

**PERSONNEL IS POLICY: U.N. ELECTIONS AND
U.S. LEADERSHIP IN INTERNATIONAL
ORGANIZATIONS**

HEARING
BEFORE THE
SUBCOMMITTEE ON
INTERNATIONAL DEVELOPMENT, INTERNATIONAL
ORGANIZATIONS
AND GLOBAL CORPORATE SOCIAL IMPACT
OF THE
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PERSONNEL IS POLICY: U.N. ELECTIONS AND U.S. LEADERSHIP IN INTERNATIONAL OR- GANIZATIONS

Thursday, November 18, 2021

HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES,
SUBCOMMITTEE ON INTERNATIONAL DEVELOPMENT,
INTERNATIONAL ORGANIZATIONS, AND GLOBAL
CORPORATE SOCIAL IMPACT,
COMMITTEE ON FOREIGN AFFAIRS,
Washington, DC.

The subcommittee met, pursuant to notice, at 10:02 a.m., in room 2172, Rayburn House Office Building, Hon. Joaquin Castro (chairman of the subcommittee) presiding.

Mr. CASTRO. The Subcommittee on International Development, International Organizations, and Global Corporate Social Impact will come to order.

Good morning, everyone. Thank you to our witness for being here today for this hearing entitled “Personnel is Policy: U.N. Elections and U.S. Leadership in International Organizations.”

Without objection, the chair is authorized to declare a recess of the committee at any point, and all members will have 5 days to submit statements, extraneous material, and questions for the record, subject to length limitation in our rules. To insert something into the record, please have your staff email the document to the previously mentioned address, or contact subcommittee staff.

As a reminder to members joining remotely, please keep your video function on at all times even when you are not recognized by the chair. Members are responsible for muting and unmuting themselves. And please remember to mute yourself after you finish speaking.

Consistent with the H. Res. 8 and the accompanying regulations, staff will only mute members and witnesses as appropriate when they are not under recognition to eliminate background noise. I also ask members who are present in the hearing room to keep their masks on when they are not speaking.

I see that we have a quorum and will now recognize myself for opening remarks.

Pursuant to notice, we are holding a hearing today on the United States’ engagement with the United Nations and other international organizations, upcoming leadership elections at the United Nations, and the Biden Administration’s policies to more effectively engage with these multilateral bodies.

After the Second World War, the United States worked with our allies and adversaries to create the United Nations, the entity that is at the foundation of today’s international system. Much of

world's diplomacy is centered around the United Nations and its various component agencies and offices. The work at the United Nations today covers everything from nuclear nonproliferation to human rights to the standards that determine how technology will be developed.

It is essential that the United States stays deeply engaged with the U.N. To preserve and advance our interests within this international system, using diplomacy and negotiation instead of conflict and coercion.

I called this hearing today to understand from the Administration and the State Department how they will do that, including when it comes to key elections to U.N. bodies.

We know what it looks like when the United States' approach isn't well-coordinated. And I will give you an example of that. The heads of U.N. bodies are determined by elections where member States build coalitions and support candidates that reflect their values. In 2019, the United Nations Food and Agriculture Organization was scheduled to elect its director general, someone who would have a key role in setting international policy on agriculture and food security. The United States, under the last Administration, approached this critical election without a clear strategy or goal. Not only did we split with our European allies, reports indicate that the State Department and the Department of Agriculture, both agencies that work with the Food and Agriculture Organization, weren't on the same page on which candidate to back.

Ultimately, the Government of China was able to get one of its senior government officials elected to the office, a serious setback for the United States and for our European allies and allies around the world.

The lessons of this experience are why I am encouraged to see the Biden Administration and the Blinken State Department make concrete efforts to better coordinate our work in international organizations. This year, the State Department created the new Office of Multilateral Strategy and Personnel that will coordinate the actions of the United States on these elections.

I am also encouraged to see the Administration's early and vocal support of Ms. Doreen Bogdan-Martin's candidacy to lead the International Telecommunications Union during the upcoming fall 2022 elections. I had the opportunity to meet with Ms. Bogdan-Martin recently and believe she would be an effective leader of the ITU, an organization where major decisions on standards and technology are set.

Other major elections are looming, including for the International Labor Organization, the World Health Organization, Interpol, and others.

I hope to hear from the Administration on their approaches to these contests as well. I would also like to hear from the Administration on what they will do to expand the use of tools, like the Junior Professional Officer Program, which allows countries to sponsor young professionals to work at the United Nations, or the use of existing authorities to allow U.S. Federal Government employees to be detailed to international organizations.

I believe the State Department should be proactive in identifying where these opportunities are, building awareness of them within

the rest of the Department and with other Federal agencies, and coordinating the placement of these individuals.

We have seen some Federal agencies, such as the Centers for Disease Control, make good use of these authorities to place employees in international organizations, but these efforts across the Federal Government are uneven and inconsistent. We need a more strategic approach that the State Department can provide.

This year I introduced the Restoring U.S. Leadership in International Organizations Act of 2021. The legislation will strengthen the State Department's ability to do just that. And I am glad that key parts of the bill are now included in this committee's EAGLE Act, which is currently being debated by the Congress.

The President will convene a summit for democracy this December, which will kick off a year of action to advance democratic values. In the spirit of advancing democratic values, it is essential that the United States does everything we can to ensure that international organizations do not become the means by which authoritarian powers entrench their policies.

And, with that, I will turn it over to Ranking Member Malliotakis for her opening statement.

Ms. MALLIOTAKIS. Thank you, Mr. Chairman, for calling this important hearing. I look forward to working with you and the rest of the committee members to conduct important oversight of our engagement with the United Nations and other international organizations.

Ambassador, thank you for being here and for your service with the State Department.

This hearing comes at a pivotal time. In recent years, we have seen the United States-led international order challenged as rogue States like China and Russia seek to advance their authoritarian agendas and undermine sovereignty in places like Ukraine and the South China Sea.

As we saw in the early stages of COVID-19, international organizations often oppose our national interests. The World Health Organization routinely parroted Chinese Communist Party talking points, which conflict with statements made by their own experts, leaving the American people exposed to the havoc that COVID-19 would wreak on our Nation.

Instead of serving the American people who fund them, the bureaucrats at the WHO continuously kowtow to President Xi and his cronies, genocidal actors whose goal is to remake the world in their Communist image.

China's bad behavior has not been limited to the WHO. They have consistently sought to exclude Taiwan from international organizations in general, including the International Civil Aviation Organization. And, during the early days of the COVID-19 pandemic, ICAO, which was then headed by a Chinese national, blocked users on Twitter who requested Taiwan be allowed to participate in COVID-19 response efforts at the organization. Those blocks included think tank analysts and journalists. Such behavior is exemplary of China's approach to Taiwan's participation in international organizations.

The United Nations and international organizations more broadly often oppose our national interests. Last month, the United

States was elected to the U.N. Human Rights Council, a fundamentally corrupt body with a track record of protecting dictatorships and covering up the crimes of the world's worst human rights abusers. It is astounding that China, Russia, Venezuela, Cuba all have seats at the table at the supposed shrine of human rights in Geneva. It is laughable. Nicolas Maduro, dictator in Venezuela, was speaking at the opening session earlier this year. And, additionally, the council has focused its efforts on persecuting Israel, the only country permanently featured on the council's agenda as its own item.

This Administration has done nothing to drive real reform at the council. These reforms should have been a prerequisite for the U.S. reengaging with the council—something that I had suggested time and again—let alone seeking election to it, not a lofty goal left to be achieved sometime in the future.

The same can be said for the President's decision to unilaterally rejoin the Paris Agreement on climate change without congressional consultation. While costing Americans trillions of dollars, the agreement permits the world's largest carbon emitter, China, to make meager contributions. Under the agreement, the CCP may continue raising carbon emissions until 2030, destroying our environment and contributing to climate change every step of the way.

When the United States engages with the United Nations, its agencies, or other international organizations, we bring not only our values but also our financial contributions. The U.S. accounts for roughly one quarter of both the regular and peacekeeping budgets at the United Nations, yet our influence rarely measures up to our contributions.

Chairman Castro, I look forward to working with you to conduct rigorous oversight on U.S. engagement with the United Nations and other international organizations. We have a duty to the American taxpayer to ensure that our engagement with these institutions is targeted, strategic, and advances America first interest abroad. Otherwise, we are wasting our time and our constituents' money. Again, I want to thank the witness for being here today, and I look forward to your testimony.

Mr. CASTRO. Thank you, ranking member.

I will now introduce our distinguished witness with us today. Our witness is Ambassador Erica Barks-Ruggles, the Senior Bureau Official at the Department of State's Bureau of International Organization Affairs. She is a career Foreign Service officer who previously served as a U.S. Ambassador to the Republic of Rwanda. She has also served as the U.S. Council General in Cape Town, South Africa, as Deputy U.S. Permanent Representative to the United Nations.

And I will now recognize our witness for 5 minutes. And, without objection, your prepared written statements will be made part of the record. Ambassador Barks-Ruggles, you are recognized for 5 minutes.

