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# THE FY 2018 FOREIGN AFFAIRS BUDGET

## HEARING

BEFORE THE

## COMMITTEE ON FOREIGN AFFAIRS
## HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

ONE HUNDRED FIFTEENTH CONGRESS

FIRST SESSION

JUNE 14, 2017

**Serial No. 115–61**

Printed for the use of the Committee on Foreign Affairs



Available via the World Wide Web: http://www.foreignaffairs.house.gov/ or
http://www.gpo.gov/fdsys/

U.S. GOVERNMENT PUBLISHING OFFICE

25–840PDF WASHINGTON : 2017

For sale by the Superintendent of Documents, U.S. Government Publishing Office
Internet: bookstore.gpo.gov Phone: toll free (866) 512–1800; DC area (202) 512–1800
Fax: (202) 512–2104 Mail: Stop IDCC, Washington, DC 20402–0001

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# THE FY 2018 FOREIGN AFFAIRS BUDGET

**WEDNESDAY, JUNE 14, 2017**

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

The committee met, pursuant to notice, at 10:00 a.m., in room 2172 Rayburn House Office Building, Hon. Edward Royce (chairman of the committee) presiding.

Chairman ROYCE. Before we say or do anything else today, I want to pause to extend our thoughts and our prayers for the well-being of Whip Scalise and our colleagues, police, and staff who were attacked by a gunman this morning in Virginia. Several members of this committee were there. This is a sad day for our country. We still don't have all of the details, but we do know that there are those who want to use acts of violence to create chaos, to disrupt our democracy. The American people will not let them win. So after deliberation with the ranking member, we have decided to proceed.

The Secretary has a very challenging schedule. Given these circumstances and the delayed start of our hearing, I want to appeal to members to attempt to use less than their full 5 minutes so that more of our colleagues have a chance to participate and I will be abbreviating my opening statement.

Today, Secretary Tillerson will testify on the administration's budget and reorganization plans for the Department of State.

First off, Mr. Secretary, let me welcome you to this committee. This committee and your Department manage an essential responsibility for our Government, set at its founding. And that is defending our Nation.

The committee strives to be bipartisan. We are fortunate to have a ranking member, Mr. Engel, who shares this approach. We look forward to working with you, Mr. Secretary. We wish you success in your tenure.

For generations, America has been the leader of the world. This has required great sacrifice. But our commitment to stability, to the rule of law, to open markets, and human rights, and our work through alliances have all paid off greatly. We have made mistake, no doubt, sometimes by overreaching in our commitments and sometimes by not reaching at all. But our Nation has certainly been a force for good. If we do not lead in security and commerce as well as in values and in ideas, the vacuum will be filled by others, including jihadists and others, wishing us grave harm.

Leading takes resources. Sufficient resources are needed for our military, for sure, but also for our diplomats working to end the many conflicts impacting our security. That is what the generals say. In today's well-connected age, in which threats can come from anywhere, we need a very broad diplomatic presence and that takes resources too, especially to keep our diplomats safe.

Resources are also needed to support our humanitarian relief and to support development. Their work abroad benefits America at home. Consider that a modest emergency investment in West Africa's health stopped cold what looked like an emerging Ebola panic in our country a few years ago.

Mr. Secretary, I am confident that you will find new efficiencies in your Department. There is waste to attack. But many here remain concerned by the hand you were dealt with the budget and look forward to strengthening it. Congress also has a responsibility not to hamstring the Department with mandates and with restrictions. And these have accumulated over years, compounding your management challenges.

For our partnership to succeed, we need to communicate, often. Too often, administrations go it alone, as frankly, the last administration did. Iran and Cuba policy are examples. Let us break that pattern.

And I will now turn to Mr. Engel.

Mr. ENGEL. Thank you very much, Mr. Chairman. I know that the shooting in Alexandria this morning is on all our minds. It is shocking. We are all hoping for the best for our colleague, Steve Scalise, the police officers, and others who were victims of the attack. We wish them a speedy recovery and we are thinking of their loved ones this morning.

Mr. Secretary, we are glad to have you here. I wish you well, but I have to tell you that I am deeply skeptical about this budget, which in my view is part of a foreign policy strategy that would cripple American diplomacy and development efforts around the world. This strategy has been carried out first and foremost by an action with an initial purge that pushed out some of our most senior and accomplished career diplomats. This administration has eliminated years of expertise in one fell swoop and, with few exceptions, the President simply has not nominated anyone to help you run the Department.

Mr. Chairman, I ask that my graphic be displayed. This is an organizational chart of the State Department. The three dark green boxes are President Trump's confirmed nominees. The light green boxes are officials in place in the last administration. Yellow boxes are nominees awaiting Senate action. And all the red boxes are positions for which the President hasn't even submitted a nomination. That is a lot of red boxes, far behind where Presidents Bush and Obama were at this point and that doesn't cover the dozens of vacant ambassadorships. We should all keep this in mind next time there is talk about obstruction in Congress. People have not been confirmed, not because there is obstruction, because they haven't been submitted.

Now career diplomats, keeping the seats warm, are capable and devoted public servants, but they aren't able to direct our foreign policy. What is the President's approach to Russia hacking our elec-

tion or nonproliferation or human trafficking or Africa or the Arctic? When will we have the Under Secretaries and Assistant Secretaries and Ambassadors at large to put these policies in place?

The second indication of the administration's view of the State Department is this document. This is the budget, The 2018 State Department Budget, submitted to Congress by the Secretary of State. It calls for a 32 percent cut to our international affairs budget. I have never seen a budget proposal so reckless in all the years I have been here. It is so insulting to our personnel and so quick to hit bipartisan opposition.

