict;
- Failing economies;
- A break down in domestic political order; and
- Difficult or blocked humanitarian access.

This is to say that all four countries are mired in states of fragility.

Last year, I partnered with former Deputy Secretary of State Bill Burns, president of the Carnegie Endowment for International Peace, and former Undersecretary of Defense for Policy at the Defense Department Michele Flournoy, CEO of the Center for a New American Security, to conduct an independent, non-partisan Senior Study Group on Fragility. Building on two decades of scholarship, the Fragility Study Group report characterized fragility as the absence or breakdown of a social contract between people and their government. Fragile states suffer from deficits of institutional capacity and political legitimacy that increase the risk of instability and violent conflict and sap the state of its resilience to disruptive shocks. Fragile states are highly correlated with violent conflict, violent extremism, extreme poverty and vulnerability to natural disasters, and the predations of other powers.

Somalia (1), South Sudan (2), Yemen (4) and Nigeria (13) are ranked among the most fragile states in the world according to the Fund for Peace 2016 Fragile States Index.

Meanwhile, the most recent Global Terrorism Index and Global Peace Index places these four countries among the most terror-affected and least peaceful na-

tions on earth. Each of these nations are contending with competing tribal, religious or clan-based identity politics while being wracked by violent conflict and terror.

#### NIGERIA

Despite the early optimism around the election of President Buhari and his renewed focus on defeating Boko Haram, this terrorist group continues to leverage the region's historic marginalization, chronic poverty and poor education system to gain new recruits from Adamawa, Borno and Yobe states in Northern Nigeria—the states at the center of Nigeria's looming famine. More than 2 million people have been displaced since 2012 by Boko Haram, leaving behind fallow land and fields devoid of cattle, closed markets and escalating food prices. With villages empty and fertile ground untended, Boko Haram has taken to stealing what few cattle and food remains. More than 5 million people are now in crisis, most of them children. The crisis is now becoming a regional crisis, with emergencies declared in Chad, Niger and Cameroon as well.

Humanitarian access, previously very difficult due to insecurity and government hurdles, is now dramatically scaled up, although with significant funding constraints.

#### SOMALIA

Despite heartening gains over the last five years, with recent peaceful elections delivering a new president, Somalia is once again suffering another round of destructive droughts. At the same time, Al Shabaab is again expanding its influence, undercutting fragile political progress. An estimated 363,000 children are currently malnourished and over 6 million people are in need of humanitarian assistance, the highest numbers since the 2011 famine. However, international assistance to the region faces many of the same challenges presented five years ago. There is significant concern that Al Shabaab could act as spoilers in any humanitarian intervention, potentially diverting aid or denying agencies access to effected populations.

#### YEMEN

Over the past 24 months, the insurgency in Yemen has escalated into a full-scale civil war, with Houthi and loyalist forces clashing while terrorist organizations like Al-Qaeda and ISIL feed on the conflict and sectarianism. The war and insurgency, which has killed 16,200 people since 2015, has pushed the Arabian Peninsula's poorest country to the brink of famine. I visited Yemen in 2012, when I first learned of the startling levels of nationwide stunting, and even then, an estimated 44% of the population was in need of humanitarian assistance. Now, two years into a nationwide conflict, the World Food Program estimates that 80% of the population is in urgent need of humanitarian assistance, while 14 million are estimated to be food insecure due to the conflict. Humanitarian access is constrained by poor security and a dismal level of funding, with only 7.4% requested funding raised to date.

#### SOUTH SUDAN

Using the metrics described above, the South Sudan Integrated Food Security Phase Classification (IPC) on February 20 declared a famine in two counties of Unity State, Leer and Mayendit. Insufficient data is limiting the ability to apply that declaration in other areas, but all indications are of famine or near famine conditions in a larger swath of the country. Some 4.8 million people—nearly one person in every three in South Sudan—are severely food insecure, and one in every five people in South Sudan have been forced to flee their homes since the civil war began three years ago. More than 440,000 South Sudanese have fled to Uganda, turning one grassland area into one of the world's largest refugee camps in just six months.

While South Sudan is not engaged in conflict with terrorist organizations, it is deeply divided and perilously close to descending into a second genocide. Despite an August 2015 peace agreement, violence has spread for the past eight months while the humanitarian situation has continued to deteriorate. The government has consistently blocked access to humanitarian assistance, including a recent decision to charge aid workers \$10,000 for a visa. Continued fighting, government hurdles and lack of infrastructure mean that food is being airlifted into remote areas as the only means of reaching those in dire need.

All four of these famine-affected countries are suffering massive displacement. Yemen (3.1 million displaced); Nigeria (1.8 million displaced); South Sudan (1.7 million displaced); and Somalia (1.2 million displaced) are all struggling to manage huge flows of people, many of whom are extremely malnourished. To give a sense

of scale, the 1.4 million people that have been displaced in Nigeria's Borno state alone is roughly 40 percent more than reached Europe by boat in 2015.

Famine also has a negative cascading impact on neighboring countries, as this type of large-scale displacement generates security problems, places strains on infrastructure, weakens economies, increases criminality and exacerbates tensions between refugees, locals and government officials.

#### RESILIENCE

In the wake of the devastating 1984 Ethiopian famine, USAID pushed for more effective ways of responding to humanitarian crises, including the development of the Famine Early Warning System (Fewsnet), which was created by USAID with the leadership of Greg Gottlieb who testified here earlier. Fewsnet is still a powerful tool today, using an array of data to provide early warnings of impending food crises. However, other efforts were unfortunately not sustained.

The successive droughts of 2011–12 in the Horn of Africa and the Sahel triggered a renewed push to find more effective ways to address recurring cyclical droughts that continually undercut development progress in these areas. The U.S. government provided global leadership with a vigorous commitment to early action in response to early warning, developing new policies and tools for generating greater resilience in the face of recurrent risks, and partnering with international, regional and country level government to align efforts for managing and reducing risks. USAID adopted a new agency-wide policy and organized a new resilience office to span relief and development efforts for greater sustained impact.

Progress has been heartening, with evidence in Kenya and Ethiopia that investments by both the national governments and international donors in building resilience to the shock of droughts is protecting millions of people from falling into greater crisis during the current drought that is again gripping the region.

However, in the last decade, humanitarian assistance flows have shifted from 80% of global aid going to victims of natural disasters to now 80% going to assist victims of violent conflict. In the last three years, U.N. humanitarian appeals have risen from \$16.2 billion in 2012 to the current U.N. Global Appeal of \$22.6 billion, driven almost entirely by a toxic brew of violent conflict, disease and drought—including now the four impending famines. The urgent challenge now is to address those drivers of violent conflict that are fueling a worldwide humanitarian crisis.

#### RECOMMENDATIONS

These four pending famines present an extraordinary humanitarian challenge, as well as a rising set of regional and international security threats. Addressing these crises will require urgent and sustained U.S. global leadership to mobilize partners and action.

**Urgent humanitarian action:** The U.N.'s Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (OCHA) is appealing for \$5.6 billion in 2017 to address famines in Yemen, South Sudan, Nigeria and Somalia, \$4.4 billion of which is required urgently by June to massively scale up efforts and avert an even graver crisis in the four countries. The U.S. government is the leading contributor of humanitarian assistance, although as a percentage of gross national income (GNI), the U.S. ranks 19th. Without significant contributions from the U.S. government, it is less able to catalyze contributions from other donors and meet even minimal life-saving needs for life-saving food, medical assistance and shelter immediately. Our urgent action is a deep reflection of who we are as Americans, and action now can make the difference between life and death for millions of children, women and men.

**Continued investment in resilience:** U.S. government leadership and support is also vital for ensuring sustained progress in more effective and efficient humanitarian delivery. A range of changes are already underway to enable smarter assistance, including more flexible funding that enables greater support for local actors, greater ability to tailor response to needs on the ground and bridging the gap between relief and development for more sustained results, including a focus on managing the risks that otherwise upend U.S. development investments. More innovative financing is critical, such as insurance for areas chronically hit by natural disaster.

Many of these approaches were highlighted at the World Humanitarian Summit in May 2016, along with the commitment to broaden the pool of donors.

**Increased focus on addressing drivers of violent conflict:** Ultimately, the U.S. will not be able to address these four famines or other humanitarian crises with humanitarian responses alone.

As noted in the Fragility Study Group report, the U.S. needs to use all its tools—development, diplomacy and security—in a strategic, selective, systemic and sus-

tained effort to address the fragility that repeatedly results in grave humanitarian and security crises. Countries like Yemen, South Sudan, Somalia and the northwest region of Nigeria have all been trapped in multiple cycles of conflict. Without addressing the deeper drivers of these conflicts, the U.S. can be assured of continued cycles of humanitarian need. Instead, we need to get ahead of these crises instead of relying on late and more costly—both in financial and human terms—responses.

Decades of research has resulted in well-established lessons that peaceful, sustained progress requires security and justice for all citizens; legitimate governments characterized by inclusive politics and accountable institutions; locally-led solutions; inclusive economic growth; and sustained engagement by the international community. Countries lacking those elements are more likely to plunge into crisis, as illustrated by the four countries we are discussing today.

Without question, progress requires local partners—whether at the local or national level—for meaningful progress. There is no simple prescription, but the U.S. government can articulate a way forward and play a leadership role in shaping a response that can save lives and ultimately get ahead of these crises.

Thank you, Senators, for your continued focus and attention to this critical issue. I look forward to answering your questions.

The views expressed in this testimony are those of the author and not the U.S. Institute of Peace.

The CHAIRMAN. Thank you.  
Go ahead, sir.

**STATEMENT OF YVES DACCORD, DIRECTOR-GENERAL, INTERNATIONAL COMMITTEE OF THE RED CROSS, GENEVA, SWITZERLAND**

Mr. DACCORD. Thank you very much, Chairman Corker, Ranking Member Cardin, and all distinguished members of this committee. I am very happy that you are holding a hearing on this very specific issue. I would like to share four points with you, and these four points are informed and I would say tainted by the experience of my own organization, the International Committee of the Red Cross.