STATEMENT OF AMBASSADOR ERICA BARKS-RUGGLES, SENIOR BUREAU OFFICIAL, BUREAU OF INTERNATIONAL ORGANIZATION AFFAIRS, U.S. DEPARTMENT OF STATE

Ms. BARKS-RUGGLES. Good morning, and thank you Chairman Castro, Ranking Member Malliotakis, and the members of the Foreign Affairs Subcommittee on International Organizations for having me here today.

Under the Biden-Harris Administration, the United States has re-engaged vigorously on the multilateral stage to support key U.S. priorities. We have rejoined the Paris Agreement. We have recommitted to the World Health Organization, and we have been re-elected to Human Rights Council.

But U.S. leadership in the U.N. system involves more than simply signing on to existing institutions or re-engaging with U.N. bodies. We are leading with the power of our example, rekindling old alliances and forging new partnerships.

For example, the United States is by far the largest single country contributor to COVAX, and we are making hundreds of millions of doses of vaccine available without political strings attached. At the U.N. Climate Change Conference that ended recently, the United States showed a whole-of-government response to the climate crisis. And we are mobilizing the necessary investment in technologies to promote good jobs in the United States while growing a prosperous net-zero emissions economy in the U.S. and globally.

We must ensure that the U.N. system as a key global platform in all of these efforts is strong and resilient and able to uphold the fundamental values of democracy, justice, transparency and respect for individual human rights. We are committed to ensuring that the U.N. Has the skilled, well-qualified, and capable leadership and personnel it needs to respond to global challenges.

One of the IO Bureau's co-responsibilities is to lead the State Department's efforts in the appointment and election of qualified, independent U.S. and likeminded candidates to leadership positions throughout the U.N. system. As you mentioned, Mr. Chairman, this is critical to ensure the U.N. operates effectively and bolsters reform and good governance that the ranking member has underlined as so important.

Thanks to funding that Congress provided earlier this year, our Bureau stood up the Office of Multilateral Strategy and Personnel, known by an acronym, of course, as IO/MSP, to reinforce U.S. leadership and priorities, including on priority elections and appointments. IO/MSP coordinates with rest of the Department to ensure the Administration advances an affirmative agenda that revitalizes and expands partnerships in support of a rules-based international order. This includes countering the efforts of countries, such as the People's Republic of China and Russia, to reshape and underline international law, institutions, and standards.

Since April 2021, the U.S. has won five U.N. elections, including a seat on the Human Rights Council and electing independent American experts to the Committee on the Elimination of Racial Discrimination, the Committee Against Torture, the International Narcotics Control Board, and the International Civil Service Commission.

Looking ahead, a top U.S. Government priority is the candidacy of Ms. Doreen Bogdan-Martin, who is running against a Russian candidate to become the next Secretary General of the International Telecommunications Union, the ITU. With three decades of experience in the telecom sector, Ms. Bogdan-Martin would be the first woman to head the ITU in its 156-year history if she is elected. Her election would also help expand universal connectivity and uphold an open and multistakeholder approach to internet governance against State-led models urged by some authoritarian nations.

In addition to leadership positions, IO promotes U.S. employment in the U.N. system more broadly, including through expanding the opportunities for Americans in the U.N.'s Junior Professional Officer Program, known as the JPO Program, and broadening outreach to all Americans interested in a U.N. career. We appreciate the JPO funding that has been provided through the IO & P account. This funding is currently restricted, however, to positions only within the U.N. Secretariat, and we look forward to working with Congress to expand our JPO efforts more broadly through the U.N. system.

IO has also funded technology-based solutions to ensure that we use the best and most current data to manage elections and personnel and to make decisions in the future. With congressional support, we are planning to build customized data bases and analytic tools to manage multilateral elections, organize U.S. employment efforts, and track U.N. member States' voting histories to improve U.S. negotiating expertise and inform policymaking.

While personnel is paramount, the Department also scrutinized draft resolutions and other documents to ensure they reflect international values, not the ideology of foreign policy initiatives of individual States. When we see language that runs counter to U.S. interests, U.N. values, or international law, we coordinate engagements with other countries to contest that. We also support Taiwan's meaningful participation throughout the U.N. system, including at the WHO and in ICAO.

In short, we are back to make sure that the U.N. advances the interests of the United States and the American people.

I thank you for your interest in these issues and the opportunity to appear today, and I look forward to your questions.

[The prepared statement of Ms. Barks-Rubbles follows:]

**Testimony of SBO Barks-Ruggles to the House Foreign Affairs Subcommittee on
International Development, International Organizations,
and Global Corporate Social Impact**

**Hearing Subject: Personnel is Policy: UN Elections and U.S. Leadership in International
Organizations**

Good morning, Chairman Castro, Ranking Member Malliotakis, and Members of the House Foreign Affairs Subcommittee. Thank you for inviting me to today's hearing to discuss what the State Department's International Organization Affairs Bureau is doing to restore and advance U.S. leadership in the UN system.

Under the Biden-Harris administration, the United States has already re-engaged vigorously on the multilateral stage to support key U.S. priorities. We have rejoined the Paris Agreement, recommitted to the World Health Organization, and been reelected to the Human Rights Council. But U.S. leadership in the UN system involves more than simply signing on to existing instruments and reengaging with UN bodies.

We are by far the largest single country contributor to COVAX, the best vehicle for the equitable distribution of safe and effective COVID-19 vaccines, and we're making hundreds of millions of doses available to others without political strings attached. At the UN Climate Change Conference, or COP 26, in Glasgow, the United States showed up with a whole-of-government response to the climate crisis, and we are rallying the private sector to mobilize the investment and technologies needed to promote a prosperous net-zero U.S. and global economy.

One of our top priorities is to ensure that the UN system, as a key global platform in all these efforts, is strong and resilient in upholding its fundamental values of democracy, justice, transparency, and respect for individual human rights. As we all know, that requires persistence, skill, leadership, and hard work. We are committed to ensuring the UN has the skilled, well-qualified, and capable leadership and personnel it needs to be able to respond to global challenges and find solutions to these difficult issues while ensuring the integrity of the global multilateral architecture.

One of the IO bureau's core responsibilities is to lead State Department efforts to ensure the appointment and elections of qualified, independent U.S. and like-minded candidates to leadership positions in the UN system, including specialized agencies. Having strong candidates for these positions is critical to ensuring the UN operates effectively and in line with its foundational principles and values, as they bring technical and policy skills that enhance the performance and outcomes within the UN system. Having qualified Americans in leadership positions in the UN system bolsters our efforts on UN reform and good governance.

Thanks to the funding that Congress provided earlier this year, IO was able to stand up a new office called the Office of Multilateral Strategy and Personnel, or IO/MSP, to strengthen and reinforce the United States' leadership and priorities within the UN system. With the establishment of IO/MSP, the bureau is strengthening its coordination and focus on priority elections and appointments. In coordination with the rest of the State Department, this new office is charged with ensuring that the Administration advances a positive, affirmative agenda and vision of U.S. leadership in international organizations that revitalizes and expands partnerships in

support of the rules-based international order. It takes a strategic approach to address the competition we face in achieving our objectives, which include countering the efforts of some countries, such as the People's Republic of China and Russia, to reshape and undermine international law, institutions, principles, and standards.

Since April 2021, the United States has won six consecutive UN elections, including a seat on the UN Human Rights Council and electing independent experts to the International Law Commission, the Commission to Elimination of Racial Discrimination, the Committee Against Torture, the International Narcotics Control Board, and the International Civil Service Commission.

Looking ahead, we are supporting the candidacy of Doreen Bogdan-Martin to head the International Telecommunication Union (ITU), who is running against a Russian candidate. Her election is a top USG priority. Ms. Bogdan-Martin has three decades of experience in the telecom sector and, if elected, would be the first woman to head the ITU in its 156-year history and the first leader from the Americas in 30 years. Her election would help expand universal connectivity that is so critical to development for many countries and uphold an open and multi-stakeholder approach to Internet governance, against state-led models urged by some authoritarian nations.

Beyond election and appointment of U.S. citizens and like-minded candidates to leadership positions, the IO bureau promotes U.S. citizen employment in the UN system at all levels. One of our strategic priorities is expanding the opportunities available to Americans through the UN's

Junior Professional Officer (JPO) Program, as well as broadening our outreach to all U.S. citizens who are interested in a career at the UN. We appreciate the bipartisan support for these efforts to date and look forward to continuing that partnership. While current JPO funding provided by Congress to IO through the IO&P account is restricted to positions within the UN Secretariat, we look forward to working with Congress to expand our JPO efforts throughout the UN System including in rules and standards setting organizations.

In support of our multi-lateral engagement, IO has also funded technology-based solutions to ensure we are working with the best and most current data possible. This includes nascent efforts to construct customized databases and analytical tools to support negotiations, multilateral elections, and American citizen engagement and employment. With the support of Congress, we are looking to build an analytic tool that will allow us to also track UN and other international organizations' resolution language and Member State voting histories to identify trends and coincidences across agencies and over time to allow us to track and plan for multilateral elections, improve U.S. negotiation expertise, and inform policy making. IO is also improving its data capture and analysis to better coordinate multilateral U.S. citizen employment efforts to organize our outreach, advocacy, and engagement with candidates.