Mr. Secretary, when we spoke, you told me that you hoped to put the State Department on the glide path to reduce spending levels. A one third cut is more like a nose dive. Imagine being an American diplomat learning that this is the value the administration places on your service. Imagine waking up every morning in a dangerous place on the other side of the world knowing that the officials responsible for your safety haven't even been nominated, and that America's top diplomat, which is you, Mr. Secretary, was coming here to ask us for a 32 percent budget cut.

Some consequences of this budget will hit us down the road if we fail to invest in diplomacy and development now. The conflicts we don't prevent will come back to us as wars we will need to fight. Senator Lindsey Graham said it well and I quote him, "If we implemented this budget, we have to retreat from the world and put a lot of people at risk." He said we would have "a lot of Benghazis in the making if we actually implemented the State Department cuts." He is right. The budget cuts Embassy security by more than $1 billion, 62 percent—Embassy security cut 62 percent. So fortunately on this point, Congress retains the power of the purse, so we will have the last word on this issue.

So I think that we need a lot of clarity on this and I think this committee should keep pressing these issues until we have the answers we need. I am going to stop now, Mr. Chairman, because we have agreed to shorten our statement, but I will submit the rest of my statement for the record.

Chairman ROYCE. Thank you very much, Mr. Engel. This morning, we are pleased to be joined by Mr. Rex Tillerson. He is the 69th Secretary of State. Prior to his appointment, the Secretary spent 40 years at ExxonMobil, culminating as the chairman and Chief Executive Officer. Secretary Tillerson also has long been involved with the Boy Scouts of America, most recently serving as the Boy Scouts' National President. Mr. Secretary, welcome to our committee.

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

Also, we want as many members as possible to have a chance to question the Secretary, so to accomplish that, I would just ask that everyone respect the time limit and that means leaving an adequate amount of time for the Secretary to answer your questions. Nothing requires full use of your time. And we will begin with Secretary Tillerson's testimony.

**STATEMENT OF THE HONORABLE REX W. TILLERSON, SECRETARY OF STATE, U.S. DEPARTMENT OF STATE**

Secretary TILLERSON. Thank you, Chairman Royce, Ranking Member Engel, and distinguished members of the committee.

Of course, we were all stunned by the news of the shooting involving your colleagues, members of congressional staff, and Capitol Police. Congressman Scalise is a friend of mine. He is a friend and represents many friends of mine back in Louisiana. My prayers and those of my colleagues at the State Department are with the injured and with those members of law enforcement who responded to this morning's attack.

Today, I would like to continue the conversation that we have started about the administration's State Department and USAID budget requests for Fiscal Year 2018.

Before I begin my testimony on the budget, I would like to offer a point of view on the Russian sanctions legislation currently being considered by the Congress. I certainly agree with the sentiment that has been conveyed by several members from both parties that Russia must be held accountable for its meddling in U.S. elections. I would urge Congress to ensure any legislation allows the President to have the flexibility to adjust sanctions to meet the needs of what is always an evolving diplomatic situation. Essentially, we would ask for the flexibility to turn the heat up when we need to, but also to ensure that we have the ability to maintain a constructive dialogue.

As we all know, America's global competitive advantages and standing as a leader are under constant challenge. The dedicated men and women of the State Department and USAID carry out the important and often perilous work of advancing America's interests every single day. That mission is unchanged. However, the State Department and USAID, like many other institutions here and around the world, have not evolved in their responsiveness as quickly as new challenges and threats to our national security have changed and are changing. We are challenged to respond to a post-Cold War world that set in motion new global dynamics, and a post-9/11 world characterized by historic new threats that present themselves in ways never seen before, enabled by technological tools that we have been ill-prepared to engage. The 21st century has already presented many evolving challenges to U.S. national security and economic prosperity. We must develop proactive responses to protect and advance the interests of the American people.

With such a broad array of threats facing the United States, the Fiscal Year 2018 budget request of $37.6 billion dollars aligns with the administration's objective of making America's security our top priority. The first responsibility of government is the security of its own citizens, and we will orient our diplomatic efforts toward fulfilling that commitment. While our mission will also be focused on advancing the economic interests of the American people, the State Department's primary focus will be to protect our citizens at home and abroad.

Our mission is at all times guided by our longstanding values of freedom, democracy, individual liberty, and human dignity. The conviction of our country's Founders is enduring, that "all men are

endowed by their Creator with certain unalienable rights." As a Nation, we hold high the aspiration that all will one day experience the freedom we have known. In our young administration's foreign policy, we are motivated by the conviction that the more we engage with other nations on issues of security and prosperity, the more we will have opportunities to shape the human rights conditions in those nations. History has shown that the United States leaves a footprint of freedom wherever it goes.

Ensuring the security and prosperity of the American people and advancing our values has necessitated difficult decisions in other areas of our budget. The Fiscal Year 2018 budget request includes substantial funding for many foreign assistance programs under the auspices of USAID and the State Department, but we have made hard choices to reduce funding for other initiatives. Even with reductions in funding, we will continue to be the leader in international development, global health, democracy and good governance initiatives, and humanitarian efforts. If natural disasters or epidemics strike overseas, America will respond with care and support. I am convinced we can maximize the effectiveness of the programs and continue to offer America's helping hand to the world.