As you know, we are focusing on extreme vulnerability in times of war. This is where we work. We work in the four countries we mentioned. We also work in Ukraine, in Afghanistan, in Syria. And when we work, it does not mean we are working in Damascus. We are working in the homes. We are really closely related to the people, in order to understand their needs and what is happening.

We also discuss and engage with every single party to the conflict, which means, of course, government but also non-state armed groups, as we call it now.

And it is important because there will be some connections in what I would like to say.

The first point, quickly, is about the label we want to give to this crisis. As an organization, we do not like so much to compare crises. Is this crisis worse than before? Is Syria suffering worse than South Sudan? It is always complicated.

But we do recognize, though, that what we are facing right now in terms of humanitarian crises in these four countries plus Ethiopia and Kenya is possibly becoming one of the most serious humanitarian crises that we are facing in recent history, and it is for three reasons. One, the nature of the crisis, as Nancy mentioned, armed conflict together with, in fact, famine, which makes it so complex. B is, in fact, the scale of it. We are talking about 20 million directly affected plus, as you mentioned, several other millions being possibly affected. And the third element is the impact. You have an impact right now in these four countries, talking about



Yemen, South Sudan, Northeast Nigeria, and Somalia. But you do have an impact also in the region. If you just look at Northeast Nigeria, Gabon, Chad, Burkina Faso are already affected directly. If you look at Yemen, you can see immediately all the region is affected.

And it is a crisis that can affect all of us. If you look at the impact over time in terms of life, funds, but also migration.

So, yes, it is absolutely important that we focus on this crisis. That is key.

Point two, timing. So I think there is an issue about timing. I am of the opinion, we are of the opinion, that we can make a difference over the next coming weeks, and I want to insist on that one. Specifically, in two countries, Yemen and Somalia, where, if we mobilize ourselves, we can prevent the famine in these two countries. On the rest, it is also long-term aid that needs to happen, but there is a timing issue. Time is short. We need to be able to focus.

My third point is about some of the specific elements of the crisis. One, the population and communities in these four countries are somewhat not in a position anymore to absorb shock. This is why the crisis is so complex, because there is a war going on, conflict. People are displaced. They do not have all the choices.

South Sudan is 3 million people displaced in 3 years, out of 11 million. If you look at Yemen, it is 70 percent of people needing aid, just to give you a sense. If you look at Somalia, 60 percent of the people depend on livestock. Livestock is gone, almost.

So there is a very fragile environment which is very complex, which means that communities are not able to absorb shock.

But the problem is the systems, when they exist, are also under pressure—the health system, the water sanitation. If you think about Yemen, 160 hospital health structures attacked last year. This just gives you a bit of a sense.

So we have a situation where resilience is extremely low. That is why it is so complex. At the same time, you do have, in this full context, local and national authorities and governments not in a position to provide basic services to the population. They do not. Sometimes because they cannot. They do not have the means, the infrastructure. But most the time, it is because they are themselves party to the conflict, which makes things extremely complicated.

And my fourth and last comment, Mr. Chairman, is the fact that we need to have a complex response to these complex issues. One, we need to massively scale up the humanitarian response, very clearly. But doing that, we need to also be pragmatic on who can do what.

And here the question is, who has access to which communities? Who is able to perform now? Who is able to perform in 6 months' time? There are differences. We need to be able to focus on that one. We need to make sure we do not now just do massive scale-up everywhere. We need to scale up where there are issues, and we need to impact that in every country.

And here the focus is really on displaced people, on communities hard to reach in places that are not always controlled by governments. That is where it is important, so the access is central.

Point two, and Nancy mentioned it, I cannot imagine it is just a humanitarian response. We are aware as humanitarians the limits of what we can do. We will do our best, but there is a diplomatic surge which is needed. There is really a diplomatic surge, a massive diplomatic surge is needed in these four countries in order to end conflict and to make sure that also states but non-state actors are also held accountable to international humanitarian law, the law of war. Very clearly.

Look at South Sudan. Look at Yemen. Look at Northeast Nigeria. Look at Somalia. There are elements of leadership which is not just a financial leadership but also a diplomatic leadership.

Thank you very much.

[The prepared statement of Mr. Daccord follows:]

#### THE PREPARED STATEMENT OF YVES DACCORD

Chairman Corker, Ranking Member Cardin, distinguished Committee members, thank you for the opportunity to testify today on what is fast becoming one of the most critical humanitarian issues to face mankind since the end of the Second World War. As famine looms over several countries in Africa and the Middle East—with many millions of people suffering severe food insecurity and increasing numbers facing starvation—we are at the brink of a humanitarian mega-crisis unprecedented in recent history. While the situations in the four countries primarily affected—South Sudan, Somalia, Nigeria and Yemen—are all distinct, the overall scale of acute humanitarian needs in different places at the same time is immense.

My statement today will focus on the urgent need for accelerated efforts to avert such a catastrophe, in consideration of the scope of the problem, the ICRC's mandate and operational response on the ground, and the vital role of the U.S. in its support to our work and to humanitarian action more broadly. Sustained and robust U.S. funding for humanitarian action—which not only saves lives but also helps shorten crises, facilitates eventual reconstruction and reconciliation, and promotes stability—is needed now more than ever.

Our main message is clear: immediate, decisive action is needed to prevent vast numbers of people starving to death. We also need to address the root causes of this desperate situation. If we act now, the worst-case scenario can still be avoided, particularly in Somalia and Yemen. The ICRC has a long-standing presence on the ground in all four affected countries: as one of very few international humanitarian actors who are effective front-line responders, we are often able to reach vulnerable people in areas inaccessible to others. We need your support, and we need it now.

#### SCOPE OF THE HUMANITARIAN PROBLEM

The humanitarian crises in all of these contexts are, in differing degrees, man-made and all are to a large extent preventable.

The main cause of hunger—and of wider humanitarian need—in all four countries is protracted (and intractable) armed conflict. All are characterised by asymmetric warring parties, particularly fragmented and multiplying non-state armed groups; by a widespread lack of respect for even the most fundamental rules of international humanitarian law; and by a lack of any viable political solution to end them. In addition, all of these armed conflicts have regional repercussions, which in the case of northern Nigeria are being felt across the entire Lake Chad region.

In South Sudan, more than three years of brutal armed conflict has resulted in economic collapse, with large-scale displacement, loss of agriculture and livestock, massive inflation, rising food prices, widespread hunger, and—in areas where specific criteria have been fulfilled—famine. One in three households is estimated to be in urgent need of food. The approximately 3.4 million people who have been forced to flee their homes are among the most vulnerable, fearing for their lives and often hiding in remote swampy areas.

In Somalia, northern Nigeria and Yemen, harsh climate conditions and environmental problems, including cyclical drought, are major factors in the current crises, but not decisive ones. Combined with chronic insecurity and fighting (more than a quarter of a century in the case of Somalia), and extremely constrained humanitarian access, the consequences are however catastrophic.

In Somalia, where memories are still raw of the famine that killed more than a quarter of a million people just six years ago, the adverse effects of drought are being felt much more widely than in 2011. An estimated 6.2 million people, over

half the country's population, are now facing acute food insecurity across the country and are in need of urgent assistance. With famine looming once again, there is a growing concern that should the aid response fail to keep pace, the situation will get much worse.

People living in conflict-affected areas of north-eastern Nigeria are likewise experiencing desperate food shortages, with an estimated 1.4 million internally displaced people in Borno state (one of the hardest-hit parts of the country) as well as resident communities in difficult-to-reach areas living a particularly precarious existence. Some 300,000 children in Borno state alone are expected to suffer from severe acute malnutrition over the next twelve months. In some remote areas, general acute malnutrition rates among children, pregnant women and lactating mothers are reported to be as high as 70 percent.

And in Yemen, decades of recurrent upheaval, drought and chronic impoverishment preceded the current calamitous situation—where two years of intensifying conflict have caused spiralling humanitarian needs including alarming levels of acute malnutrition, especially among children. With a mere 45 percent of health structures functioning and less than 30 percent of vital medicines and medical supplies entering the country, hospitals with which the ICRC works have reported a 150 percent increase in child malnutrition cases. Fighting in or near ports, such as Hodeida, has seriously hampered the import of vital humanitarian supplies of food, fuel and medicine needed to address critical needs and stave off famine.

#### ICRC MANDATE AND RESPONSE

While famine poses common problems in the four contexts, each crisis has its own dynamics and the humanitarian response must be adapted accordingly.

The ICRC, broadly, works with Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies worldwide to deliver relief and protect people from armed conflict and violence. We work even in the most constrained and complex situations of armed conflict, where the authorities are not willing or able to protect or assist people in need, and where a direct and radically principled response is invaluable. This requires an approach that demonstrates the value and practical application of the fundamental principles of impartiality, neutrality and independence in a number of ways. It must be needs-based, have close physical proximity to the beneficiaries, and entail engagement with all stakeholders, including state and non-state actors—thereby gaining the widest possible acceptance and respect, and through this, the widest possible humanitarian access to people in need of protection and assistance.

Better protecting conflict-affected people—through law, policy and operations—is at the heart of our overall strategy. To this end, we promote compliance with international humanitarian law at all levels, and engage in confidential dialogue with state and non-state actors with the aim of preventing violations from occurring in the first place. We have worked with states, including the U.S. government, for over a century to develop and apply the law of armed conflict—rules that protect soldiers, civilians, detainees, and the wounded and sick in war.

At the same time, the ICRC works to address victims' wide-ranging needs—be they food, water, shelter, other essential items or medical care; tracing missing family members and re-establishing links between them; or ensuring that people in detention are well-treated.

While humanitarian action is of course vital to save lives and meet short-term needs, the long-term nature of many of today's wars means it is also increasingly necessary to sustain basic services and infrastructure in fragile environments, and at the same time boost livelihoods and build resilience against shocks. In places at risk of drought and ultimately famine, this may include improving access to clean water, strengthening nutritional programmes as well as hygiene awareness, protecting vital livestock against diseases and providing various forms of economic support.