These efforts will take time to bear fruit, but the support we have received to date from Congress, the Administration, and partners and allies has been instrumental to laying a strong foundation for success in making sure America's voice is heard throughout the UN system.

While personnel is paramount to ensure strong stewardship and accountability in UN organizations, the Department is also dedicated to supporting our multilateral goals by keeping a close eye on the language of draft resolutions and other documents in the UN to ensure they reflect international values and principles – not the domestic ideology or signature foreign policy initiative of individual Member States. Where these documents put forward ideology or non-consensus language that runs counter to U.S. interests or undermine UN values or international law, IO plays a leading role in coordinating our engagement with other countries to contest problematic texts.

IO works closely with the Department's regional bureaus to integrate multilateral discussions into our regular bilateral engagements in capitals around the world. This includes targeted outreach to developing countries to partner on shared strategic objectives, such as combatting the climate crisis or ending the COVID-19 pandemic, and to showcase the United States' affirmative leadership in the UN system.

The United States also supports Taiwan's access to UN facilities and its meaningful participation in the UN system and participates actively in the semiannual meetings of the U.S.-Taiwan Working Group on International Organizations. The Secretary issued a statement just a few weeks ago calling on Member States to support Taiwan's return to meaningful participation within the UN in ways that are consistent with our One China policy and the Taiwan Relations Act.

To sum up – the United States is back in global leadership. We're back in our alliances, we're back in multilateral fora, and thanks in large part to your support and the hard work of our teams around the world, we're back in the United Nations. Thank you for the opportunity to appear before you today, and I look forward to your questions.

Mr. CASTRO. Thank you, Ambassador, for your testimony. And thank you for helping us lead the world again.

I will now recognize members for 5 minutes each. And, pursuant to House rules, all time yielded is for the purposes of questioning our witnesses. Because of the hybrid format of this hearing, I will recognize members by committee seniority, alternating between the majority and the minority. If you miss your turn, please let our staff know, and we will recognize you, but we will circle back to you. If you seek recognition, you must unmute your microphone and address the chair verbally.

And I will start by recognizing myself, but actually before I do, for the members I have, especially the folks that are on the video, please be sure to watch the 5-minute timer so that we can keep our questions to 5 minutes, you know, within a few seconds or whatever. And, since we only have one witness, we may actually have time for a second round of questions again if time permits. So I will start by recognizing myself.

Ambassador, the United States' work with international organizations runs across the State Department and across multiple Federal agencies, as you know. Over two dozen parts of the U.S. Government provide funding to different international organizations, and individual bureaus at the State Department handle policy toward different organizations. I think it is important to make sure that the State Department plays the key role when it comes to foreign affairs, and by that I mean, the State Department, not DHS, not DOJ, or another agency.

How will the State Department make sure that U.S. policy across the Federal Government is coordinated when it comes to elections and placement? And will the State Department set up an inter-agency mechanism to streamline that coordination? And can you describe your outreach efforts to build awareness of the opportunities for Federal employees to be detailed to international organizations? And what barriers do you see in fully using that authority?

Ms. BARKS-RUGGLES. Thank you very much, Mr. Chairman, for your question. The State Department is indeed in the lead on our efforts in international organizations. And with the help of this Congress and the setting up of the IO/MSP Office, we have reinforced that effort over the course of the last 9 months. This has been an important effort because it has required everybody to be more coordinated within the State Department but also in the interagency, and it has allowed us to recapture the leadership effort to make sure that we are coordinated.

So let me give you a couple of examples. Our IO/MSP Office—and I have our new director here with me today, Mr. Andy Shaw—has set up several units, one of which is on the strategic competition side, working to develop and implement efforts to address strategic competition across the U.N. system, whether that be language, access for Taiwan, and also making sure that we are placing people in the correct positions throughout the U.N. system.

A second unit is working on electoral campaigns or U.S. officials and American citizens across the system. And so this unit has done things like—I brought some examples today—producing campaign materials, including from Ms. Bogdan-Martin—I have also her pin, and I am happy to share those with folks—to make sure that we

are putting forth at an early stage our efforts on electoral campaigns and to strongly back with the backing of the entire American Government, not just the State Department. We have the Commerce Department. We have our private sector working with us to make sure that we have a coordinated, well-managed campaign for Ms. Bogdan-Martin and for our candidates across the U.N. system.

And then a third area is the placement of U.S. citizens from the JPO level, the very junior professional officer level throughout. So we have put in place Standard Operating Procedures about how we advertise U.N. positions that are available. So those are now publicly available, we link to the U.N. system, and we are working with folks who are interested and applying for jobs to make sure that we are advocating for them. If they are Americans who are applying for jobs and they make themselves known to us, we are then advocating for their placement in the U.N. system. Whether they are coming from inside the government or coming from the private sector, we make sure they are well-qualified. We make sure that they have the requisite expertise for the job they are applying for, but we are also working with other agencies. So, if it is a law enforcement position, with the DOJ; if it is for something in FAO, we make sure that Agriculture is aware of those citizens and is working with us to make sure that they get those placements.

So this is the beginning, not the end, but we appreciate the support, and we look forward to working with this committee to strengthen that effort.

Mr. CASTRO. Great. And you may have to take part of the next question for the record because I only got about 45 seconds left. But I support the Administration's decision to create this Office of Multilateral Strategy and Personnel where you have asked for the funding for five staff positions. This is in contrast to the efforts before that drew down the number of State Department employees with this portfolio to zero.

So what is the status of this office getting set up and operational? And what are its early priorities? Do you have any constraints when it comes to authorities or funding for the office to effectively do its job? We got like 10 seconds, so maybe for the record.

Ms. BARKS-RUGGLES. Just very briefly. We are hiring now for the office. When it is fully staffed, it will have 15 members, plus a Deputy Assistant Secretary. We are about half staffed at this point. We look forward to filling the rest of those positions shortly.

Mr. CASTRO. Wonderful. Thank you.

I now recognize Ranking Member Malliotakis for her questions.

Ms. MALLIOTAKIS. Thank you. Ambassador, part of the frustration of the American people is that they fear our country is making bad deals that put us at a disadvantage. You mentioned three things that the Biden Administration has done since taking office: re-entering the Paris accord, re-entering WHO, and re-entering the U.N. Human Rights Council. However, they did so enter the Paris accord without demanding a level playing field from China or India. They re-entered this accord without any changes that would give America an advantage, or at least a level playing field.

With regards to the World Health Organization, they didn't even demand an investigation into the origins. And, you know, as evi-

dence points to the Wuhan lab and more Americans want accountability, the President said he was going to do a 90-day review, and then nothing happened after that. It was just a, you know, kicking the can down the road.

With regards to the U.N. Human Rights Council, there was no plan to eliminate bad actors on the Council. And I still do not hear a plan from this Administration on how we are going to get rid of those egregious human rights violators: Russia, China, Cuba, Venezuela.

So the question is, why should the American people have faith that their—our participation and their tax dollars that significantly fund, for the majority of the funding in these organizations, are going to be utilized in a strategic manner when we are giving away the store, we are going back to a negotiation that we saw under President Obama, giving away our leverage, giving away our funding without getting anything in return, at least any commitments that—level the playing field if not going to put America first?

Ms. BARKS-RUGGLES. Thank you, Ranking Member, for your question. Let me address, first, the Human Rights Council. This is a body which we share your concerns about. The membership is far from perfect, and it contains some of very problematic countries that have gross human rights abusers on the Council. We agreed that we need to work hard to improve that membership. We have been working with like-minded allies to recruit better candidates because the candidate pool has to be better in order to get folks elected. And we agree with you that that is something that we need to focus on and that we will be focusing on as we move forward.

We also agree that there are reform efforts that are needed. We have seen, when we are not present, however, that it creates a vacuum that has actually made the situation worse. We have seen rising language pushed by authoritarian governments in a number of resolutions which have undermined the individual human rights values on which the very Council is founded. So we need to be present to fight for those values, to fight for American democratic values, and individual human rights, but also to improve the Council. And we believe that that is important.

I will briefly address the WHO. We agree that the initial response to the pandemic globally should have been better and could have been better. We have pushed very hard for the WHO to undertake a rigorous scientific-based investigation into the origins of COVID. And we were quite critical of the first origins report which was published in April. We are pleased that the WHO since then has launched a followup in the origins 2 investigation effort that is based on science. They have put together a SAGO, which is a group of experts, scientific experts from around the world, to look at their origins in this second report, and we are pushing for that to go forward.

Ms. MALLIOTAKIS. Well, I hope they will take a much stronger approach in what we have seen, both against the Human Rights Council, because I have not seen anything from the Ambassador truly speaking out against the egregious violations of those countries that sit on this Human Rights Council. Obviously, makes it

a farce, this Council. And we need to reform it. And I would like to see more speaking in support of that.

And, also with WHO, I mean, it is so critically important that this Administration gets serious about working with the international partners to get to the bottom, so, No. 1, we can prevent it from happening again, but, also, we can push back on this rhetoric from the Communist Chinese Party that we are seeing, saying now that this virus—they are saying was created in a U.S. Army base in Maryland. It is outrageous. And we need to play a stronger role. We cannot allow these bad actors to get away with this. And I appreciate it. I would love to hear more about the Paris accord in the next round. Thank you.