This budget request also reflects a commitment to ensure every tax dollar spent is aligned with the Department and USAID's mission critical objectives. The request focuses the State Department and USAID efforts on missions which deliver the greatest value and opportunity of success for the American people. The State Department and USAID budget increased over 60 percent from Fiscal Year 2007, reaching a record high $55.6 billion in Fiscal Year 2017. Recognizing that this rate of increase in funding is not sustainable, the Fiscal Year 2018 budget request seeks to align the core missions of the State Department with historic funding levels. We believe this budget also represents the interests of the American people, including responsible stewardship of the public's money.

I know there is intense interest in prospective State Department and USAID redesign efforts. We have just completed collecting information on our organizational processes and culture through a survey that was made available to every one of our State and USAID colleagues. Over 35,000 surveys were completed, and we had held in-person listening sessions with approximately 300 individuals to obtain their perspective on what we do and how we do it. I met personally with dozens of team members who spoke candidly about their experiences. From this feedback we have been able to get a clearer overall view of our organization. We have no preconceived outcomes, and our discussions of the goals, priorities, and direction of the State Department and USAID were not token exercises. The principles for our listening sessions and subsequent evaluation of our organization are the same as those which I stated in my confirmation hearing for our foreign policy: We will see the world for what it is, be honest with ourselves and the American people, follow the facts where they lead us, and hold ourselves and others accountable. We are still analyzing the feedback we have received, and we expect to release the findings of the survey soon. From all of this, one thing is certain: I am listening to what my people are telling me are the challenges facing them and how we

can produce a more efficient and effective State Department and USAID. And we will work as a team and with the Congress to improve both organizations.

Throughout my career, I have never believed, nor have I ever experienced, that the level of funding devoted to a goal is the most important factor in achieving it. Our budget will never determine our ability to be effective, our people will. My colleagues at the State Department and USAID are a deep source of inspiration, and their patriotism, professionalism, and willingness to make sacrifices for our country are our greatest resource. I am confident that the U.S. State Department and USAID will continue to deliver results for the American people.

I thank you for the time, and I am happy to answer your questions.

[The prepared statement of Secretary Tillerson follows:]

**SECRETARY OF STATE REX TILLERSON**
**STATEMENT TO THE HOUSE FOREIGN AFFAIRS COMMITTEE**
**ON THE FY 2018 BUDGET REQUEST**
**JUNE 14, 2017**

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

Thank you for the opportunity to discuss this Administration's State Department and USAID budget request for Fiscal Year 2018.

As we all know, America's global competitive advantages and standing as a leader are under constant challenge. The dedicated men and women of the State Department and USAID carry out the important and often perilous work of advancing America's interests every single day. That mission is unchanged. However, the State Department and USAID, like many other institutions here and around the world, have not evolved in their responsiveness as quickly as new challenges and threats to our national security have changed and are changing. We are challenged to respond to a post-Cold War world that set in motion new global dynamics, and a post- 9/11 world characterized by historic new threats that present themselves in ways never seen before, enabled by technological tools that we have been ill-prepared to engage. The 21st century has already presented many evolving challenges to U.S. national security and economic prosperity. We must develop proactive responses to protect and advance the interests of the American people.

In Syria and Iraq, ISIS has been greatly diminished on the ground, but there is still a substantial fight ahead to complete the job and eliminate it from the region. But the battle to ensure that ISIS and other terrorist organizations do not gain or grow footholds in other countries will continue. The fight against Islamist extremism extends to the digital world. The battle to prevent terrorists' use of the internet and other digital tools will continue to challenge us from a security and diplomatic perspective.

The regime in Iran continues activities and interventions that destabilize the Middle East: support for the brutal Assad regime, funding militias and foreign fighters in Iraq and Yemen that

undermine legitimate governments, and arming terrorist organizations like Hezbollah, which threaten our ally Israel. We and our allies must counter Iran's aspirations of hegemony in the region.

Thoughtful development and implementation of policies to ensure Afghanistan never again becomes a platform for terrorism, Pakistan does not become a proliferator of nuclear weapons, and the region is positioned for stable economic growth.

On our southern border, illegal migration from countries in the Western Hemisphere presents a risk to our security, with criminal cartels exporting drugs and violence into our communities. Almost 20,000 Americans died from overdoses of heroin or synthetic opioids in 2015, and between 90 and 94 percent of all heroin consumed in the United States comes from or passes through Mexico. While we, as Americans, must take responsibility for being the largest demand center in the world for the drug trade, stopping the cross-border flow of drugs is an essential step in protecting American lives from the catastrophic effects of drugs and the violence that follows them.

While we seek a constructive relationship with China, and in many cases are seeing signs of shared interests, their artificial island construction and militarization of facilities on features in international waters is a threat to regional stability and the economic livelihood of the United States and our allies. As a nation dependent on the free flow of commerce across the globe, we, and all other nations, have a legitimate interest in the peaceful use of international waters, and we must assert our lawful right to the use of the South China Sea and other bodies of water.

Both state and non-state actors' malicious cyber capabilities present a threat to U.S. national security, and complicate our diplomatic efforts with a surge of misinformation and interference in sovereign countries' internal governments.

With such a broad array of threats facing the United States, the FY 2018 budget request of $37.6 billion dollars aligns with the Administration's objective of making America's security our top priority. The first responsibility of government is the security of its own citizens, and we will

orient our diplomatic efforts toward fulfilling that commitment. Within the FY 2018 request level, funding for Diplomatic Security operations will increase by approximately 11% over FY 2016. While our mission will also be focused on advancing the economic interests of the American people, the State Department's primary focus will be to protect our citizens at home and abroad.