The scope and magnitude of these humanitarian needs, and the reality of today's broad humanitarian "ecosystem" comprising diverse actors working on local, national and international level, with varying degrees of organization, approaches and goals, makes effective coordination and constructive engagement with diverse stakeholders all the more imperative. For the ICRC, this means strong and effective partnerships primarily with Red Cross and Red Crescent societies, but also engaging closely with states and non-state actors, U.N. Agencies, regional or faith-based organizations and many others.

The ICRC, together with Red Cross and Red Crescent societies, has been on the ground for many years in the four countries now threatened with famine. Just a few brief examples of our 2016–17 activities are as follows:

- Provided food to nearly 750,000 people in South Sudan. The ICRC will continue food assistance in 2017, working alongside the South Sudan Red Cross Society, while also expanding programs that provide seeds and tools to communities, helping them feed themselves. In 2017, ICRC surgical teams are continuing to provide urgent medical care and build up local medical capacities in South Sudan.
- Working closely with the Somali Red Crescent Society, provided nearly 750,000 people in Somalia with urgent food assistance, clean water, and medical attention. In 2017, the ICRC is rapidly scaling up these efforts to mitigate the risk of famine.
- Provided food to more than 1.2 million people in conflict-affected areas of Nigeria, and agricultural inputs such as seeds and fertilizer to more than 280,000 returnees to enable them to start farming again. The ICRC also provided hundreds of thousands of people with medical assistance, access to water and improved sanitation and hygiene. In 2017, the ICRC is stepping up efforts to meet urgent food and other needs including in the most difficult-to-reach areas, and supporting the emergency response work of the Nigerian Red Cross Society.
- Supplied 20 medical centers in Yemen with surgical items and critical medication, enabling local hospitals to treat more than 250,000 people injured by the conflict or who were in need of medical attention, and supporting the critical work of the Yemeni Red Crescent Society. The ICRC also provided food and other items, like tarps and water cans, to nearly 750,000 people in Yemen. In view of the threat of famine, the ICRC is expanding its operations in 2017, focusing on supporting hospitals and providing food to hungry people.

The ICRC has already begun scaling up its work in all four countries. In total, we will be spending at least 400 million CHF (about 400 million USD) this year. But in view of the overwhelming needs, this is still just a drop in the ocean.

#### WHAT NEEDS TO BE DONE

##### *Financial Support: Short-term Needs and Long-term Resilience*

First and foremost, there is a need for donor generosity and more humanitarian aid, to facilitate humanitarian action to save lives and meet short-term needs, but also to enable investment in programmes that help build the resilience and self-sufficiency of affected communities. This could be providing training and grants to women heads of households to start income-generating activities, or training staff of the national Red Cross or Red Crescent society in first aid and emergency preparedness, to give just two examples.

Both the quantity and quality of U.S. support to the ICRC over many years has been outstanding, and vital for us to be able to do our work. The U.S. government has been the ICRC's biggest single donor since 1980, covering between 20 percent and 28 percent of our annual expenditures. This reflects strong, bipartisan support for the ICRC and its humanitarian action. In 2016, the U.S. State Department provided the ICRC with 417 million USD, representing 24 percent of the ICRC's global budget. Congress provides critical support through the Migration and Refugee Assistance account in the State/Foreign Operations appropriations bill. This generosity also reflects a level of trust and appreciation that the ICRC provides good value for money, based on the relevance, effectiveness and efficiency of our humanitarian work.

However, it is not just the size of the contribution that counts. The U.S. government has also provided the ICRC with a significant amount of flexible funding—money not earmarked for specific crises. Flexible funding enables the ICRC to respond quickly and early to emergencies with vast needs but less visibility. Without it, the ICRC would be unable to fulfill its international mandate of protecting and assisting the victims of all armed conflicts—not just the ones which attract media attention or are high on the political agendas of states.

The ICRC response to the crisis in Nigeria is one example. The ICRC has been providing food, medical and other life saving assistance to people affected by conflict in Nigeria for eight years. Few other agencies were working in north-eastern Nigeria until 2016, when the conflict finally gained more global media attention, and thus humanitarian funding. Without the quantity and quality of U.S. financial support, the ICRC may not have had a significant presence in northern Nigeria until last year, potentially resulting in millions more displaced or facing starvation.

We would like to take this opportunity to reiterate our deep gratitude to the U.S. government, including Members of Congress, for this historic financial support that helps save countless lives and stabilize conflict areas. Republican and Democratic

administrations alike have robustly funded the ICRC's operations and humanitarian action more broadly. We respectfully ask for that support to continue.

At the same time, the scale and number of humanitarian crises requires that we seek out new donors, and ask other governments that could contribute more to do so. The U.S. can help the ICRC develop a truly global support base by urging governments to follow its example of providing predictable, quality financial support to the ICRC.

We are also seeking more collaborative and innovative solutions with increasingly diverse stakeholders, including the corporate sector and research and development institutions. Beyond simple pecuniary support, the corporate sector's wealth of ideas, expertise and resources—be it in the domain of communication technologies, health care and a wide range of others—has become invaluable in helping us to better deliver on our mandate, to reach people in need of protection and assistance, and to provide a relevant and effective response to their needs.

#### COMPLIANCE WITH INTERNATIONAL HUMANITARIAN LAW

Not only is there a need for more humanitarian aid, but also a need to ensure that it actually reaches the people who need it most. This means ensuring better humanitarian access and proximity to the people directly affected, on both sides of frontlines. And this, in turn, means that both military forces and armed groups must meet their legal obligations to facilitate the delivery of humanitarian relief supplies to all those who need it.

The basic message is simple: better respect for the rules of international humanitarian law and for the principle of humanity is the single best way to reduce suffering in war. Civilians and civilian objects must not be targeted. Wounded and sick people's right to health care during armed conflict must be respected and protected, and attacks on health personnel and facilities must stop. The basic services that preserve life—and prevent starvation—need to be protected. Blockades need to be lifted—in the name of humanity.

Strengthening compliance with humanitarian law and preventing violations is therefore a fundamental prerequisite to achieving better protection for people affected by armed conflict.

For the ICRC, this entails engaging with all parties to conflict—no matter how challenging this may be—in an effort to gain acceptance and access to people in need. It also entails engaging with other stakeholders—including states—who can positively influence the behaviour of parties to conflict.

The relationship between the ICRC and the U.S. is strong in this regard too, with the two enjoying a constructive and confidential dialogue on the latter's combat operations and detention activities around the world. The U.S. has a long tradition of promoting the law of armed conflict—a tradition it can continue by ensuring that its armed forces respect this law and influencing security partners to do the same. Through training and sharing of best practices, the U.S. can also help partner forces protect civilians and detainees in war.

#### CONCLUSION

Mr Chairman, Ranking Member Cardin, the onus is of course on those who wage war and those who support them to prevent these humanitarian crises from becoming even bigger tragedies, and ultimately to show the political will required to end the conflicts.

Yet as long as political solutions remain elusive, it is incumbent on humanitarian organisations such as the ICRC to alleviate the suffering as best we can, and try to prevent existing humanitarian crises becoming uncontrollable catastrophes. For that we need funding and humanitarian access. The U.S. can—and does—play a vital role in supporting us in both these domains.

Responding only when people are already dying of hunger will inevitably be too little, too late. The cost of delay—in terms of finance but moreover in terms of lives lost—would be unconscionable.

The CHAIRMAN. Thank you both for that testimony.

So I think you get a sense that most members of this committee are going to do what is necessary to make sure that we continue to play a role in helping people who are starving not to starve. And I think, over time, there will be a commitment to weed out some of the special interest issues that are keeping us from feeding 5 million more people. I think that will happen.

I think you will see a united effort to make sure there is appropriate funding. Look, every organization can be streamlined. We all know that. The two of your organizations could be streamlined. Every organization can be looked at.

But my sense is you are going to see a combined effort to make sure that these types of efforts are appropriately funded. But my question is this. Two weeks, I mean, we get emails, we understand people today, as we sit here, are dying. In some cases, a thousand people a day. A thousand people a day dying.

What is it that we can do in our respective positions right now today, if anything? Hopefully there is. What is it that we can do to help try to meet the needs that you are talking about over the next 2 weeks? I would love to know.

Most of the stuff we do around here is long term. It takes a while. It happens way beyond, in many cases. No doubt, a diplomatic surge, I could not agree more.

But what can we do as individual committee members or as a group to try to meet the needs you are discussing over the next couple weeks?

Ms. LINDBORG. Right now, the first and most important response is to ensure that funding is moving through the humanitarian channels. All of those other things are needed, approaches that marry the development and the resilience approaches, the diplomatic surge. But right now, it is saving lives and it is making sure that those urgent appeals are being filled by global actors, by global donors.

And that sometimes requires going around and saying, to a broader set of donors, it is up to you as well, which is a role that the U.S. has frequently played quite successfully.

Mr. DACCORD. I think, first of all, by showing an interest and a focus on this crisis. That is what you are doing. It is important. B, by ensuring funding. The funding is extremely important right now. And, C, to clarify where the funding needs to go.

The CHAIRMAN. And we are going to do that, I am sure, as a group. That is going to be pursued and will happen.

But I am talking about over the next 2 weeks. I mean, you referred to the fact that, over the next 2 weeks, millions of people may well perish. And so what is it that we might be able to do in the short term to have some effect on that?

Mr. DACCORD. Ranking Member Cardin, you mentioned what is happening about Somalia. There is an interest right now. There is a diplomatic interest also, to make sure that is around Somalia, for example.

Somalia and Yemen are maybe the two countries I would prioritize right now, because there is a possibility both at the political level, and this is one element, the diplomatic level, but also the humanitarian level where, over the next coming weeks we make a difference.

I mean, there is a question in Yemen about access. Everybody knows that, right now, there is a huge issue around Taizz and Hudaydah, very clear. But maybe not this committee but your interest in helping, maybe your country, an important country, playing a role, focusing on the question will help. I can tell you, that is for sure.

And, B, making sure also that some of the funding goes now directly, specifically, to humanitarian actors like us being on the ground being able to perform right now.