Mr. CASTRO. All right. Sounds good. Next we have the vice chair of our committee, Ms. Sara Jacobs, Congressman Jacobs.

Ms. JACOBS. Well, thank you so much, Mr. Chair. And I really appreciate you putting—hosting this hearing.

As an American who worked at the United Nations, I can tell you that we are few and far between in that organization, and it will be great to get more folks in there.

As was mentioned in the chair's testimony and the witness' testimony, we have that International Telecommunication Union vote coming up for the next Secretary General. I actually know Doreen Bogdan-Martin. We worked together when I was at UNICEF and running an organization, and I think she is wonderful. She has three decades of experience. And the stakes are clearly very high.

But, Ambassador Barks-Ruggles, I was hoping if you could just, for the record, explain for the committee why this election is so important.

Ms. BARKS-RUGGLES. Thank you very much, Member Jacobs. The election to the ITU is critically important because the ITU's work and mandate are important to U.S. defense, to space, to development, and to our economic interest. This campaign has broad inter-agency support because of that. The ITU is partly responsible for internet and telecommunications governance. It was set up 156 years ago, well before the U.N. itself, to allocate bandwidth across telecommunications. That is still part of its primary purpose and is absolutely essential when you look at WiFi infrastructure and telecommunications infrastructure on which our committee depends. This is an absolutely critical institution, and we need to have a leader who reflects our values but who also will help ensure the development of telecoms across the globe is based on a multi-stakeholder approach with the values of openness, transparency, and efficiency that we need to see to make this sector as efficient and as transparent as possible for the benefit of our companies as well as for the benefit of those of our allies, friends, and partners around the world.

Ms. JACOBS. Well, thank you. And how can Congress best help the State Department in this election?

Ms. BARKS-RUGGLES. Thank you. As Representative Castro has said, as Chairman Castro has said, I know a number of Members of Congress have already met with Ms. Bogdan-Martin, and she will be coming back to meet with other Members of Congress. We think it is important to highlight why the ITU matters and also to work with the private sector to make sure that they are involved

in this. I know that Members of Congress have been extremely supportive of her election, and we look forward to working with you as we move forward with her campaign and making sure that the American people understand why this matters.

Ms. JACOBS. Well, thank you so much. And please count my office in to help with whatever we can do.

I wanted to switch topics a little bit. A recent article in the Journal of Democracy found that China has used its seat on the U.N. Economic and Social Council's Committee on NGO's to block applications from civil society organizations seeking consultative status to participate in important U.N. activities, like gaining access to sessions and speaking at events. These activities are very critical to make sure that civil society's voice is heard and consulted when really big decisions are being made.

So we have talked a lot about electing good candidates to prevent these kinds of situations. But what else can be done at the U.N. to mitigate or prevent this misuse of a U.N. seat? And what else have you seen this type of behavior by China or other countries?

Ms. BARKS-RUGGLES. Yes, this is one of those places where nefarious things can happen because it is fairly obscure. The ECOSOC NGO Committee's current membership is, unfortunately, not great and is fairly hostile to NGO's, reflecting a global trend that restricts civil society space in international organizations. We have serious concerns about restriction of civil society, and we have been pushing very hard with the U.N. Secretariat and in the Committee and with other allies to make sure that we walk back those efforts and ensure that the Committee's work is open, transparent, and accessible to civil society, and that the U.N. is open and transparent and accessible to civil society.

We were pleased that just yesterday the new President of the General Assembly held an open meeting with members of civil society and has pledged that they will have renewed access post-COVID, starting in January of next year to the U.N. headquarters building as it had before.

Ms. JACOBS. Well, thank you so much. I appreciate all of your work on that.

And, Mr. Chair, I yield back.

Mr. CASTRO. Thank you, Vice Chair.

We will now go to Representative Houlahan.

Mr. ISSA. Really?

Ms. HOULAHAN. No, I think you should go to Mr. Issa.

Mr. CASTRO. Darrell, I didn't see you on the video. There you are. All right.

First, we are going to go to Darrell Issa. He was off video for a second. Please.

Mr. ISSA. Yes, no problem. I have always thought, every time a take a sip of coffee, I should probably be off video.

But, Ambassador, thank you so much for giving us so much of your time today. I am going to focus on the free people of Taiwan. As you know all too well, when Richard Nixon made the decision to recognize mainland China, rather than two Chinas, he made a decision to switch the recognition from one country to another. But as effectively happened as a result is, with only a couple of exceptions, no one recognizes Taiwan as an independent country, and

those who continued to, China has used its vaccine and other techniques to essentially bribe/extort or attempt to extort a change in recognition. That is at the same time as they are building islands, threatening both Taiwan and likely Japan and the other countries in the region.

In your testimony, you said you wanted to support Taiwan. Currently, Taiwan is treated as a noncitizen at the WHO and a host of other U.N. activities. They clearly do not get—by the way, includes the access to vaccine—they do not get treated as, if you will, part of China by China. What, specifically, will you be doing to ensure access to the free people of Taiwan to standing as necessary in agencies, particularly, since it is very clear that China does not share if you ask them to help Taiwan?

Ms. BARKS-RUGGLES. Thank you for your important question. We will continue the U.S. policy of supporting Taiwan's meaningful participation in the U.N. and its related organizations. We are working closely with friends and allies on this issue to facilitate their ability to contribute to efforts on public health at the WHA and in other health organizations, in law enforcement efforts, in civil aviation safety, and on other issues.

We also are concerned in three areas. One, access. We believe that Taiwan's citizens should have access to U.N. buildings, U.N. headquarters, and be able to contribute, and we continue to press for that to happen. We are also concerned about nomenclature and efforts to change the way that Taiwan is referred to in U.N. documents, and we will continue to push back on that. And as I said, we will continue to press for Taiwan to have meaningful participation in areas where its expertise and experiences can contribute to responses to things like pandemics, but also to aviation safety around the world.

Mr. ISSA. Thank you, Ambassador. And just following up, you know, you have used the term appropriately you will continue as previous Administrations, but each Administration has seen more threats to Taiwan. As you know, Taiwan represents as much as 80 percent of the supply chain of integrated circuits chips to the United States and similar amounts to many other countries of the world.

Do you believe—and I know policy is always difficult to say on the fly—but do you believe that the United States has an obligation to use the United Nations in order to spell out or reiterate the prohibition on the taking of China, either directly, militarily, or through economic coercion by China? And isn't the United Nations an appropriate venue to bolster that security rather than simply sending our fleets to confront China in the strait?

Ms. BARKS-RUGGLES. Thank you. There are a number of different venues where we have spoken very plainly and very recently about our commitment to Taiwan's security. And I think I will let those statements stand for themselves. I think they are important, and we will continue to press on our consistent policy in defense of Taiwan.

Mr. ISSA. And I guess, last, specifically, at the WHO, what reforms—if you are able to maneuver, you know, the United States having influence over China—would you bring about to prevent the

kind of misinformation we saw from the WHO during the early parts of the pandemic?

Mr. CASTRO. You can take that one for the record.

Mr. Issa, your time is up, but we are going to have a second round.

Mr. ISSA. Thank you.

Mr. CASTRO. OK. We will go to Representative Houlahan.

Ms. HOULAHAN. Thank you. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

And thank you so much for joining us today.

My first question has to do with, earlier this year, I reintroduced legislation to authorize an annual U.S. contribution to the UNFPA, or the United Nations Population Fund, and with more than a hundred of my colleagues as cosponsors to that legislation. And I am really happy to see that the Biden Administration committed and restored funding to the UNFPA after the prior Administration ended its support.

The previous Administration was not the first GOP Administration to end support for UNFPA, despite its important work in supporting women and girls around the world. I was wondering if you might be able to speak to the consequences of the inconsistency of U.S. contributions to international organizations like the UNFPA, particularly in the context of the increased influence of authoritarian countries. And I was wondering, how do periodic halts in the U.S. UNFPA dues impact broader U.S. personnel and policymaking objectives?

Ms. BARKS-RUGGLES. Thank you, Representative Houlahan, and thank you, again, to Congress for your support for U.N. institutions and for these important efforts.

As you know, we have been strongly supportive of the UNFPA, as well as ensuring that women, girls, and gender issues are clearly addressed throughout the U.N. system, whether that is in UNICEF, in UNFPA, in the U.N. Human Rights Council, and in other organizations. Because we believe that women's rights are human rights and women's development is global development. So we appreciate very much your support.

We believe that the U.S. has enduring and long-term interests in international institutions and the multilateral system. And we appreciate very much this committee's support for continuing and long-term support for the U.N. because we believe that when we are present—and we have seen that when we are present, that the U.S. can and does lead in making policy and ensuring that U.S. values are embedded in U.N. policies and in U.N. institutions. When we are not present, there are authoritarian States who fill that vacuum. And that is not in our interests, not in our security interests, not in our national interests, not in our economic interests. So we think it is important for us to be present, and it is important for us to be leading.

Ms. HOULAHAN. Thank you. I appreciate that, and I, of course, agree.

My second question has to do with STEM and technology and that general space and about the status of a new technology that I understand is under development.