Our mission is at all times guided by our longstanding values of freedom, democracy, individual liberty, and human dignity. The conviction of our country's Founders is enduring, that "all men are endowed by their Creator with certain unalienable rights." As a nation, we hold high the aspiration that all will one day experience the freedoms we have known. In our young administration's foreign policy, we are motivated by the conviction that the more we engage with other nations on issues of security and prosperity, the more we will have opportunities to shape the human rights conditions in those nations. History has shown that the United States leaves a footprint of freedom wherever it goes.

Ensuring the security and prosperity of the American people and advancing our values has necessitated difficult decisions in other areas of our budget. The FY 2018 budget request includes substantial funding for many foreign assistance programs under the auspices of USAID and the State Department, but we have made hard choices to reduce funding for other initiatives. But even with reductions in funding, we will continue to be the leader in international development, global health, democracy and good governance initiatives, and humanitarian efforts. If natural disasters or epidemics strike overseas, America will respond with care and support. I am convinced we can maximize the effectiveness of these programs and continue to offer America's helping hand to the world. Despite necessary reductions from FY 2017 levels, we are still devoting $25.3 billion to foreign assistance, which accounts for over 2/3 of the State and USAID budget. This entails $7.1 billion in security assistance programs, and $5.6 billion, including our diplomatic engagement, to defeat ISIS and other terrorist organizations. In several other areas where we have chosen to make reductions, we will ask other donors and private sector partners to increase their support.

This budget request also reflects a commitment to ensure every tax dollar spent is aligned with the Department's and USAID's mission-critical objectives. The request focuses the State Department and USAID's efforts on missions which deliver the greatest value and opportunity of success for the American people. The State Department and USAID budget increased over 60% from FY 2007, reaching a record high $55.6 billion in FY 2017. Recognizing that this rate of increase in funding is not sustainable, the FY 2018 budget request seeks to align the core missions of the State Department with historic funding levels. We believe this budget also represents the interests of the American people, including responsible stewardship of the public's money.

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source of inspiration, and their patriotism, professionalism, and willingness to make sacrifices for our country are our greatest resources. I am confident that the U.S. State Department and USAID will continue to deliver results for the American people.

I thank you for your time, and I am happy to answer your questions.

Chairman ROYCE. Thank you very much, Mr. Secretary. This committee has worked to make the State Department more efficient. In December, as you know, the first State Authorities Bill in over a decade was signed into law. That was our work product. We stand ready to work with you to reform the Department and on reorganization. On this question I just ask that you commit to intensified consultation between your staff and the committee in terms of plans for reform.

Secretary TILLERSON. We certainly will do that and welcome and seek your input as we go about this.

Chairman ROYCE. Thank you. I only have one question and it goes to the issue of North Korea, Secretary Tillerson. This situation, we were encouraged yesterday first to hear news that Otto Wormbier would be returned to the United States, but then we found out about his condition and were horrified to learn that he was in a coma. This is outrageous. And on Monday, we heard Secretary Mattis call North Korea "the top security threat to the United States."

You have been working a strategy, I know, to ratchet up pressure on the regime. Last Congress, we passed and signed into law a comprehensive North Korea sanctions bill to go after those assisting the regime. And then recently we passed out of this committee again another piece of legislation, this one to attack North Korea's use of overseas labor, indentured servitude in which the check goes to the regime and they use it for hard currency and they can use it for their nuclear weapons program.

We heard two kind of mixed reports on China's cooperation on this. There is a new report out this week and it shows that by cracking down on a relatively small number of interlinked Chinese companies that deal with North Korea, we could really crank things up and reportedly the administration has asked China to act on some ten entities. If Beijing doesn't act, are we prepared with the sanctions we put on the books now, to act unilaterally with third-party sanctions in order to cut off the hard currency? This a very expensive program they are running. It costs them billions and billions of dollars a year and frankly they don't make much of anything, so they need the hard currency coming in in order to fund this program. And this is what I wanted to ask you.

Secretary TILLERSON. Thank you, Chairman. I am familiar with the reports you are referencing. Treasury Department also has that report and we will examine the study that was done and the results they found.

The approach we are taking with North Korea, as you are aware, is one of eliciting countries all over the world to support us in putting pressure on the regime and Pyongyang to change and alter their position and their view before we are willing to sit down and conduct discussions with them.

Clearly, China is the capstone to achieving this kind of pressure. This was a topic of significant discussion in President Xi and President Trump's summit in Mar-a-Lago. The communications had been very clear. Our expectations have been very clear with the Chinese. Their cooperation, I would say, has been notable, but it has been uneven. And we continue that dialogue with the Chinese, specifically around their actions that support revenue streams to

North Korea, but also taking action against entities inside of China that may be supporting revenue streams as well.

We will be having another high-level dialogue next week when Secretary Mattis and myself meet with our counterparts here in Washington, and that will be one of the first topics on the agenda. We have made it clear to them and we have provided them lists of entities that we believe they need to take action against. We have asked that they take the action, but President Trump has also been very clear with President Xi that if they either don't want to take the action or they do not take the action, that we will act on our own.

Chairman ROYCE. I concur. We can't have dialogue forever, Mr. Secretary. Thank you and I go to Mr. Engel.

Mr. ENGEL. Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Mr. Secretary, I just want to say that I heard what you said, but I don't find it compelling that we can operate the State Department and diplomacy with a 33 percent cut, a one-third cut. It just seems to me like it is—I know you will do the best with what you have, obviously, it is showing where priorities are not and priorities don't seem to be with the State Department, with diplomacy. I just want to say that.