It is not a time of planning right now. It is a time of acting. And that is what is so important, to be able to also let's say prioritize what needs to be prioritized in terms of funding and diplomatic engagement.

The CHAIRMAN. Who is the lead pitch person internationally to generate the immediate funding, this additional altar call, if you will, that is occurring right now? Who is the lead pitch person on that internationally?

Mr. DACCORD. I think right now you have two models. One, of course, is the U.N. And I think, as you may know, the Secretary General of the U.N. has really mobilized, in fact, the entire international community. I think the good news is I have seen them also mobilizing the World Bank.

So I think you can see things moving up. And I would really commend the Secretary General of the United Nations to have brought the attention and mobilized the U.N. and its entire forces. That is one element.

And then, B, we have organizations like the Red Cross and Red Crescent, my own organization. I also feel responsible. We are not part of the U.N. We are a different organization, but we are collaborating, and we are mobilizing ourselves.

We are talking, for our own organization, \$400 million that we are spending and using now on the ground specifically.

And then, last but not least, I already mentioned about the diplomatic outreach. There is an important limit about the diplomatic outreach which needs to come from your government. That is for sure. It is not the only government but your government can play an extremely important role when it comes to Yemen, for example. Very central.

The CHAIRMAN. Are there any U.S. dollars today that for some reason have been committed and yet are not making their way to the appropriate place today?

Mr. DACCORD. I do not know. My sense is that I see an interest at the level of the State Department, a level of your government. But I think there is maybe also a bit of worry of how we spend the money right now. I think that is for sure. But I think—I hope—that the crisis will help, in fact, spend it at the right places.

I would just be very careful, again. When you look at figures, it is overwhelming, right? And I do understand that there is a need to unpack the questions. And here I really would like to stress there are elements we need to happen urgently now, and there are elements that are more short and long term.

That needs to be distinguished, because when you look at the figures, I do understand. If I were American citizen, I would say, my God, we are talking about millions of people, billions of dollars. What does that mean? What are the plans?

What we can say is there are elements that need to happen now, and we can reprioritize that, and that is important to be clear about that. We need to clarify also who can do what and make sure that, in the way that we intervene as humanitarians, we are doing that smartly among us.

And last but not least, I really want to insist there really is a diplomatic surge which, frankly, as humanitarians, we cannot do. That needs to happen at the state level.

Ms. LINDBORG. If I could elaborate on that, if dollars are not reaching their intended targets, in some of these cases, it is because of obstacles being presented by the governments of these countries. And where there could be very effective immediate action is making it clear to the Government of South Sudan and to various actors in the Yemen conflict, for example, that the world will respond, and we need them to do their part.

We need them to not charge \$10,000 per visa for an aid worker. We need them to allow barges to move up the rivers to the more remote locations and have a concerted both regional and international set of pressures that says, with response and global response comes local responsibility.

The CHAIRMAN. Thank you very much. It is very powerful testimony. Thank you both for what you do.

Senator Cardin?

Senator CARDIN. Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I also compliment our two witnesses not just for being here but for what you do on the ground to help in this regard.

I read out the percentage of funding on the U.N. humanitarian appeals in the four countries we are dealing with, and they are between 6 percent to 21 percent, so we are well—it is very low. So the funding issues are a significant problem.

But it is more than funding, as has been pointed out. Yemen, we do need a diplomatic surge. The United States plays a critical role in Yemen. We are dealing with the neighbors of Yemen, and we are engaged in supplying military assistance in dealing with those issues.

So we do play a role, and I think we need to look at the people of Yemen and recognize that, as part of our diplomatic role, we need to get access for humanitarian assistance in helping the people of Yemen that have been so much impacted.

In South Sudan, you are right there also. In South Sudan, the youngest country in the world, and yet we have seen their government do horrible things in regards to allowing international intervention to help their own people. Instead, they seem more interested in arms than they are in food, and we have to act in that regard.

So each country is different, but they do have a lot in common.

The chairman asked a very important point. What can we do short term to provide relief? Well, it seems to me, in these countries, access by humanitarian workers is an area that could be done in the short term, that if we put a real spotlight on that \$10,000 visa, you cannot defend that. South Sudan cannot defend that. If we put a real international spotlight on humanitarian workers' safety issues—and I commend you, because your frontline people are at risk. I mean, it is difficult work under ideal circumstances, but under attack, it becomes impossible.

So could you just share with us what we could do to perhaps give you greater access so that you can, in fact, have safer access on the ground in order to assess and help the people that are in need?



Mr. DACCORD. Thank you very much, Senator. Maybe you will allow me to be a little bit more specific about access and just say a word, and then link it with your question of what we can do.

My organization, the International Community of the Red Cross, what we do is we engage with every party to the war, so let's look at Yemen. We would talk to all the parties, to the governments but also to all of what we would call let's say the rebel groups and the different groups, including the one which could be labeled as outlaw or terrorist.

We do that with a very, very clear, in fact, humanitarian perspective and agenda, which is we are talking to them in order to make sure that the checkpoint can be crossed, in order to make sure that the people can go to the hospital, in order to make sure that Taizz right now, which is besieged, can get the water they need. And you need to talk to the people.

So in that sense, access is something which is created. It cannot be ordered. I mean, this is something you negotiate on a daily basis, and it is sometimes extremely complex. It took us years to really get access and get tolerated in Northeast Nigeria. So you arrive, and then you negotiate.

That is how we do that, and it is sometimes very complicated, to be honest, because, of course, some of these groups, they will very carefully look at us and how we connect and what are we saying and how it works.

Where you can play a role as a very important government, and you have played that role already for quite a while, is exactly what you mentioned on global and specific issues.

Global is very clear. If there is a sense by some of the government, but also a non-state armed group, that your government and you as a steering group and as a committee, you still have an interest, a focus on South Sudan, as an example, authority will behave differently. They know. They will be very careful on the way they will look at that.

Yemen, the same. Northeast Nigeria also.

And then there are specific elements. And here, if I look at Yemen, everything related to the sea and to the port is a big issue that are sometimes beyond what we can do as humanitarian organizations. You can ensure access to the ports. You can make sure that the blockades are done but also with a humanitarian exception very clear.

You can talk to, in fact, as you mentioned, coalition countries, which are close to your country and help possibly to integrate international humanitarian law perspective when it comes to, in fact, delivering food and delivering aid. And I think this is something which we would value enormously.

Specifically when it comes to Hudaydah, for example, right now, in Yemen, that would be very, very important. It would make a lot of difference for a lot of people. Seventy percent of people right now in Yemen need, in fact, aid, and this aid needs to come from outside. There is no choice. There is no market anymore in Yemen, so we need—absolutely, the blockade needs to cease and it needs to be managed.

Senator CARDIN. Mr. Chairman, I think that may be a specific area within the next couple weeks that our committee may want

to keep the look on, Hudaydah. Clearly, that is a target for action, and it is the major entry point for humanitarian—could be the major entry point for humanitarian assistance, and it is unclear as to the current abilities to get humanitarian aid into Yemen because of the control by the illegitimate authorities. If it is taken back, there is concern as to whether the government would be interested in using that port for humanitarian needs.

I think that is an area where we may be able to have some impact that could really help people save their lives.

I appreciate that comment.

The CHAIRMAN. Senator Young?

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

I would like to ask Ms. Lindborg, picking up on some testimony I elicited from Mr. Gottlieb earlier, I actually cited your prepared statement and your reference to Amartya Sen's observation in *Development as Freedom* that no famine has ever taken place in the history of the world in a functioning democracy because democratic governments have to win elections, face public criticism, have strong incentive to undertake measures to avert famines and other catastrophes. And we discussed here today the principle of resilience.

I would just like to get your thoughts. Is Sen's assertion correct? Isn't the ultimate resilience measure a functioning democracy? And in your opinion, how effective has our government, USAID in particular, been at promoting democracy and good governance?

And if you could sort of include in there how you assess, how you a measure, effectiveness in democracy promotion, I would be grateful.

Ms. LINDBORG. Yes, thank you.

You know, since Amartya Sen made that statement in the 1980s, which really turned on its head the assumption that famines were a function of food scarcity, and instead made the assertion that it is the result of failed democracies or ineffectual systems, scholarship has really moved us forward on this understanding of the importance of having what is called a functioning state-society relationship, where you have both state capacity, the ability to provide services, the political legitimacy, and the inclusion of people from throughout their country.

And when that is nonexistent or when it is a frayed relationship is when you have greater fragility in the system, which I talk about in my testimony. And that is what leads these states to not being able to manage conflict so that it does not become violent and rip them apart.

Senator YOUNG. So where has our government, if at all, fallen short with respect to adapting to this new scholarship?

Ms. LINDBORG. I think our greatest difficulty is that it really does require a combination of assistance, development, humanitarian assistance, as well as understanding the security dimensions and the need for using our diplomatic, our security, and our development tools together in a coherent way to bring to bear on countries that are in deep states of fragility. That is our biggest challenge.

I co-chaired a study on this, a senior study group on fragility. I am happy to share that report with you.

Senator YOUNG. I will look forward to receiving it. Thank you.

In his prepared statement, Mr. Gottlieb states that the United States' commitments to humanitarian efforts also enable us to push for greater transparency and improve efficiencies in the international system, specifically in the United Nations. I serve as chair of the subcommittee that oversees multilateral international development and multilateral institutions.

I would like to get both of your thoughts, if you have thoughts on this matter, with respect to specific examples where there is a need for greater transparency and improved efficiencies in United Nations Agencies.

Mr. DACCORD. Thank you, Senator.

Senator YOUNG. Is the question arcane or is it politically sensitive?

Mr. DACCORD. No, I think the question is very—let me try to answer. I am not sure—it is a big question.

I can start with my own organization. My experience—first of all, we benefit from an extremely powerful and strong support from the governments, including the Members of the Congress, which is fantastic over time, and we value that.

And always, the support is not just financial support. It is not just diplomatic support. It is also a partnership, which means, as an organization, including my organization, including working in the most difficult places, you need to be able to show results.