You mentioned in your opening statements the importance of technology-based solutions to complement your office's multilateral

engagement. And, as an engineer and STEM advocate myself, I am really interested in learning more about this initiative and about the potential for customized data bases and analytical tools that support negotiations, multilateral elections, and American citizen engagement and employment, which is from your opening statement.

Could you elaborate on the technological improvements that you referenced, and what is the status and timeline? And how would this improve your office's mission and increase American citizens' engagement?

Ms. BARKS-RUGGLES. Thank you. Yes, we are working still at the very beginning stages. We have only just—I believe it was about 4 weeks ago—brought on the first staff members in our new office, IO/MSP, looking at how do we track elections, how do we track voting, how do we make sure that we have constant efforts to get that data in a format that is usable, not just for our Bureau but throughout the interagency so that we can better coordinate on elections, so that we can better coordinate on policies, and we can better coordinate on vote campaigns.

So we are at the beginning stages of that. I would say our projected timeline to build out that office and build out that capability is over the next year to 18 months. And what we would like to do then is have that be a constant. So you will see in our budget request for Fiscal Year 2022 that we included a small allocation for that effort, and we believe that it is important for us to be able to build on that as we go forward. And so we hope to see that included in the future as well because we think it is important to be able to track this over time, which is something that we haven't done as consistently as we would like to.

Ms. HOULAHAN. And, so with the final seconds of my time, that leads into my very last question. Other than the funding that you have requested, is there any other barriers or anything else that we can be doing to be helpful?

Ms. BARKS-RUGGLES. Thank you. We have a number of requests in our budget proposal for both personnel, as well as resources for that, and your support for those is very important to us.

Ms. HOULAHAN. I appreciate your time, and I yield back, Mr. Chair.

Mr. CASTRO. Thank you, Representative Houlahan.

We will now go to Representative Tenney.

Ms. TENNEY. Thank you, Chairman Castro, and thank you for convening this meeting.

Thank you also to our ranking member.

When international organizations work effectively, and the United States is rightly their biggest supporter. There are far too many of these organizations that have lost sight of their intended missions, and some fail to even advance American interests, as many of these institutions, mainly U.N. entities, are increasingly being lead in staff by nationals of countries that are U.S. competitors and adversaries, particularly China and Russia. We not only need to strengthen U.S. leadership in these organizations but also ensure they are transparent, effective, and actually advance the causes of liberty in rules-based order. This isn't anything new. I have worked at a foreign consulate, and this was something that,

you know, is going to be around for a while, which brings me to my first question. Despite some success by the United States, the U.N. still lacks the appropriate levels of financial transparency in reporting on outcomes. Major donor States, including the United States lack access to reasonable—and reasonably detailed, reliable reports and information made available by these single country trust funds, as well as the outcomes and results stemming from United Nations' activities.

How is the United States working to increase this transparency and getting these nations to reveal where they are being funded behind the scenes so we can actually get to who is really, you know, the money base behind them?

Ms. BARKS-RUGGLES. Representative Tenney, your questions are very important because we agree a hundred percent that transparency and being able to understand how effective the U.N. is, what they are spending the money on and what the outcomes are, is really, really important. It is crucial for the U.S. taxpayer to understand that, for our contributions, but it is also crucial for us to understand it globally.

So one of the things that we have been doing is working very hard in each individual organization to make sure that we are placing competent, well-qualified folks in the administrative structures who are pushing for that transparency.

So, for example, we just placed the Deputy Director General for IOM, the International Organization for Migration, to which we are the largest voluntary contributor, an American citizen who has long experience in that area in the new DG spot for Administration so that we can better track, not just the input of our—

Ms. TENNEY. Can I just reclaim my time for a second? How exactly are you tracking that, though? And what mechanisms are being put in place so we can actually track it other than just overseeing it and saying “we are hoping you comply”? I mean, is there actually some type of transactional investigation that we are doing to make sure that they report? And I am curious about that. Just briefly, if you would, because I have another important question.

Ms. BARKS-RUGGLES. Absolutely. Each U.N. organization is required to submit annual reports. Some of them are much better and more transparent than others. And we are pushing for greater level of transparency in all of those reports so that we can track this stuff better.

Ms. TENNEY. Is there a system in place so we can verify those reports so that we know that what they are actually submitting is actually accurate? Is there like a way that we can do that?

Ms. BARKS-RUGGLES. Each agency has its own Office of Investigations if we believe there is, you know, malfeasance or something going on. But, as I said, part of what we are doing is making sure that the personnel who are providing those reports have the integrity and the qualifications to make sure that there are quality reports coming out that we can trust.

Ms. TENNEY. Great. Thank you.

And now I just wanted to bring up Ranking Member McCaul has introduced legislation that would codify the Office of Multilateral Strategy and Personnel, otherwise known as MSP. That bill, the United Nations Transparency and Accountability Act, would estab-

lish clear duties for the Office and empower the head of MSP to coordinate all nominations for election to the U.N. system. It would also require an increase in JPO slots of not less than 50 percent, ensuring Americans have the same access to U.N. employment as other countries.

What is the IO Bureau's position on RM McCall's, Ranking Member McCall's, proposal? Would this legislation assist you in your ongoing efforts at State?

Ms. BARKS-RUGGLES. Thank you. We have seen the legislation from Representative McCall, and we look forward to continued discussions with this committee and with his office on that. Many elements of the draft legislation are already underway, including, as you noted, the establishment of the Office of Multilateral Strategy and Personnel. And we have appreciated the frequent opportunities to talk with his staff and staff of this committee about this evolving effort. We think that anything that supports U.S. involvement in U.N. institutions is helpful. Thank you.

Ms. TENNEY. So do you think that you can get to the 50 percent or any aspect of that in the legislation?

Ms. BARKS-RUGGLES. We would hope to see the funding for that as we go forward.

Ms. TENNEY. OK. Thank you so much. I appreciate it, and I yield back.

Mr. CASTRO. Thank you, Representative. All right.

That is all. I thank everybody so far for first-round questions. We will go through for any quick second-round questions.

Members, if you have second-round questions, please let us know. Don't feel like you have to ask a question. But, if you have got one, we will go through right now for a quick second round.

All right. I wanted to start with myself. I have got one more question and wanted to ask you about the election for the International Labor Organization. In March 2022, the International Labor Organization will elect its new Director General after the retirement of Guy Ryder from the United Kingdom. There are candidates from Australia, Togo, South Africa, France, and South Korea. And the ILO plays a key role in setting international labor standards. And the United States, of course, has strong interests in front of that body.

What are the State Department's priorities at the ILO, and how does that align with your strategy for these upcoming elections? And what are you going to do to ensure that the State Department has a coordinated strategy with other organizations, especially the Department of Labor, and with labor unions and other civil society groups to approach this election?

Ms. BARKS-RUGGLES. Thank you. We agree that this is a critical election, and we have been working already with the Department of Labor and with others, both in the private sector as well as in the union movement to make sure that we are giving everybody an opportunity to interview each of the candidates. I met just yesterday with the ROK candidate. I have met with the French and the Australian candidate and look forward next month to meeting with the Togolese candidate. And we are working hard to make sure that they get around.

We are also pleased that there is going to be more transparency in this election and that there is going to be a panel discussion that will be live and open to everybody on the internet to see those candidates give their vision for the ILO. But we will be coordinating the U.S. Government's voting. And we will be working to make sure that we are working with the labor unions and the private sector representatives on this election as it goes forward.

Mr. CASTRO. Thank you.

I will go now to Ranking Member Malliotakis.

Ms. MALLIOTAKIS. As we discussed earlier, the United States is the largest financial contributor to the United Nations, paying roughly one-quarter of both the regular and peacekeeping budgets.

My first question is, do you believe our influence in the United Nations system reflects our financial contributions? And second part of that question is, despite some success by the United States, the U.N. still lacks the appropriate levels of financial transparency in reporting on outcomes. Major donor States, including the United States, lack access to reasonably detailed, viable information on the use of funding made available through single country trust funds, as well as the outcomes and results stemming from the United Nations' activities. How can we as Congress ensure that we are working to increase this transparency? Do you have any suggestions there?

Ms. BARKS-RUGGLES. Thank you. We agree that the level of transparency on single country trust funds needs to be much improved. We are concerned about these trust funds, and we were concerned that some countries, in particular the People's Republic of China, have been using them to push their own agendas and their own single nation foreign policy agendas. This is particularly true in the case of the Belt and Road Initiative and the newly launched GDI, the Global Development Initiative.

We have worked with U.N. agencies to which these trust funds have been aimed, including the U.N. Development Program and UNICEF in particular, to push for greater transparency of how those funds are being used both in their programmatic documents and in their outcome documents and reporting. We will continue to do that, and we are committed to making sure that that is the case.

Ms. MALLIOTAKIS. Any suggestions on what Congress can do to just push for more accountability and transparency when it comes to moneys that are being put into any of these, any of these international organizations to measure the metrics but also to ensure that it is being used properly?

Ms. BARKS-RUGGLES. I have to say, Madam Representative, that one of the best things that Congress has enabled us to do is set up this IO/MSP Office because we are very focused on data analytics as part of this office. And your continuing support for us to be able to have that Data Analytics Unit established and grow will allow us to have greater transparency and is really, really important as we go forward because we have to have modern data-capturing techniques in order to make sure that we are tracking this stuff. And we agree with you that transparency is absolutely critical.