Because we are short with time, Mr. Secretary, I would like to start by getting you to respond to a series of questions, but I would like just a yes or no, if you can.

As you may know—and we chatted a little bit before—this committee under Chairman Royce and myself has a long-standing bipartisan tradition and we have worked closely with both Republican and Democratic administrations. So I was taken aback by the Trump administration's apparent decision to ignore oversight requests of Democratic Members of Congress.

In a letter to the President, Senator Grassley called the administration's departure of long-standing practice nonsense, and I was pleased that Homeland Security Secretary Kelly rejected this guidance by saying and I quote him, "Regardless of who the letter comes from and it doesn't have to just come from a ranking member or chairman, we will respond to any congressional inquiry." That is a quote from him.

So I would like to ask you, Mr. Secretary, will you join Secretary Kelly in committing to respond to congressional inquiries and information requests regardless of the political party of the member inquiring?

Secretary TILLERSON. I already have and I will.

Mr. ENGEL. Thank you. Can I have your commitment that you will direct the Department to respond to requests for information made by the committee staff as the designees of the chairman and ranking member?

Secretary TILLERSON. Indeed, through the appropriate channels and processes.

Mr. ENGEL. Thank you. Mr. Secretary, a member of your staff informed my staff that the reorganization you are planning for the State Department will require statutory changes. So I am glad to know that that is the State Department's position because I agree with that.

When your reorganization assessment is complete, will you commit to coming to this committee, the Foreign Affairs Committee, which has oversight and authorizing responsibilities for the State Department, with any requests you have for organizational changes at the Department?

Secretary TILLERSON. Yes, and we would expect to work with you on that as we are developing those.

Mr. ENGEL. Thank you. It was recently reported that within the first few weeks of the administration, a top White House aide attempted unsuccessfully to lift economic sanctions imposed on Russia in response to the illegal occupation of Crimea and interference in the 2016 Presidential Election. This followed repeated contacts with the Russians by Jared Kushner, Michael Flynn, Jeff Sessions, and others. So do you accept the conclusion, Mr. Secretary, of the Intelligence Committee that Russian criminally interfered in last year's election?

Secretary TILLERSON. Yes, I do. And I have no knowledge of any of those efforts that you mentioned.

Mr. ENGEL. Do you believe that it is in the U.S. interest to relax sanctions on Russia before she has fully complied with the Minsk framework and left Crimea?

Secretary TILLERSON. I think it is important that we be given sufficient flexibility to achieve the Minsk objectives. It is very possible that the Government of Ukraine and the Government of Russia could come to a satisfactory resolution through some structure other than Minsk, but would achieve the objectives of Minsk, which we are committed to.

So my caution is I wouldn't want to have ourselves handcuffed to Minsk if it turns out the parties decide to settle this through a different agreement.

Mr. ENGEL. Well, let me say that I hear what you are saying, but I disagree, because I believe that the only thing that Russia understands is tough talk and if they think that we are somehow willing to relax the sanctions on them before they have complied with the Minsk framework and left Crimea I think it just will encourage Putin to continue his bullying and who knows where he will strike next.

Secretary TILLERSON. That is not our intent, nor will we do that. I back the objectives of Minsk.

Mr. ENGEL. And let me finally ask you, what has the administration done to respond to the Russian assault on our Presidential Election? Have you spoken with the President about how to prevent from ever happening again?

Secretary TILLERSON. I have spoken to the Russians directly about it. Their response is pretty much as you have seen in their response publicly to be. But we have registered our complaint about that and that it is going to be a constant obstacle to our ability to improve our relationship if they do not address it.

Mr. ENGEL. Thank you very much. Mr. Chairman, I yield back.

Chairman ROYCE. Thank you, Mr. Engel. We go now to Congresswoman Ileana Ros-Lehtinen of Florida.

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

I am strongly against the proposed zeroing out of democracy and governance programs, especially in Cuba, Nicaragua, and Venezuela, where civil society is facing increasing repression. In the last 2 months nearly 3,000 Venezuelans have been jailed. Over 1,000 have been injured, and nearly 70 people have been killed by Maduro's thugs. So I ask you to please place more human rights violators on our sanctions list.

On a separate topic, in January of this year, your State Department determined that the PLO and the Palestinian Authority have not complied with their commitments under U.S. law, yet all potential sanctions were waived. So I ask how you can justify an increase when so many things in the budget are cut, but the PA has an increase in your budget request.

Also, a few days ago, Mr. Secretary, Israel's Prime Minister called for UNRWA to be folded into the U.N. Commissioner for Refugees after a Hamas tunnel was found beneath two UNRWA schools. Is the U.S. going to support our ally, Israel, and prohibit funding to UNRWA?

And finally, on Iran, as a witness told this committee at a hearing in February, sir, the International Atomic Energy Agency "has not been able to state that Iran has addressed its concerns and questions about past nuclear weapons activities." And it also "has not stated that it successfully is verifying the JCPOA's prohibitions on specific nuclear weapons development activities." So considering this lack of verification, how does the Justice Department justify its certification that Iran is in compliance with the JCPOA as it did in April? And I don't want to take more time, but if you could answer adding names to the Venezuela sanctions list, UNRWA funding, and Iran and noncompliance.

Secretary TILLERSON. We are working with Treasury to develop a very robust list of individuals and most recently you saw sanctions imposed on six members of the Venezuelan Supreme Court in response to their decision handed down which we felt was certainly not in keeping with the Constitution. We are going to continue to be very engaged in the situation in Venezuela, but as you know, the challenge for the U.S. is to do this in a way that is productive and constructive as opposed to the U.S. then being used by the Maduro regime as a tool to justify their actions. But rest assured, we have active efforts underway working with others in OAS, in particular.