You mentioned, Senator Young, at the beginning that you need to be able to explain to your own constituency where the money goes, what does that mean. Of course, we, ICRC, work in the most difficult places. It is difficult to explain to anybody that we are doing humanitarian actions in Somalia or in Ukraine or in Afghanistan and get some impressive support. People say what the hell are you talking about there? How does that work? Right?

So I think there is a need for us to be able to show results, to be specific. We do, including humanitarian actions right now, results-based management. So when we do, in fact, our own way to plan, we do it very differently from the United Nations. Be aware of that.

We do a yearly base. We do by target audience. We are very specific. So as a humanitarian organization, you can be humanitarian but also be very specific about what you want to be able to achieve. That is one.

B, where there is transparency and where your government has played an important role is on the quality funding—quality funding. It is not just the money. It is also giving flexible funding, and that has made an enormous difference.

Can I just give you one anecdote? Northeast Nigeria. Nobody was interested about Northeast Nigeria 5 or 6 years ago—nobody, not a single person.

My team at the time said, 6 years ago, we have a problem here. It took us 4 years of operation to, little by little, start to understand the problems and get tolerated by the people and also by the groups and the government on the spot.

We were able to do that because we had flexible funding, because the United States Government is giving us this flexible funding.

So that I found extremely useful. But at the same time, when you do have flexible funding, you need to be able to show that you were efficient and it is fine. You need to be able, when you are evaluated, you are the best in terms of finance, in terms of diversification of aid. We do have systems, which are very robust, and we do have it.

And we had long discussions with your government over time, and it works. So I do not know if I answered your question, because this is not the United Nations. This is my organization.

But what I wanted to tell you is, yes, it has an influence on the way we work on our policies, on our practice, including in the most difficult places. And this is absolutely critical, if we want to be able to get the support we need from people.

Senator YOUNG. So I will just add this, again being respectful of the chairman and my colleagues' time.

If you have additional ideas—I know this is a big, complex question that lends itself to a multifaceted and extensive response. I think it is incumbent upon us to really scrutinize how these agencies are organized in furtherance of their mission. I want to work with the State Department, our U.N. Ambassador, and others, but I need some input from experts like yourself moving forward on this area.

Ms. LINDBORG. If I could just briefly note, there was a very landmark event last May, the World Humanitarian Summit, that really crystallized and articulated some of the very important advances that have been made over the last few years, in part in response to the extraordinary strain on the humanitarian system. But ways to make it more effective, more efficient, that is an agenda that has yet to be fully realized, but it provides an important blueprint of where to put energies and how to move forward smarter, more effective assistance.

Senator YOUNG. That is instructive. Thank you.

The CHAIRMAN. Thank you. Thank you very much.

Senator Shaheen?

Senator SHAHEEN. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

And thank you both for being here and for your very important work at this very critical and difficult time.

Last week, the Armed Services Committee, which I am a member of, had presentations from the CENTCOM commander, General Votel, who has Yemen as part of his area of oversight, and the AFRICOM commander, General Waldhauser, who has Nigeria and Somalia as part of his area of oversight.

One of the things that General Waldhauser said that I thought was very important, he talked about the importance of addressing development and governance and economic issues in Nigeria, and the impact of that on the rest of the continent of Africa because of Nigeria's size and importance.

But can you talk about how, if at all, you work with the American military and other military efforts in the countries that we are talking about today, and particularly in Yemen and Somalia, because I very much appreciate the chair and ranking member ask-

ing what we can do today that is going to help the situation in those two countries?

Ms. LINDBORG. Sure. One of the things that U.S. Institute of Peace has been doing has been to work with both our DOD, our state, as well as our AID colleagues to conduct tabletop exercises.

We recently completed a series of exercises looking at the Lake Chad Basin, where the Nigerian crisis has provided regional disruption. Cameroon, Chad, Niger, are all affected by Boko Haram and what has been going on.

The interests of General Waldhauser and his associates are how do we better coordinate across all of these tools so that we have a shared understanding of the problem that we are trying to solve, and make a better, more effective difference both in the medium and into the long term?

We have a lot of resources. If we coordinate them together, we can have a far greater impact.

Senator SHAHEEN. So are they engaged in the current, immediate crisis in both Yemen and Somalia?

Ms. LINDBORG. They are not engaged with the delivery of humanitarian assistance, but they are engaged on the security dimension of those crises.

Senator SHAHEEN. So the protection for aid workers?

Ms. LINDBORG. More about the ongoing threats presented by the terrorist groups that are part of the conflicts, that are creating the conditions for famine to occur. It is an essential part, and it is essential that they be part of a joint understanding of the problem.

Senator SHAHEEN. Yes?

Mr. DACCORD. If you allow me, Senator? We are lucky enough to meet American troops everywhere on the ground because we are together.

When it comes to CENTCOM, of course, there is a lot of work that we do together, AFRICOM also. So we are used to that.

And I think we, in fact, value—and I hope they value us also—their reading of the situation. They have a very, very good understanding of what happens. They have very clear, I would say, military and security objectives, and they distinguish them very clearly from our own, I would say, humanitarian objective.

And I think we value having this very regular but also very strategic contact on a daily basis.

Senator SHAHEEN. Thank you.

Ms. Lindborg, USIP has been very involved in the role of women in conflict areas, and the importance of women being at the table and negotiating in the conflicts.

So I want to ask you about that, but I also want to point out that I have been part of a task force that has been done by the Center for Strategic and International Studies that just came out with a report this week on addressing adolescent girls and women, and empowering them in four areas—maternal and child health, family planning, reproductive health, nutrition, and HPV vaccines. And this is the report.

Mr. Chairman, I would like to share this with anybody on the committee who has an interest.

But I know this is a longer term issue than the current topic of today's discussion, but can you talk about how important it is to

make sure that, as we are engaging in these conflict areas and areas where there are tragedies like the famines we are facing, that we engage with women and make sure that they are at the table because of their importance to the long-term solutions for many of these situations?

Ms. LINDBORG. Absolutely. And congratulations on your work on that important study.

You know, women and girls and children disproportionately suffer from these kinds of complicated conflicts and famine. The health implications, as you discussed earlier, are overwhelming.

And they are also those who often are on the frontlines of needing to take care of their families. Often, they are the ones who are the refugees and have to hold together family and often community cohesion.

It is very important to include women in the longer term rebuilding of these communities, both at the community level and at the peace table. And we are seeing that when women are included in these peace processes, they are far more likely to be enduring. There is a lot of research on this.

So from taking care of women at the health level to empowering them as leaders is an absolutely essential aspect of addressing these crises, short term and long term.

Senator SHAHEEN. Thank you very much.

And, Mr. Chairman, just another reason why we need to advance the Women, Peace, and Security Act.

The CHAIRMAN. I am sure we will get that done in some form.

And if you want to enter that document into the record, you are welcome to do that.

So without objection, we will enter it in.

[The material referred to above can be downloaded from the following url:]

<https://www.csis.org/analysis/her-health-her-lifetime-our-world>

The CHAIRMAN. Thank you for the comments.

Senator Rubio?

Senator RUBIO. Thank you.

Thank you both for being here. All of these areas are important. I want to focus on South Sudan for a moment.

I want to read to you from the first paragraph of the Enough Project. It is in combination with The Sentry, a partnership with Sentry, which is an investigative initiative. Here is what they write: "South Sudan leaders have stoked violent conflict, committed mass atrocities, and created a manmade famine. The main source of the conflict is the competition for spoils in which factions, based primarily on ethnic and historical allegiance, compete violently for power and the massive opportunities for self-enrichment available through looting national budgets, exploiting natural resources, and manipulating state contracts."

Would either of you disagree with this assessment?

Ms. LINDBORG. No.

Mr. DACCORD. No. I would be more specific.

Senator RUBIO. You want to be more specific? Is that what you said?

Mr. DACCORD. No, I think South Sudan, I agree with the statement, but I think then we have to understand exactly which dynamic it is. South Sudan is not something that you can look at in a vacuum. It is a country that has been created a few years ago. The leaders there have been part of a guerilla which is there for a very, very long time.

So I agree with the statement, but I think we need to put the statement, I would say, in context to understand exactly what we are dealing with.

Senator RUBIO. Well, I appreciate that. I think what we are dealing with, according to this, according to the statement from Mr. Gottlieb where he said that we hold all the warring parties, including the government, the opposition, and affiliated armed groups responsible for the hostilities that upend and, even worse, target civilian lives and livelihoods.

You also had a large number of aid workers killed trying to provide services in South Sudan.

So here is what I wanted to ask about. You have sensed from some of the members a sense of urgency about what we can do now. And the resources, I do not think any of us disagree—although in 2013, I believe South Sudan was the largest recipient of aid in the world, and yet this remains.

So the resources, I do not think, are in dispute. We all agree we want to continue to be a part of it. But that is not enough unless we get through the access problem.

The access problem requires a whole-of-government approach, from our perspective. One of the suggestions that they make is that we need to, in essence, we have an opportunity to hit these leaders and their criminal networks in their wallets using the power of the U.S. dollar, which they rely on almost exclusively, to create leverage in support of a renewed peace initiative that can probably bring stability and peace to the region.

And they go on to talk about changing the calculations of South Sudan's leaders through this leverage. The aim is to bring them to the table, for example, to negotiate a new ceasefire. But the leverage would involve OFAC designation of individuals and entities both in the government and in the opposition, that it should start with mid- to senior-level targets.

They also believe that we can reach out to financial institutions to take extra steps to safeguard against the laundering of the proceeds of corruption originating in South Sudan. The U.S. Department of Treasury's Financial Crimes Enforcement Network should issue an advisory that identifies particular, very specific categories of money laundering associated with plutocracy in South Sudan, including real estate transactions.

The point being, the argument that they make in this report, which I am compelled to agree with, is that the only way we are going to get to the access problem here is not simply by providing more resources but by using leverage, particularly the unique leverage the United States brings to bear to pressuring these criminals on both sides to the table to organize a ceasefire and, as a result, allow access to humanitarian relief and the safety of the workers that provide it.