Ms. MALLIOTAKIS. And, if these organizations aren't being transparent, how are you doing these analytics?

Ms. BARKS-RUGGLES. One of the things that we are able to do because we are the largest contributor in many cases, both voluntary and assessed funding, to these organizations is to go in and actually demand that transparency from them, to ask for reporting, and to make sure that that is coming to us in a regularized fashion. And we have been doing that.

It is not as consistent as we would like across the board, and so this is something that that office will also be able to track is to say, where are we not getting that kind of reporting so that we can make sure that we are able to track?

Ms. MALLIOTAKIS. Have you to date identified any disturbing misuse of funds?

Ms. BARKS-RUGGLES. I apologize. I didn't hear the question.

Ms. MALLIOTAKIS. To date, has this analytics department been able to identify any particular misuse of fund?

Ms. BARKS-RUGGLES. As we are just setting up the office—we only hired the first people about 6 weeks ago—we have not yet been able to do that reporting, but we look forward to being able to do a better job of tracking that kind of issue.

There have been reports issued by Offices of Inspectors General across the U.N. system.

Ms. MALLIOTAKIS. Sure.

Ms. BARKS-RUGGLES. And when those reports come out, we do investigate those.

Ms. MALLIOTAKIS. OK. And when do you expect your initial reports to be disseminated?

Ms. BARKS-RUGGLES. We hope to be able to have this unit within the Office of IO/MSP up and fully functional within the next year. We are just getting started, and we have to build out the data bases for tracking before we are able to do that.

Ms. MALLIOTAKIS. What do you think may be some of your priorities, once it is up and running, where will you be focusing most of your attention, a particular organization or just—

Ms. BARKS-RUGGLES. We will be focusing our attention in large part in the areas where we are the single largest contributor as priorities at the first go, but then also in organizations where we haven't had the level of transparency that we would like, and then, also, on elections because this office will also be building out election-tracking devices, and we think that that is critically important because, if you do not have the right people in place, you know, you are not going to get the kind of transparency you want.

Ms. MALLIOTAKIS. Thank you.

Mr. CASTRO. Thank you, ranking member.

We will go now to Vice Chair Jacobs.

Ms. JACOBS. Thank you, Mr. Chairman, for allowing us a second round. We know that international organizations are incredibly diverse in terms of the topics and regions that they touch. The U.S. agencies and even parts of the State Department that deal with them stretch across the entire government.

For instance, according to a recent CSIS report, 23 different parts of the U.S. Government provide funding to different IOs. And in certain circumstances, those overlap even within the same IOs, such as both USAID and Treasury, provide staff to the World Bank and OECD risk-use funding from five different agencies.

So this, obviously, seems like a huge challenge in interagency coordination. What kind of interagency-coordinating mechanism exists to ensure our policies are synchronized with a whole-of-government strategy? And, if one does not exist, do you think there should be one?

Ms. BARKS-RUGGLES. Thank you very much.

It is a diverse and broad funding base, but also a diverse and broad policy base. So the Bureau of International Organization Affairs in the State Department has the lead on international organizations and multilateral affairs throughout the entire U.S. Government, and we regularly convene in conjunction with our colleagues at the NSC, IPCs, interagency policy committees, to discuss policies but also to discuss coordination on these efforts.

When it comes to elections and appointments, we have the lead, and our office—this new office that we have set up is enabling us to have the resources and the personnel to do that in a much more rigorous and coordinated fashion across the government within the State Department and across the interagency, and we are committed to continuing that effort.

Ms. JACOBS. Well, thank you. And I want to talk about this Office of Multilateral Strategy. I know we talked about it in the last question, and you just mentioned it.

Moving forward, how will IO and the new office coordinate with regional and functional bureaus that handle specific IOs that fall within those regional or functional bureaus' jurisdictions? Will each Bureau have a person responsible for coordinating with IO on strategy?

Ms. BARKS-RUGGLES. So I will take one example. Our Economics Bureau works very closely with the OSCE, and there is a person who is designated in that office with whom we coordinate on OSCE policy, but also on personnel. So we have a very tight coordination effort already in that instance.

In other areas, it has been less tight, and we are working to tighten that up.

Ms. JACOBS. OK. Well, I will look forward to seeing progress on that tightening.

I want to also ask a little bit about down-ballot races. I know we have talked about some of the marquis races coming up, like ITU, ILO, but where are there down-ballot races, and what are you doing to prepare for those? I know, for instance, ITU has several down-ballot races in addition to the Secretary General one. And what are you doing, and what more can be done, and do you have the authorities and resources you need to be able to do that?

Ms. BARKS-RUGGLES. Yes. It is very important, because not only the leadership of these organizations but the No. 2, three, fours, and the folks who are in charge of Administration are very, very important. So one of the things that we have done is set up a tracking table, which we are then going to put into our data bases as we go forward, to look not only at the leadership-level races, but down into the deputy—deputy director general level and then the assistant deputy director general level, so that we are looking across these organizations.

Right now, we are still building that out, but we are hopeful that we will be able to track that trend over time. That will give us

greater granularity so that we cannot only track these elections but then work ahead of time to put good candidates in place, whether Americans or from like-minded countries and partners.

Ms. JACOBS. Wonderful. Well, thank you again so much.

Mr. Chair, I will give you 1 minute and 15 seconds back.

Mr. CASTRO. Thanks.

We will go to Mr. Issa.

Mr. ISSA. I will take the minute.

Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

When we left off on the first round, I had asked about tools available or that you felt you could use going forward to protect Taiwan from this ongoing—Taiwan and the other neighbors from this ongoing aggression. Do you believe that the United Nations has a role? And, if so, how would you begin the process of getting them to provide some pushback to China's continued aggression?

Ms. BARKS-RUGGLES. I think the U.N. has a role in any case where there is peace and security at stake, and I think that it is important for the U.N. to speak out, and we have urged them to speak out, for instance, where there are examples of gross human rights abuses perpetrated by the People's Republic of China, whether that is in Tibet, whether that is in Hong Kong, or whether that is in Xinjiang.

We have also urged the U.N. to include Taiwan, where appropriate, in—bring its expertise and its experience to bear, so on things like supply chains, on things like international civil aviation safety, on disease prevention. They did a great job, especially at the beginning of the COVID pandemic, not only in identifying the DNA sequencing but also developing their own vaccine and monitoring and keeping their population safe.

So we need to continue to push the U.N. to include them, include their expertise, but also to address where the People's Republic of China is not taking into account international safety and security in its own policies.

Mr. ISSA. OK. And then the last part, there has been a lot of discussion, always will be, about how the U.N. gets—interfaces with such programs, as you said, of the Chinese initiative, Belt and Road. We have a number of agencies—the Trade Development Agency, obviously USAID—that give essentially free grants outside the U.N. to help in development while China basically does its development as a profit center, as a tool of expanding their influence, and then leverages the United Nations' funding and personnel for that agenda.

How are you specifically going to be able to stop China from essentially both profiteering in their port takeovers and so on, but most specifically from using U.N. resources to further leverage their already robust program under Belt and Road?

Ms. BARKS-RUGGLES. Yes. This is an area where we have longstanding and I think strong bipartisan agreement that we need to do everything we can to push back on the Chinese effort to undermine international institutions, international norms through using these kind of programs like the Belt and Road—

Mr. ISSA. Ambassador, I just want to interrupt to—

Ms. BARKS-RUGGLES. Yes, please.

Mr. ISSA [continuing]. Steer the question a little bit. The last Administration, for 4 years, failed in that effort, so I agree that it has been multiparty; it has been multi-Presidential. I was actually looking at what new initiatives could be taken since, you know, in the last Administration, there was talk about it, certainly a lot of robust talk about it, but the record of accomplishment—as a Republican and a Trump supporter—the record of accomplishment isn't there.

So what can we do that didn't work last time because obviously this is still an ongoing problem?

Ms. BARKS-RUGGLES. Part of what we are working on is combining with our—the DFC, the Development Finance Corporation, and other U.S. Government institutions to put forward a proactive and positive agenda that pushes forward American values because it is hard to fight something with nothing.

We think it is important that we show up, that we compete, and that we work with developing countries to make sure that they have sound investments that benefit them and that benefit us, not that just benefit China, and we will continue to do that.

Mr. ISSA. Thank you.

And, Mr. Chairman, I will yield back my 15 seconds. Thank you.

Mr. CASTRO. Thank you, Mr. Issa.

We will go now to Representative Tenney.

Ms. TENNEY. Thank you, and thank you for staying longer. And this is actually similar to the question that Mr. Issa had. And obviously we know that China engages in attempts to rewrite the international order to drive their agenda in various ways that—even cited by Mr. Issa. You know, one of my concerns is that China steals anywhere from \$350 billion to \$400 billion in intellectual property.

And, in order to facilitate that, they try to change the rules at the World Intellectual Property Organization, they try to exclude Taiwan from the World Health Organization, and even the International Civil Aviation Organization, which is interesting obviously for Taiwan, being a country that is surrounded by water.