With regard to the Iran compliance, we rely upon the process called for under the JCPOA and the IAEA. We do question them vigorously. We are in discussions with them to ensure that are they meeting all of those obligations to certify compliance to us. We are reliant upon them to make the certifications to us in order to then make decisions around filing a compliance report and then filing the sanctions and waivers that follow on with that.

With respect to the Palestinians, we are in active discussion with the Palestinian Authority. As you know, we had a meeting here in Washington at the President level and I had my own bilateral meetings with President Abbas. We were recently in Israel and had meetings with the Authority in Bethlehem. These discussions are around issues of how they manage terrorism and how they manage violence within the West Bank and Gaza, but it is also hopefully

setting the stage for a re-engagement on the peace process with the Israelis. So all of those issues of concern have been discussed with them.

Ms. ROS-LEHTINEN. Thank you, sir. And I won't take up any more time. Thank you, sir.

Chairman ROYCE. Mr. Brad Sherman of California.

Mr. SHERMAN. Our hearts go out to the victims. This is an attack on our democracy and the best response is for us to be here doing our jobs, so I thank you, Mr. Secretary, for being here. Most of my questions will be for the record because we want to be as brief as possible.

The discussion about what resources the State Department should have and without objection I would like to put into the record a letter from 120 Three and Four Star Flag Officers urging that you have more resources than you are asking for. And of course, Senator Corker made some more comments to you yesterday.

We in Congress decide how much money is going to be spent. We have the overall view. We might plug a tax loophole or have savings in another part of the budget that would allow us to spend more on foreign ops. But we do our best job when we get guidance. I would hope that you would submit for the record how you would spend a 10 percent, a 20 percent, or a 30 percent increment. What your recommendation to us is if we can find the money to provide that and I thank you for nodding.

I am going to move on to the red boxes that the ranking member brought up. The Under Secretaries, the Assistant Secretaries that haven't been appointed. We talked about this and I commend you for your decision to praise the people who are filling these positions as Acting Assistant Secretaries, Acting Under Secretaries. They are career professionals. They are doing a spectacular job except they can't do the job because they are temporary. They are not authorized to make policy and there are hundreds of decisions that shouldn't reach your desk, but need to be made by someone who isn't just there holding down the—so I would urge you to submit a list of those actings that you would recommend keep their job because they are doing a spectacular job and they have already got their security clearances and then you hit the ground running and whoever holds that position not only has the incredible competence that you and I have discussed, but also has the authority of saying this is really my desk.

I would urge you to designate the Islamic Revolutionary Guard Corps as a specially designated foreign terrorist organization. The Quds force is already so designated. If you designate the subsidiary, you should designate the entire consolidated group of corporations. If we apply that business term to the situation you should certainly designate the IRGC given the thousands of people they have killed in Syria.

We face an ideological threat from radical Islamist terrorism. I hope that we would pay to print and provide textbooks to parents who otherwise have to pay for them and expand our broadcasting, particularly in the regional language of Pakistan, especially Sindhi.

Now a couple of oral questions. I think this is an easy one. Is the Trump administration committed to the implementation of last

year's extension of the U.S.-Israel Memorandum of Understanding regarding security assistance?

Secretary TILLERSON. Yes.

Mr. SHERMAN. Another one that might be a little tough. They are talking about an arms package for Saudi Arabia starting at $110 billion, perhaps $350 billion over the next 10 years. Can you provide the committee with assurance that the State Department will closely scrutinize any proposed sales to ensure that they do not adversely impact Israel's qualitative military edge and that you would oppose the transfer of F-35 aircraft?

Secretary TILLERSON. We will ensure that all of those sales meet all of our obligations both to Israel and to others.

Mr. SHERMAN. I yield back.

Secretary TILLERSON. I would like to respond to——

Mr. SHERMAN. I yield to the Secretary.

Secretary TILLERSON. I would like to respond to the ranking member's chart, all the red boxes since you brought it up. First, just so you know, we have named and have names in the process at the White House for about 50 percent of the Under Secretary and Assistant Secretary positions and we have candidate lists that we are narrowing down for the remainder.

Same on the ambassadorial roles. We have 212 Ambassador or representative positions. Over 140 of those are filled. Of the remaining 70, about half have already been named and are in process. The other half we have evaluations with candidates under way.

One of the real obstacles over in the process is—I followed up with people, all these people were named literally months ago, asking what is the hold up—and when we call them we find out it is getting their paperwork done. The paperwork burden to get the clearance and to satisfy the Office of Ethics, which is important, is extraordinarily burdensome. I know from my own experience, I had to hire eight individuals to help me get mine done so that I could get it done as quickly as I did. Most people can't afford to do that. So this is an extraordinary chore for people to get through the paperwork, even former senators who have been nominated for positions are struggling to get through the paperwork. Just the point that it is not because people haven't been named and they are not in the process. They are being processed.

Mr. SHERMAN. I yield back.

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

Mr. SMITH. Thank you very much, Mr. Chairman. Mr. Secretary, welcome to the committee and thank you for your leadership.