My question to both of you is, do you believe that it would be a positive exercise of American power to use the threat of sanctions against these individuals on both sides of this conflict to bring them to the table to resolve this in a way that allows access for food and medicine for these people that are on the verge of starvation and death in South Sudan?

Ms. LINDBORG. I have heard of the Enough proposal. I think that it is critical to bring U.S. leadership to bear. We have used threats through U.N. security resolutions. They are not always borne out.

If there is a way to use the sanctions that Enough is proposing to really make a difference and to galvanize action and to jumpstart a very moribund peace process, I think it is a very important idea to explore and look at the feasibility.

For this, we need to refill the special envoy position. We have long looked at local leadership as being key, local regional leadership at IGAD or the African Union as key for moving forward that process. That is still true. And it will be important to have U.S. leadership and all of our tools as a part of moving that forward.

This has been a very difficult, nonproductive peace process to date, but we will not be able to solve this problem if we do not engage more effectively regional leadership, African Union leadership, and, ultimately, look at these kinds of creative uses of sanctions.

American leadership, I believe, will be absolutely essential.

Mr. DACCORD. Senator Rubio, I do value—again, my limit is that I am a humanitarian, so I will not look at these questions of sanctions and all of that. But as a humanitarian, and also my limits—and when it comes to South Sudan, what is requested is not more humanitarian response. What is requested today is a political response, very clearly.

Here, the framework is very clear. You have international humanitarian law, which very specifically says what the parties to the conflict need to do. And there is an Article 1 of the Geneva Convention that says respect and ensure respect.

What I would really find interesting is that, for once, the community of states are ready to do that. In South Sudan, it is a place where it is possible to guarantee, in fact, the respect of international humanitarian law. Absolutely. And it is a political and diplomatic endeavor.

The CHAIRMAN. Thank you very much.

Senator Markey?

Senator MARKEY. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

So would each of you support targeted sanctions in South Sudan as a strategy which the United States should be supporting?

Ms. LINDBORG. I think so. I mean, I do not know enough about the specifics and who would be targeted, but we should look very carefully and lean into those possibilities that will make a difference.

Senator MARKEY. Great.

Mr. Daccord?

Mr. DACCORD. In general, I am careful about sanctions. If I look at the humanitarian side of the sanctions, normally, the people suffering from the sanctions are never the ones you are targeting.

Senator MARKEY. I appreciate that.



Mr. DACCORD. That is my problem. So my point 2, though, is, as a humanitarian organization, as I mentioned before, we are extremely interested that the government but also all the parties to the conflict are really abiding by international humanitarian law, and that should be the focus of the international community.

Senator MARKEY. Members of this body called for targeted sanctions in the Congo last year on the elections issue, targeted those who were repressing democracy, and now we see some success. We are going to have to keep our fingers crossed. So that would be one of our goals.

I would like to focus as well on climate change and the impact it may have had in South Sudan. We have been warned for 40 years about the impacts of carbon dioxide in the atmosphere and the impact that it was having on sub-Saharan Africa. And now we see droughts, followed by famine, followed by limited resources inside of the country, followed by fights over those limited resources.

So can you talk a little bit, Mr. Daccord, about the need for the United States, for the world, to lead on climate change, so that what we see in South Sudan is not exacerbated and what we see in South Sudan is not replicated in other parts of the world?

Mr. DACCORD. Senator, you are taking me a bit outside of my zone of competencies and knowledge. If I look at the pure humanitarian perspective, what we see, of course, is that, in the region of East Africa over the last 15 years, there is a clear impact of climate change in the country and in the entire region, not only South Sudan, by the way. You see that in Somalia, Kenya very clearly.

What you see is it has had a dramatic impact on the way people are living. With the livestock, they had to go down, in fact, because there was drought everywhere for a long, long time. We know that El Niño has an enormous impact right now in the region. We know that very clearly.

Now this is my, I would say, responsibility as a humanitarian to be able to integrate that dimension when we respond there.

Senator MARKEY. So should we the United States be a leader in reducing the carbon dioxide so that we do not see a further exacerbation of this increased desertification that we are seeing all across the world? Do you think we should take the lead, sir?

Mr. DACCORD. Senator Markey, what I would find important is that the United States would understand, in fact, when they look at a crisis like the crisis we are talking about all the different components of the crisis.

Senator MARKEY. Right. So should we take the lead?

Mr. DACCORD. That is not what I am saying.

Senator MARKEY. Okay. I hear you.

Ms. Lindborg, should we take the lead?

Ms. LINDBORG. U.S. leadership is absolutely essential for making movement on global problems. We are seeing that over and over again.

Senator MARKEY. Do you put climate change in that category?

Ms. LINDBORG. As Yves has said, we have seen an ever-fasting cycle of drought in the Horn of Africa that is leading to exacerbated and increased humanitarian—

Senator MARKEY. And do you agree with the experts that it is caused by human activity that is warming the planet dangerously

and causing an exacerbation of these problems? Do you agree with that?

Ms. LINDBORG. So, like Yves, I am not a scientist.

Senator MARKEY. Okay.

Ms. LINDBORG. But from a humanitarian perspective—

Senator MARKEY. I understand. You see the consequences of it.

Ms. LINDBORG. We are seeing the consequences of increased cycles of extreme drought.

Senator MARKEY. You see the consequences of it. I appreciate that. Yes. The science is clear, and the impact is also clear.

I would like to move over, if I could, to Haiti. There are many, many people who are in need of help in Haiti. In December, the United Nations asked for \$400 million for a strategy to address a cholera outbreak started by U.N. peacekeepers in Haiti. Two days ago, the New York Times reported that the total amount raised so far is \$2 million—\$2 million to help these people in Haiti to deal with the long-term consequences of this cholera introduced by U.N. peacekeepers about 10 years ago.

What are your perspectives on this U.N. appeal for such severe humanitarian need and how it has failed so spectacularly in terms of actually getting help from the United Nations to deal with the problem?

Mr. Daccord?

Mr. DACCORD. Again, you mentioned perspective. I think what I found so difficult is to see that Haiti today still, in terms of population and system, is not equipped to be able to absorb shock whatsoever, right? And after now 7 or 8 years of intervention of the international community, I think there are reflections of how we do it together and what we are able to do, to make sure that we are able not only to respond to emergency—the emergency was rather well responded. It was not perfect, but it was—

Senator MARKEY. In the immediate, but not for the long term. It is just sitting there waiting for a repetition of the same situation.

Mr. DACCORD. Exactly. I agree with that.

Senator MARKEY. So are you disappointed in the U.N.?

Mr. DACCORD. I am disappointed not in the U.N. I am disappointed about the global response.

Senator MARKEY. So you are disappointed in the individual countries in the U.N.? Is that what you are saying?

Mr. DACCORD. No, I am disappointed about the global response. I find it difficult as always—as a humanitarian, what I am trying to do is to see what is our contribution. We have a very clear humanitarian perspective. We are trying to see that, but we also see the limits of what it is.

Typically, in Haiti, for years, we have really downsized our presence because we thought that we as humanitarians need to focus on where really there is a need to do that.

Senator MARKEY. Yes. What I am afraid of, Mr. Daccord, is that because the global response, just how well each one of the individual members did on it, I think in the Trump era, with his America First attitude and saying we are going to retreat on the State Department budget, other budgets that would have the United States being a leader, it is going to give other countries which have

not been so great anyway further excuse not to themselves participate.

And then the global response, unfortunately, is going to leave these poor people in even worse situations even though it was a problem that was caused by the introduction of cholera by the United Nations peacekeeping forces into that country. And now they are going to be living with it forever, if this period of time this Trump America First attitude is perpetuated in our own country but around the world it is replicated.

So I just think it is a huge long-term problem.

Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

The CHAIRMAN. Thank you.

I would note the incredible discipline of our witnesses to stay within humanitarian confines.

Senator Young?

Senator YOUNG. Thank you.

Mr. Chairman, I just want to build on this question of access in various areas, particularly South Sudan. It has been invoked a number of times. A related question is accountability when there is a lack of access.

Mr. Gottlieb noted in his written testimony that the aid workers have been harassed, attacked, or killed in South Sudan, with at least 72 aid workers dying there since 2013.

Mr. Daccord, you cite the widespread violation of international humanitarian law, tax on health facilities, health care workers, so on and so forth. As you know, Rule 31 of Customary International Humanitarian Law states that humanitarian relief personnel must be respected and protected. Rule 35 prohibits directing an attack against a zone established to shelter the wounded, the sick, and civilians from the effects of hostilities. And that applies to all parties, including Russia, the Assad regime, their deliberate and repeated targets on hospitals in Aleppo, I might note.

Mr. Daccord, in all conflict zones where ICRC operates, are you making any effort to document these attacks on humanitarian personnel so we can bring the perpetrators to justice?

Mr. DACCORD. First of all, Senator, thank you for the question. Your assessment is quite right.

I think we see a real issue when it comes to access, and not just access of humanitarians. My concern is access for people, communities to health, for example.

And you mentioned the issue of health. What we have seen over the last few years is a systematic pressure attacking health structure. And by the way, not only in South Sudan, in Yemen, as an example, in Afghanistan, in Syria, by all the parties from day one of the conflict. And this is really dramatic.

So what we do as ICRC, we first of all, are part of something larger, but, as an organization, we document that, of course. But we do not then put that at disposal of the public. What we do is we document that because we engage in bilateral discussions, confidential discussions with the people in charge. So we do discuss with, in fact, in the case of Syria, we do discuss with the government, with the rebels, with also international governments. You mentioned Russia and others. And we engage with them on very specific elements.

We did the same with governments on specific questions in Afghanistan, for example, in Syria, in Iraq. I think it is important to be able to do it. That is the way we do. Others will do differently. Other organizations will then really recommend and look and be more public about that.

And I value, in fact, this different perspective, but our perspective is to document and to have a real very, very thorough discussion over time with, in fact, the people that are directly responsible. We do not do that only about health. We do that, as you mentioned, about the tensions and all that. And this is something we maintain very carefully.