But, more to Mr. Issa's point—and I agree with him. You know, we haven't really been effective at countering China. What can we do now, now that we know it is in place—and I think the Administration is sort of projecting to China that you are just a competitor. Isn't it—shouldn't we be taking China more seriously than just a competitor, they are really a world hegemony who wants to take over with their hundred-year strategy, their Belt and Road Initiative, and, as Mr. Issa cited, you know, profiting off of the use of our money, almost leveraging our money that we give so much to the U.N.?

How do we counter that, and how do we hold them accountable, and what—like, real quickly, what strategies does the Administration have and viewing them as not just a competitor but a world dominator that is really going to have negative implications for the world, not just the United States going forward?

Ms. BARKS-RUGGLES. We take very seriously not just the competition piece but also the potential for very aggressive competition that could lead into very bad situations in the future. So we are

working very hard, one, to make sure that security—our security is strong; two, that our allies and their security is strong.

But, also, really working at how do we keep the PRC's efforts, which I equate to kind of the tide over time. It is not a big tidal wave. It is the gradual undermining of the foundations upon which these institutions are built, which have served our interests and served global peace and security interests over the last 70, 80 years, that we need to preserve and we need to fight for.

So that means we need to be present. It means that we need to be looking at what they are doing on language, but also really scrutinizing and shining a light on what they are doing on funding. So we agree with you.

Ms. TENNEY. Uh-huh.

Ms. BARKS-RUGGLES. Light is something that they do not want on what they are doing, and we need to be very public about shining a light on what they are doing and why they are doing it so that other countries understand why it is not in their interests to go down this road.

Ms. TENNEY. Great. Thank you for that, and I appreciate it. And, other than just—obviously shining a light, transparency, all those things are important. What type of rule changes can we make to really emphasize and project that we aren't fooling around, you know, we are serious, we want to make sure they understand that we are not going to accept their dominance and their attempt to dominate other countries?

So what can we do in terms of rule changes within your organization to really put, you know, some pressure on them strategically and also to make sure that not just the United States but other countries around the world aren't leveraged and in such a vulnerable position, because they have great economic strength? They use, you know, basically a kind of economic espionage the way that they go through to these countries and manipulate them.

What can we do to specifically in terms of rule changes at your level to make this not just shining a light, not just transparent, but really, you know, digging in and having some real guardrails for them?

Ms. BARKS-RUGGLES. Guardrails is the right word. We need to make sure that the rules of the road in international organizations that have sustained global peace for generations are maintained and sustained. That is first and foremost.

Second, the transparency issues that you have already—we have already discussed.

And, third, we need to make sure that we are present, we are leading, and that we are working very strongly with not only our traditional allies but with countries which have been, unfortunately, vulnerable to exploitation, because they are not in the strongest positions.

Ms. TENNEY. And I agree. When you say "present," do you mean, you know, just basically making sure that we are in regions where we have a stake or where other countries have a stake or where China is over—exceeding its norms, exceeding our view of international norms—for example, moving into Afghanistan or Serbia and other areas to try to, you know, take over resources there?

Ms. BARKS-RUGGLES. It is being present not only regionally but also in international institutions.

Ms. TENNEY. OK.

Ms. BARKS-RUGGLES. For example, in UNESCO, where the ethics of artificial intelligence norms are being set up right now, we are not present. If we were present, we would have a voice at that table.

We need to be present across the board to make sure that we are influencing those efforts, not only for now but for the future.

Ms. TENNEY. Thank you. I appreciate it. Thanks for the extra time.

Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I yield back.

Mr. CASTRO. Thank you, Representative Tenney.

And that concludes our testimony and our questions, and I want to make closing remarks in just a second.

But, before I do, I just want to give a shout-out to one of our staff members, Zach Keck, who is going to be leaving us to go to the Department of Defense. He has done incredible work with us for a few years.

I just want to say thank you, Zach, for all of your work.

And I would like to thank everyone again for joining us for this subcommittee hearing. And one of the reasons that we have to remain engaged, Ambassador—as you know, consistent with your testimony, one of the reasons we have to remain engaged in international organizations is to set global standards around a host of issues, including human rights.

We were reminded of this in recent weeks after Chinese tennis star Peng Shuai went missing after accusing a close ally of Xi Jinping of sexually assaulting her. After weeks of outcry about her whereabouts, the PRC media released an email to WTA chairman and CEO, Steve Simon, claiming to be from Peng, which many suspect is of dubious authenticity.

We are best able to combat human rights abuses, including by the PRC, by engaging in international organizations and setting global standards around issues like human rights and many other issues as well. And that is why this work matters.

The members of the subcommittee, no doubt, will reflect on all the testimony we heard today as we pursue our legislative and oversight responsibilities on the United States' engagement with the United Nations and other international organizations, and I am happy to see that there is strong bipartisan support for the State Department's work to advance our influence within the United Nations.

There is a lot Congress can do, including providing the Department with the authorities and funding needed to do this great work. But, by far, the most immediate thing that Congress and, more specifically, the U.S. Senate can do is to quickly confirm Ambassador Michele Sison to be the Assistant Secretary of State for International Organization Affairs.

It has been 5 months since her hearing at the Senate Foreign Relations Committee, but the actions of Senator Ted Cruz, from my home State of Texas, and Senator Josh Hawley have held up her confirmation.

This unreasonable blockade has also held up a number of other nominees who have cleared the Senate Foreign Relations Committee, including Captain “Sully” Sullenberger to the International Civil Aviation Organization, Bruce Turner to the Conference on Disarmament, Jack Markell to the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development, Laura Holgate to the Vienna office of the United Nations and the IAEA, Sheba Crocker to the Geneva office of the United Nations, Lisa Carty to the U.N.’s Economic and Social Council, Chris Lu to the U.N.—United Nations for management—management and reform, and Julianne Smith to NATO.

I know my counterparts in the Senate, Democrats and Republicans both, share my frustration at the actions of their colleagues. Senators Cruz’ and Hawley’s continued actions have left a vacuum in U.S. influence abroad and are hurting our foreign policy. I hope they realize the serious consequences of their actions and allow for these nominees to be voted on as soon as possible.

Thank you all.

And, with that, this hearing is adjourned.

[Whereupon, at 11:16 a.m., the subcommittee was adjourned.]

APPENDIX

**SUBCOMMITTEE HEARING NOTICE
COMMITTEE ON FOREIGN AFFAIRS**

U.S. HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
WASHINGTON, DC 20515-6128

**Subcommittee on International Development, International Organizations, and
Global Corporate Social Impact**

Joaquin Castro (D-TX), Chair

November 10, 2021

TO: MEMBERS OF THE COMMITTEE ON FOREIGN AFFAIRS

You are respectfully requested to attend an OPEN hearing of the Committee on Foreign Affairs to be held by the Subcommittee on International Development, International Organizations and Global Corporate Social Impact in Room 2172 of the Rayburn House Office Building and via Cisco WebEx. The meeting is available via live webcast on the Committee website at <https://foreignaffairs.house.gov/>:

DATE: Thursday, November 18, 2021
TIME: 10:00 a.m., EST
SUBJECT: Personnel is Policy: UN Elections and US Leadership in International Organizations
WITNESSES: Ambassador Erica Barks-Ruggles
Senior Bureau Official
Bureau of International Organization Affairs
U.S. Department of State

*NOTE: Witnesses may be added.

By Direction of the Chair

HOUSE COMMITTEE ON FOREIGN AFFAIRS
*SUBCOMMITTEE ON INTERNATIONAL DEVELOPMENT, INTERNATIONAL DEVELOPMENT
AND GLOBAL CORPORATE SOCIAL IMPACT HEARING*

<i>PRESENT</i>	<i>MEMBER</i>
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	Brad Sherman, CA
	Ilhan Omar, MN
X	Chrissy Houlahan, PA
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X	Nicole Malliotakis, NY
X	Darrell Issa, CA
X	Lee Zeldin, NY
X	Claudia Tenney, NY

RESPONSES TO QUESTIONS SUBMITTED FOR THE RECORD

**Questions for the Record Submitted to
IO Senior Bureau Official Erica J. Barks-Ruggles by
Representative Joaquin Castro (#1-2)
House Subcommittee on International Development, International Organizations, and
Global Corporate Social Impact
November 18, 2021**

Question 1:

In March 2022, the International Labor Organization will elect its new Director-General after the retirement of Guy Ryder from the United Kingdom. There are candidates from Australia, Togo, South Africa, France, and South Korea. The ILO plays a key role in setting international labor standards and the United States has strong interests in front of that body.

What are the State Department's priorities at the ILO and how is that aligned with your strategy for these upcoming elections?

Answer 1:

The ILO is a vital partner in U.S. efforts to enhance workers' rights, strengthen democracies, and support inclusive economic growth and free markets in the recovery from the COVID-19 pandemic. In evaluating candidates for ILO Director-General, the Department has consistently stressed the importance of leveraging the ILO's tripartite composition to promote decent work, ensure workers' rights to freely organize and bargain collectively, combat child and forced labor, and support countries in transition to democracy, as well as the ILO's vital work on international labor standards and social protection, including occupational safety and health. Any successful candidate must be dedicated to these values and the work of the ILO and its tripartite structure.