On human trafficking, Mr. Secretary, the TIP Report, as we all know on the country ratings will soon be released. They are under active review right now. Tragically, the Obama administration in the last 2 years ignored TIP recommendations and artificially inflated, gave passing grades, to countries like China, Cuba, Oman, and Malaysia who have egregious records when it comes to human trafficking. They ignored the TIP professionals and they politicized the outcome. Reuters confirmed this. They did an investigative report that was incisive and brilliant. I held several hearings on it and the focus of the last one was "Next Time Get it Right," because they didn't. We sell out the victims of human trafficking when we

misappropriate a tierage, Tier 3 being the worst and say you are okay when they are not. So please, assure the committee that this year's TIP Report will be honest, transparent, and will follow wherever the human rights abuse goes.

What you do with sanctions, the part two of all of that, is all up to you. Hopefully, all of you are very informed and you will make a great decision on that, but at least get the TIP Report right. We have to restore the integrity of that report.

Secondly, on food aid, on October 15th, I held a hearing on why everyone it seemed were exiting the Middle East and going to Europe. Some wanted to come here, but most flooded into Europe. We were told by the UNHCR's Regional Representative that the trigger was the 30 percent in the World Food Programme provisions and that the UNHCR appeals have been so under realized, average 40 percent, 60 percent unrealized, so people felt helpless and abandoned in those refugee camps. They finally said we are out of here. We are going somewhere, Germany, wherever they wanted to go, but it was triggered by a lack of food aid and other kind of humanitarian assistance.

I would appeal to you. Karen Bass and I just returned from South Sudan. It was my second trip within the last 9 months. We went to refugee camps. One refugee camp, the largest, one of the largest in the world, Bidi Bidi, in Uganda, they are cutting food rations by 50 percent because it is not there.

We did go to another camp, Bentiu, which is an IDP camp in Unity State and frankly, they had food and a lot of it was courtesy of the United States Government, so thank you for that. But we have to make sure that that food does not diminish. It needs to actually be increased. We are having a hearing tomorrow, it was scheduled for today, on the fact that some 14 million Africans are at risk of famine and the driver, frankly, is conflict. But they have to get that food aid.

Finally, I will just say this on the issue of the conflict. I believe and I think Karen would agree with this that there is a window of opportunity with South Sudan and Salva Kiir and his leadership to really put pressure on them to end this conflict which is a Nuer versus Dinka conflict. He has a new chief of staff for the military who seems to be saying all for the right things. His previous one was a disaster and the rapes and the interruption of convoys on their way to deliver foodstuffs and humanitarian assistance were disrupted by the military. So please, there needs to be an all-out effort on South Sudan right now to act on this window of opportunity, Mr. Secretary.

Secretary TILLERSON. Well, as to the human trafficking report, as I said in my opening statement, we will see the world as it is. We will be honest with ourselves and the American people. So let me assure you that report will be reflective of what the circumstances actually are.

On the food aid, you are correct. So much of this is complicated by conflict. We appreciate that Congress gave us a big plus up on food aid this past year. Some of that money, I guess I can say regrettably, is going to carry over to 2018 and it has to do with our ability to deliver, particularly in some of these conflict areas. We have had difficulty working with NGOs getting some of the food de-

livered because of issues in the case of the conflict around Syria, issues with NGOs in Turkey that you have read about. We are working with the Government of Turkey to facilitate them approving and not stopping our ability to get aid into these regions.

You mentioned parts of Africa. Yemen, there is a serious famine crisis in Yemen. Again, we are blocked, the aid workers, and we are blocked from being able to deliver to the people that need it. We are working, trying to work solutions in all of these areas with our first and highest priority create conditions that we can at least get the humanitarian aid in while we are working on the conflict resolution itself.

Chairman ROYCE. We go now to Mr. Gregory Meeks of New York.

Mr. MEEKS. Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Mr. Secretary, thank you for being here. Let me just first say, Mr. Secretary, that what we are looking at—I understand the difficulty with the paperwork, etcetera, but just noted that the Bush and the Obama administration was way ahead at this point as far as hiring the number of individuals that we had at various levels at the State Department.

But let me ask you a couple of questions and maybe you can clear them up for me. As I travel around, these are questions that I am often asked and I have been unclear with some of the answers and so maybe you can answer them in the vein of what we talked about here in a yes or no answer.

Are you in favor of America First nationalism?

Secretary TILLERSON. America First, as we said, does not mean America alone. We will continue our strong alliances and partnerships and maintain the friendships, the relations that we have around the world.

Mr. MEEKS. Because of some of the statements that the President has made about America First and he has said that a lot of the other countries around the world have to give things back or we are not going to do this or that, in his words, by just using the words, America First in that regard, do you see any negative consequences to America's standing internationally as a result of the America First, which would seem to indicate to the rest of the world that it is about us and only about us if you just take that language.

Secretary TILLERSON. Congressman, that is why the Vice President, myself, Secretary of Defense, others have been making numerous trips, the President himself with his trip abroad. We have to ensure our partners and allies understand what that moniker conveys and I think what we have had good dialogue with them about is it does not mean America is stepping back or that we only worry about our own self interests. Rather, as I indicated, we live in some really challenging times and a lot of things are changing. We have to ask our allies and friends to do more and take more responsibility in these great alliances that we have.

Mr. MEEKS. Okay, so let me——

Secretary TILLERSON. And what I am hearing back is they are glad we are engaged. I have seen no indication that our relationships have been undermined with this very open, frank, and honest conversation we are finally having with people.

Mr. MEEKS. Short period of time I have, so let me just ask this so that we can be clear. Do we support, because I know that the President has said that he doesn't generally agree with multi-lateral agreements or multi-lateral organizations. He would rather do things on a bilateral basis. So we do support the EU?

Secretary TILLERSON. Yes. We have been quite clear that we do.

Mr. MEEKS. NATO?

Secretary TILLERSON. Without a doubt.