Senator YOUNG. And I can understand, on account of your mission, why that sort of neutral disposition would make sense. You try to mediate these conflicts. Tell me if I am misrepresenting it, but you try to come to some more positive resolution, short of outing these individuals and passing this information on to authorities that might pursue legal action against the perpetrators. Correct?

Mr. DACCORD. Senator, we are a very pragmatic organization.

Senator YOUNG. Yes.

Mr. DACCORD. In fact, we adapt to the reality of the world. And I think if we would start to pass information to anybody, my role as the CEO, I will have to withdraw my people from most of the places where we are.

You mentioned trust, trust is a critical element, and we need to have a minimum of distrust from, in fact, the parties to the conflict. So when we are confidential, they need to trust us that we are really confidential. If they start to make a mix between us and justice, it will be extremely difficult for us.

Senator YOUNG. I understand your perspective.

Ms. Lindborg is chomping at the bit to chime in here.

Ms. LINDBORG. I just wanted to note that my current organization, the U.S. Institute of Peace, works on the ground in conflict areas not providing humanitarian assistance but looking at how to manage or resolve violent conflicts. And to resolve any kind of conflict where there has been violence and terrible things that have occurred, you need to look at this issue of accountability, and there will be different solutions in different contexts both at national and international and also local levels.

So, for example, USIP worked in Tikrit in Iraq after the massacre by Daesh, by ISIL, of 1,600 Iraqi cadets. When Daesh left, there was enormous distrust between the Sunni and Shia communities and the possibility of cycles of tribal revenge.

So we brought the tribal sheikhs, the Shia and the Sunnis, together to navigate and negotiate a peace agreement, so that they would only hold the specific perpetrators accountable, not their entire tribes. And that ultimately enabled about 300,000 Sunni families to return.

So justice and accountability is absolutely essential to conclude and heal from violent conflicts, and there are both large-scale processes and local-level processes that need to be brought to bear.

Senator YOUNG. Okay. It sounds as though there may be some work to be done at the U.S. Federal Government level with respect to documenting legal action and bringing certain perpetrators

under certain circumstances to justice, but we have to be very careful about this.

We will continue the dialogue later. Thank you.

The CHAIRMAN. Thank you.

Senator Cardin?

Senator CARDIN. Let me just compliment Senator Young on that line of questioning. I understand the confidentiality and the trust issues, but this is violation of international protocols, and I do think we need to document.

I know, Mr. Daccord, your people are at risk. The numbers I think are public. As I understand, your frontline people have paid, in some cases, the ultimate sacrifice for their service.

Do you have just the numbers of people that have been injured or killed from the International Red Cross?

Mr. DACCORD. I always found it difficult to look at numbers because, as we know, it does not really reflect the issues.

If I look at just my own organization, we just lost, months ago, six of my colleagues in Afghanistan, for example. If I look at then the Red Crescent and Red Cross family, in Syria, it is the highest number since World War II. The Syrian Red Crescent, which is part of our family, has lost 57 volunteers and paid staff in Syria over the last 6 years.

That tells you a little bit of what is happening when you are on the frontline, which is very clear. And the access questions and the ability to negotiate, we are living in a world where fragmentation is there. You have a lot of fragmentation among, in fact, armed groups, which makes things extremely difficult because you need to make sure that they understand who you are, at least tolerate you. And that requires long-term work.

That is one of the big questions. When you focus on the four countries we just mentioned—Yemen, Somalia, Northeast Nigeria, and South Sudan.

And the answer to your question, Mr. Chairman, is let's make sure that the aid will really go to organizations that are able to deal with access. That is the critical issue. You want to reach out to the population that deserves to receive help.

Senator CARDIN. I thank you for that.

I just really would make this point. If the United States did everything I wanted to do, and the international community did everything that they should do, we would still need you because of the credibility you have in the community and your ability to provide frontline help that we would not be able to do as governments.

So I just really want to thank you so much for what you do, both of you, what you do and the sacrifices that you make, in really dealing with what is I think the key value of America, and that is our international responsibilities for humanitarian assistance. So thank you.

The CHAIRMAN. Thank you both.

This will conclude our hearing. I thank you for your testimony to focus on the short-, medium-, and longer term issues.

You know, we have the great privilege of serving on this committee and having a better worldview than most have because of all the information that we have on a daily basis and is incoming from our staffs and other people. It is amazing that, on one hand,

the many good things that organizations like both of yours do. It is also so disheartening to know that we have leaders around the world that would deny aid to their own people.

Yesterday, the event we had relative to Caesar where, again, we see the documentation of Assad torturing his own people, having it lay siege to communities where people cannot get medicines, as a matter of fact, specific medicines, what is happening in the four regions that we are focused on today.

So there is always going to be more work than we can do, and there are always going to be people that we could have and should have gotten aid to that we cannot. But, thankfully, the United States of America, generally speaking, has played a leading role. And I think that most people on this committee want to do everything they can to ensure that.

And we are very thankful that organizations like the two of you, and the two of you as individuals, exist. Thank you so much for being here.

For the record, if you will, it will remain open until the close of business Friday. There will be some additional QFRs that you all are very familiar with. In a reasonable amount of time, if you can respond, we would appreciate it.

Thank you, again. The meeting is adjourned.

[Whereupon, at 11:57 a.m., the hearing was adjourned.]

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#### ADDITIONAL MATERIAL SUBMITTED FOR THE RECORD

##### RESPONSES OF GREGORY GOTTLIEB TO QUESTIONS SUBMITTED BY SENATOR TODD YOUNG

*Question.* Mr. Gottlieb, in order to inform the optimal allocation of finite resources and get further ahead of crises, has USAID undertaken any systematic and methodical effort to assess, measure, and report resilience in regions that could be vulnerable to humanitarian crises? Do you regularly share those results with this committee? If not, will you? Would a systematic and ongoing assessment of resilience in regions vulnerable to humanitarian crisis help us optimally allocate finite resources?

*Answer.* USAID established the Famine Early Warning System Network (FEWS NET) in 1985 to provide state-of-the-art, evidence-based early warning analyses on both current and forecasted acute food insecurity. FEWS NET works with U.S. government science agencies, national government ministries, international agencies and NGOs to continually refine and provide systematic, forward-looking analysis and reporting on 36 of the world's most food-insecure and chronically vulnerable countries on a monthly basis, with timely alerts on emerging or likely crises and regular in-person updates as needed. We are happy to share these with the committee.

USAID, other donors and governments use this early warning information to optimally allocate finite humanitarian assistance resources on an ongoing basis. This information has also enabled USAID and others to respond earlier, more effectively, and more cost efficiently to emerging crises. For example, early warning information gathered through remote sensing and on-the-ground data collection in Ethiopia in 2015 enabled the Government of Ethiopia, USAID and others to get ahead of and manage the 2016 El Niño drought despite it being more severe and farther reaching than the 1985 drought that led to widespread famine.

We have also used historical trends in these data to target longer-term development investments in countries and regions that are vulnerable to recurrent humanitarian crises to address the underlying causes of these crises and strengthen the ability of vulnerable households, communities and countries to mitigate, adapt to and recover from them. These investments in resilience, including through Feed the Future programs and the Office of Food for Peace's development food assistance programs, are most effective when they are aligned with country-led efforts and invest-

ment, such as Ethiopia's Productive Safety Net Programme (PSNP) and Kenya's Ending Drought Emergencies (EDE) initiative.

A study by the UK's Department for International Development (DFID) in Ethiopia and Kenya estimates that, over the long-term, each \$1 invested in building resilience will result in \$2.9 in reduced humanitarian spending, avoided losses and development benefits. Recent evidence from the lowlands of Ethiopia (figure 1) confirms the value of these investments. Households in communities reached by USAID's comprehensive resilience programs were able to maintain their food security status during the severe El Niño drought in 2016, while households in other communities experienced a significant decline.

Similar efforts to build resilience to recurrent crises that result in repeat, large-scale humanitarian emergencies are underway in chronically vulnerable areas of Niger, Burkina Faso, Mali, Uganda and Malawi. Pilot resilience programs in Somalia show promise, but have been much smaller in scale due to the challenging operating environment.

More broadly, USAID also has other tools to monitor fragility globally, including to assess vulnerability to conflict and other crises at the country level, and to forecast countries' risk of instability. USAID uses these tools to prioritize more in-depth country analysis, to inform strategic planning, and to contribute to interagency policy discussions on fragility and instability.

*Question.* Mr. Gottlieb, in your prepared statement, you state that the United States' "commitments to humanitarian efforts also enable us to push for greater transparency and improved efficiencies in the international system, including in the U.N. agencies." Can you provide some specific examples of where you see a need for greater transparency and improved efficiencies in U.N. Agencies?

*Answer.* A central element of our approach to humanitarian financing includes using our position as the largest humanitarian donor to advance transparency and improve efficiencies in the international system, including with U.N. Agencies. In addition to our role on U.N. Agency Executive Boards and other donor advisory bodies, the primary vehicle for the conversations around transparency and efficiencies is the Grand Bargain.

In 2015, the then-UN Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon appointed a High Level Panel for Humanitarian Financing (HLPHF) to work on finding solutions to the widening gap between the current levels of humanitarian need and the available resources. One of the recommendations from the HLPHF was a package of reforms aiming to make humanitarian financing more effective, referred to as the Grand Bargain. Under the Grand Bargain, U.N. Agencies have committed to advance transparency and improve inefficiencies across several issues. Likewise, donors have committed to reviewing practices which may have inadvertently incentivized inefficiencies.