Question 2:

What are you doing to ensure that the State Department has a coordinated strategy with other agencies, especially the Department of Labor, and with labor unions and other civil society groups to approach this election?

Answer 2:

The Departments of State and Labor are fully coordinated on U.S. engagement in the ILO, both in the management of the organization through its Governing Body and the International Labor Conference and on the upcoming Director General election. Both departments also hold regular consultations with labor unions, employer organizations, and other civil society actors on the work of the ILO.

**Questions for the Record Submitted to
IO Senior Bureau Official Erica J. Barks-Ruggles by
Representative Joaquin Castro (#3-7)
House Subcommittee on International Development, International Organizations, and
Global Corporate Social Impact
November 18, 2021**

Question 3:

Junior Professional Officers are an important part of getting American nationals to work at the UN or other international organizations. The People's Republic of China has aggressively used JPOs to place Chinese nationals throughout international organizations. The U.S. has been lagging behind in terms of the number of JPOs it funds. What are some of the barriers to getting more U.S. JPOs in international organizations? Can you elaborate on existing restrictions that affect the Department's ability to place JPOs outside the UN Secretariat?

Answer 3:

We are exploring ways to increase International Organizations and Programs (IO&P) funding to support additional JPOs to UN specialized agencies and bodies. Upon further review, we understand that IO&P is generally available to fund JPOs outside the UN Secretariat, and we intend to explore expanding the scope of our JPO program using FY 2022 funds and will appropriately notify Congress as we do so. The IO Bureau is also working to increase its staffing to engage in outreach and work with UN officials to ensure a timely and transparent process to place JPOs in the UN system.

Question 4:

Does the Department support changing that authority?

Answer 4:

Regarding section 301 of the Foreign Affairs Act, no additional authorities are needed at this time.

Question 5:

Given these positions can be funded by different bureaus at the State Department or even different federal agencies, how can the Bureau for International Organizations play a coordinating role across the U.S. government in placing these JPOs within the UN system?

Answer 5:

IO supports engagement within the U.S. government on outreach to the UN about the potential to expand JPO funding opportunities by both State and other agencies. Currently each bureau and agency that funds JPO positions provides its own funding to support their respective JPO priorities. These positions also maintain and strengthen their relationships with key agencies across the UN system. IO will work to strengthen interagency coordination efforts to expand JPO resources and facilitate best practices, coordination, and data sharing between agencies.

Question 6:

The State Department's FY 2022 budget request asks for \$1.5 million to fund JPOs. How many positions will that cover? What goes into the costs per JPO? How will you prioritize the placement of these JPOs across the UN system?

Answer 6:

Congress provided IO with dedicated UN JPO funding in FY 2021 totaling \$1.5 million, which allows the bureau to fund approximately three JPOs for two-year assignments. The average cost per JPO for a full two-year program is around \$450,000. The costs include salary, benefits, and administrative costs of managing the JPO program. IO coordinates with all of our multilateral missions, including USUN, to identify other agencies and organizations that would benefit from receiving U.S. JPOs.

Question 7:

How do you assess the budget commitments of other federal agencies that also sponsor JPOs? How are you building awareness of these positions with other bureaus within State or with other agencies of the federal government?

Answer 7:

To build awareness of JPO positions with other bureaus and agencies, IO coordinates with department-wide stakeholders and shares information including data on positions, and best practices with interagency counterparts. IO understands that several U.S. agencies have the authority to fund JPOs, including the Departments of Commerce, Agriculture, Energy, and Health and Human Services, and IO will continue outreach efforts to ensure greater coordination and support for the JPO program. IO has also funded a project to collect data on U.S. citizens employed throughout the UN system that will provide a baseline for analyzing employment trends and how JPOs support career development for U.S. citizens in the UN system.

**Questions for the Record Submitted to
IO Senior Bureau Official Erica J. Barks-Ruggles by
Representative Joaquin Castro (#8)
House Subcommittee on International Development, International Organizations, and
Global Corporate Social Impact
November 18, 2021**

Question 8:

If we are going to counter authoritarian malign influence at the UN and other International Organizations, we need to have our best and brightest serving at these organizations. However, legislation that Congress has passed disincentives Foreign Service Officers from serving at the U.S. Mission at the United Nations. When FSOs serve abroad they have their housing covered by the government; in New York City, only 30 FSOs are giving a housing allowance. This has limited our staffing at the United States mission to the United Nations in New York City. Furthermore, the housing allowance FSOs do receive is taxed as income, so FSOs essentially take a pay cut to serve at USUN.

Can you discuss how Congressional restrictions on the number of housing allowances has hindered USUN? Would eliminating this restriction help the State Department be better represented at the United Nations?

Answer 8:

The United National Participation Act currently authorizes only 30 Foreign Service (FS) employees to receive a housing allowance. USUN currently includes 33 Foreign Service positions, which means that there are already Foreign Service employees at USUN who cannot participate in the housing program. Recruiting for FS positions without a housing benefit is extremely difficult; one such position attracted only one bidder when advertised recently, a situation that would never happen at a comparably-sized post in a similarly cosmopolitan location, such as Vienna.

The challenge of recruiting FS staff without a housing benefit was made clear when the Chief of Mission at USUN determined that it would strengthen her executive team to recruit highly experienced members of the Foreign Service to fill key roles, such as her Chief of Staff and her Executive Assistant. Unfortunately, given the existing shortage of benefits for current

FS staff, there were no housing benefits available to offer to additional Foreign Service personnel for the executive team, and candidates withdrew from consideration. The firm cap on housing allowances clearly creates a structural inflexibility imposing artificial barriers to bringing in experienced Foreign Service personnel to cover key portfolios

**Questions for the Record Submitted to
IO Senior Bureau Official Erica J. Barks-Ruggles by
Representative Joaquin Castro (#9)
House Subcommittee on International Development, International Organizations, and
Global Corporate Social Impact
November 18, 2021**

Question 9:

What are other opportunities to remove barriers to serving in positions that work with multilateral organizations or provide incentives? Do you support looking at experience in working with international organizations when assessing the performance of Foreign Service Officers?

Answer 9:

The State Department recognizes that secondments to multilateral organizations can be beneficial to both the U.S. Government and the selected organization, allowing the organization to benefit from the values and skills brought by American staff and allowing our government to benefit from the insight gained by their employees while working on international issues alongside colleagues from around the world. In coordination with the rest of the State Department, the Office of Multilateral Strategy and Personnel (IO/MSP) is exploring ways to increase funding to create more opportunities for employees to gain experience working in multilateral organizations and ensure that this experience is viewed favorably when assessing the performance of State Department employees.

**Questions for the Record Submitted to
IO Senior Bureau Official Erica J. Barks-Ruggles by
Representative Joaquin Castro (#10)
House Subcommittee on International Development, International Organizations, and
Global Corporate Social Impact
November 18, 2021**

Question 10:

Much of the United Nations' work is done through different committees that are composed of member states that are elected on to that committee. Too often, elections to join these committees are not competitive and authoritarian countries are elected to positions that let them interfere in the UN's work. For example, a recent report in the Journal of Democracy identified how countries like China use their position on the UN's NGO Committee to prevent NGOs that are critical of their policies from being accredited with the UN.

What will the State Department and the Office of Multilateral Strategy and Personnel do to make the elections to these committees more competitive and get friendly countries to run for them?

Answer 10:

The People's Republic of China (PRC) efforts to advance its own political agenda through UN Committees like the ECOSOC NGO Committee undermine core UN principles and prevent the valuable contributions of civil society and other important non-state stakeholders. The United States has had success coordinating with allies and partners to push back against the PRC. In line with our reengagement with the UN system, the United States will seek opportunities to encourage like-minded countries to run for key committees to ensure the UN continues to operate effectively and transparently in line with its foundational principles and values.

**Questions for the Record Submitted to
IO Senior Bureau Official Erica J. Barks-Ruggles by
Representative Joaquin Castro (#11)
House Subcommittee on International Development, International Organizations, and
Global Corporate Social Impact
November 18, 2021**

Question 11:

The President's budget request included the ask for a waiver for the United States to participate in UNESCO. As you know existing law prevents the United States from paying dues to UNESCO because of its decision to admit Palestine as a member. I know this issue is complex but I'm concerned about the growing reach of China and other countries at UNESCO and the fact that we aren't there to exercise our influence is not in our interests.

Can you speak to the administration's position on UNESCO and what our absence means for our interests?

Answer 11:

The President has stated that more can be accomplished by working within UN organizations than outside.

UNESCO is engaged in a broad range of work with tangible impact on U.S. security and commercial interests, including shaping international standards and best practices in education; ethics of scientific knowledge and emerging technologies, including artificial intelligence (AI); and open access to information (with implications for intellectual property).

Absent U.S. leadership, the PRC and other authoritarian states have become more assertive in UNESCO venues, shaping standards that undermine democratic norms and values and advance their authoritarian agendas, including on human rights in the context of AI.

Legislative restrictions currently prohibit U.S. contributions to UNESCO. In order to rejoin UNESCO, the U.S. Government would need to be able to pay our arrears and begin paying our dues to restore our voting privileges and eligibility for the UNESCO Executive Board, without which our ability to exercise leadership is limited.

SENSITIVE BUT UNCLASSIFIED