The key areas which have been identified for U.N. Agencies to improve transparency and make efficiency gains, through the HLPHF and articulated in the Grand Bargain, include:

- **Improve open-data:** U.N. Agencies need to make advancements in using a shared open-data standard and common digital platform to enhance transparency and decision-making. The U.N.'s Financial Tracking System (FTS) is a well-established platform for recording international humanitarian aid contributions, while the International Aid Transparency Initiative (IATI) is the most advanced platform which covers both humanitarian and development data. Following the Grand Bargain, FTS recently completed its overhaul to align with the IATI standard as a first step in this wider process. In alignment with this priority, USAID's largest humanitarian partner, the U.N. World Food Program (WFP), has undertaken major reforms in its internal architecture that will enable direct donor access to data reporting systems.
- **Increase support to local responders:** Governments, communities, and civil society actors are the first responders in any disaster. By increasing training and funding directed toward local and national responders, supporting national coordination mechanisms, and improving the quality of assistance delivered by local responders, U.N. Agencies can achieve efficiency gains through reducing the number of intermediary partners, as well as promote local ownership and strengthen local civil society.
- **Increase the use of cash-based programming:** When appropriate, cash-based assistance can be an efficient and effective humanitarian intervention. USAID frequently supports cash-based modalities for emergency response, depending on the context. Sufficient oversight must be in place, and cash must align with people's needs and market conditions. Under the right conditions, cash assistance

can be an effective way to meet needs, help the local economy, reduce storage and transportation costs, reduce risks to aid workers and beneficiaries through electronic transactions, and make the most of limited humanitarian aid budgets.

- Reduce duplication and management costs: Through maximizing efficiencies in procurement and logistics for commonly required goods and services, shared procurement across U.N. Agencies can leverage the comparative advantage of the agencies and promote innovation. Key areas which have been identified for U.N. Agencies to review include: travel, fleet management, insurance, shipment tracking, pipelines, IT services and equipment, commercial consultancies, and common support services. An effective example of this kind of initiative can be seen in the Rome-Based Agency collaboration, where the three U.N. Food Agencies (WFP, Food and Agriculture Organization, and International Fund for Agricultural Development) have already achieved, under firm Executive Board—including the U.S. Government—guidance, significant efficiencies in the areas of program, administration, and oversight.
- Increase the use of innovative technology: Advances in technology can reduce the costs and increase the effectiveness of humanitarian assistance. Several new approaches include: mobile technology for needs assessments and monitoring; digital platforms and mobile devices for financial transactions; communications with affected populations via call centers or SMS messaging; biometrics, such as fingerprint identification; and sustainable energy. Not all approaches will be successful in every context, but U.N. Agencies should be employing these technologies when appropriate. USAID has been pressing for greater use of biometric identification technology in refugee populations served by WFP and the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) which improves targeting and reduces duplication, leading to more effective and efficient programs.
- Harmonize partnership agreements and reporting requirements: Different U.N. Agencies often work with the same set of partners in humanitarian responses. By harmonizing partner agreements and reporting requirements across U.N. Agencies, the burden of administrative management by implementing partners can be reduced, allowing a shift of time and resources towards delivering assistance.
- Put in place comparable costs structures: Financial management approaches across the U.N. Agencies is varied. Greater and more consistent transparency as to what direct and indirect costs are included in various program and budget components is needed in order to achieve standard definitions of overhead and management costs.
- Improve joint and impartial needs assessments: Significant efforts have been made in the past few years to strengthen the quality and coordination of needs assessments, including within the framework of the Humanitarian Needs Overview exercise. However, the current approaches to joint needs assessment, across U.N. Agencies and NGOs, still falls short of meeting the decision-making requirements for various stakeholders, and all too often U.N. appeals do not prioritize the most urgent needs in a given response.
- Advance fraud, waste and abuse mitigation systems: All U.N. Agencies need to advance their systems to mitigate fraud, waste and abuse. Specifically, the U.N. Agencies, as a collective, need to address these issues jointly rather than in individual channels as is the current practice. While respecting the relevant legal restrictions, U.N. Agencies need to identify ways to share incident reports and other information across agencies where appropriate. A collective approach which allows this type of sharing across U.N. Agencies will support cross-learning and strengthen each individual agency's defenses against fraud, waste and abuse.

*Question.* In November of 2016, the Office of the Inspector General for USAID published an audit of USAID's financial statements for fiscal years 2016 and 2015. The IG audit identified one material deficiency and four significant deficiencies. Mr. Gottlieb, please provide my office and the committee a written response explaining the steps that USAID has taken to address the deficiencies identified in the IG audit.

*Answer.* USAID is working diligently to address the deficiencies identified by Inspector General (IG) auditors in the fiscal year (FY) 2016 Agency Financial Report. USAID is currently conducting a detailed analysis of our business processes to address concerns raised in the IG audit. This analysis includes further documenting processes, revising policies as needed, training staff, and assuring measures are in place to ensure the quality and accuracy of USAID information.



Please find below the steps USAID is taking to address each deficiency and the expected results identified in the Audit Report No. 0-000-17-001-C: Office of Inspector General Audit of USAID's Financial Statements for Fiscal Years 2016 and 2015.

USAID has made substantial progress in addressing the one material weakness and the four significant deficiencies identified in the audit.

*Material Weakness: USAID Did Not Reconcile Its Fund Balance With Treasury Account With the Department of the Treasury and Resolve Unreconciled Items in a Timely Manner (Repeat Finding)*

The IG audit identified one material weakness related to USAID's fund balance with Treasury. As a result, the Agency has expended significant resources to improve our business processes and tools to ensure timely reconciliation with Treasury in order to address the material weakness.

*Significant Deficiency: Intragovernmental Transactions Remain Unreconciled (Repeat Finding)*

To address this deficiency identified by the IG audit, the Agency has reengineered its business process for reconciliation of its intragovernmental transactions (IGT), with a focus on timely follow up with our trading partners and ongoing reconciliation between Treasury and USAID. USAID has already realized significant improvement through our efforts working with our trading partners and Treasury as evidenced by the decrease in the number and dollar amounts of IGT transactions that remain unreconciled.

*Significant Deficiency: USAID Did Not Comply With Federal Standards in Accounting for Reimbursable Agreements (Repeat Finding)*

USAID will address the non-compliance of reimbursable agreements with accounting standards once the upgrade to our core financial system is implemented in FY 2018.

*Significant Deficiency: USAID Did Not Maintain Adequate Records of Property, Plant, and Equipment*

USAID reviewed the underlying causes of the reporting errors and has established new quality assurance processes to ensure timely and accurate data collection and reporting of vehicles and real property overseas.

*Significant Deficiency: USAID Did Not Promptly Investigate and Resolve Potential Funds Control Violations*

USAID has reduced the backlog of funds control violation cases by assigning additional resources and modifying our business processes to streamline case evaluation, resulting in making major progress toward addressing the fourth deficiency.

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RESPONSE OF HON. NANCY LINDBORG TO QUESTION  
SUBMITTED BY SENATOR TODD YOUNG

*Question.* Ms. Lindborg, in your prepared remarks, you state that "The U.N.'s Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (OCHA) is appealing for \$5.6 billion in 2017 to address famines in Yemen, South Sudan, Nigeria and Somalia, \$4.4 billion of which is required urgently by June ..." What portion of that \$4.4 billion appeal has been pledged and delivered? Do you believe that goal will be met by June? If it is not met, what do you see as the specific consequences?

*Answer.* As of Tuesday, March 28, only \$572 million of the \$4.4 billion appeal for aid has been received by the U.N. That accounts for just 13% of the total needed by June 2017 to engage effectively in response and prevention efforts in the countries at risk of famine. Barring massive change to the size of pledges and their rapid disbursement over the next two months, it is highly unlikely that the full \$4.4 billion will be raised by June.

For reference, according to OCHA, of the four countries facing famine, Somalia is closest to meeting its appeal, having raised 22.3% of the priority requirements for food security, health, nutrition and water, sanitation and hygiene (WASH). However, Somalia's appeal is the smallest of the four countries at risk of famine. Yemen, which faces the largest humanitarian crisis of the four nations in question, has only raised 7% of its appeal.

Status of Priority Requirements for Famine Response and Prevention:

Nigeria—\$64 million raised out of \$734.1 billion (9%)

Somalia—\$160 million raised out of \$720 million (22%)

South Sudan—\$231 million raised out of \$1.25 billion (18%)

Yemen—\$117 million raised out of \$1.7 billion (7%)

There will be dire humanitarian, regional and global consequences if this international appeal is not met.

In March, the head of U.N. Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (OCHA) and U.N. Emergency Relief Coordinator Stephen O'Brien told the U.N. Security Council that, "without collective and coordinated global efforts, people will simply starve to death" and "many more will suffer and die from disease." As I noted in my testimony, current estimates place 20 million people at risk of starvation, and if the 2011 Somali famine is any indication, we should expect half of the dead to be children.

#### POTENTIAL CONSEQUENCES

The legacy of this humanitarian disaster will linger long after the dead are buried. A generation of those children who survive will be irreversibly stunted by the severe malnutrition they experienced. This nutrition-related stunting radically changes the course of a child's life by impairing the development of their brain, lowering IQ, and weakening immune systems. This stunting, in combination with the limited access to school that accompanies humanitarian disaster, will leave the region with millions of people who lack the skills or experience necessary to build resilient societies and responsive governments.

These famines have forced over nearly two million people to flee. The severity of this crisis is on display in Bidi Bidi, a nearly inhabited grassland in Uganda that has developed into the world's largest refugee camp in less than six months. Bidi Bidi currently plays host over 300,000 people. These refugees add to the record 65 million people displaced globally and have a destabilizing effect on the region, which in turn has the potential to affect Europe with continued unchecked flows of refugees.

As we have seen in previous famines, gains in economic development will likely be reversed with the potential for the development, revival or expansion of illicit market activities. Currently, all four nations are contending with insurgencies and violent extremist organizations, which exploit extreme hunger and structural inequality to recruit, forcibly and voluntarily, more people into their ranks. These black markets will further enable the civil wars and terrorist operations that are already underway in Nigeria, Somalia, Yemen, and renewed in South Sudan. A tepid international response to these famines may prove to be fertile recruitment fodder for terror organizations like Al-Shabaab, Boko Haram Al-Qaeda and ISIL. The sum total of a failure to respond would leave millions dead and regional conflicts more intractable, with the potential of more and longer term regional instability and economic volatility coupled with the potential for continued spread of terrorist organizations.