Mr. MEEKS. OAS?

Secretary TILLERSON. Certainly.

Mr. MEEKS. WTO?

Secretary TILLERSON. Yes. But WTO needs some reform.

Mr. MEEKS. The U.N.?

Secretary TILLERSON. Yes, the U.N. needs a lot of reform.

Mr. MEEKS. The Asia-Pacific Economic Cooperation?

Secretary TILLERSON. Yes.

Mr. MEEKS. So we will work and we are going to—silently with all of those——

Secretary TILLERSON. We are engaged with every one of those organizations you named. And those that are quite effective, we want to strengthen them. Some of them need significant reform and that is not just the U.S. point of view.

Mr. MEEKS. I am just trying to make it clear because for some, quite frankly, Secretary, what has happened is the truth of the matter is as you have traveled and General Mattis, etcetera, and the Vice President, they have heard one thing and it seems to be that people are relieved when they have heard you speak. Then the President tweets or says something else. It seems to contradict what you say and so then people come to me and they don't know what to believe, whether or not it is the words of the Secretary of State or the President of the United States. That is not your fault. There is nothing you can do. I don't want to—in the little bit of time that I have.

I really want to jump then real quickly into this issue that we have, just talking about the budget because 21 percent of the diversity in the State Department has come from the utilization of the Fellows, either the Pickering or the Rangel Fellows. And I understand that there is a freeze that is going on and we have already spent $85,000 per person on these students. So I am wondering if not these bright, young individuals who can help diversify the State Department that they can be waived from this freeze. They have finished the program. They have been paid. We have invested the money so that they can then take their spots in the foreign service. Is there any opportunity for them to be——

Secretary TILLERSON. There is no freeze. The structure of the program, Rangel-Pickering, which is very important to us and we have every intention of continuing it, the obligation in the contract that the young people and others engage with us when we fund their tuition and for their graduate studies is that we confirm that we will offer them a position in consular affairs. That is confirmed. And it is a 5-year commitment on their part to serve.

We then say we will put you on the list for consideration for the next A-100 foreign service class. We are holding the next A-100 foreign service class because quite frankly right now on foreign serv-

ice officer staffing we are actually up about 50 people from the beginning of the year. With our expected manning which we are looking at probably an 8 percent reduction by the end of fiscal 2018, in order for us to have time to manage how we want that to occur so that we do not diminish the strength of the foreign service corps, we are holding the next A-100 class. So nothing has been frozen and we want people to continue to apply and they are all offered a position in consular affairs and that is no change from the past.

There has never been a guarantee that anyone would have a clear offer or pathway to foreign service. They would be considered for foreign service, based upon the work they have completed, but they always have an offer to go to work in consular affairs.

Chairman ROYCE. Mr. Dana Rohrabacher of California.

Mr. ROHRABACHER. Thank you, Mr. Secretary, and let us just note that right from the very beginning you outlined for us that we have been spending more money on our foreign projects and foreign goals than we have at historic levels, which have actually been lower. Let me just note for the record that this increase in spending levels especially in the last 8 years, has not resulted in a more peaceful world or a more secure situation for the people of the United States of America.

Let me note also, Mr. Secretary, that I am proud that we have a Government now and we have a President who makes no apologies for putting America first in his priorities. What is important for the well-being, security, and prosperity of the United States is our job and for us to try to blur that is not doing anyone a service.

Achieving our goals, however, let us note, and putting America first, achieving our goals does not necessarily derive from higher budgets, but like you have committed to us today, working with other countries and making sure that we reach out to make friends and to make sure that we turn enemies into friends and get the job done for helping the less fortunate people of the world is something that we will work together on and not just bear as a burden of the United States taxpayer. So I appreciate, number one, what this administration is doing and what you are doing, Mr. Secretary, to achieve those goals.

I have some specific questions for you on specific areas. Number one, are we still giving money to Pakistan? Dr. Afridi, who fingered Osama bin Laden, the murderer of 3,000 Americans in 9/11, is being held in a dungeon there and the Pakistanis continue, we know, the ISI continues with a notorious support of terrorist elements in Afghanistan. Why are we still giving Pakistan any aid at all?

Secretary TILLERSON. We are beginning an inter-agency policy review toward Pakistan. This is going to be one of the considerations. The President has asked the questions specifically about our level of support and funding to Pakistan. No decision is to be taken until we complete that policy review, as you well can understand and appreciate.

Pakistan and our relationship with them touches on some much broader issues relative to stability in Afghanistan and how we achieve that, but also stability in the Indo-Pacific region. It is a very complex relationship we have with the Government of Pakistan, but your concerns are all well founded.

Mr. ROHRABACHER. I will trust you and trust this administration that we take a realistic view and sometimes that means biting the bullet and having when you are dealing with someone who is—they have been two-faced with us for so long now. Pakistan is acknowledged by most of the people I have dealt with as the source of terrorism in that part of the world and if we don't succeed in Afghanistan, it will be because of the ISI in Pakistan. With that said, Afghanistan looks like it is not going in the right direction. And there are some creative ways to handle this. We continue to have our troops involved there, but some people are calling for more troops. I hope that we look for other methods rather than sending American troops into Afghanistan.

Secretary TILLERSON. Congressman, we have an Afghanistan policy, as you know, under review as well and I mention that in the context of Pakistan because you cannot work one without the other.

In the interim though, we have had inter-agency discussions with the President about how to preserve the opportunity for our long-term solution in Afghanistan where we never allow Afghanistan to become the platform for terrorism to be launched against the United States or certainly others. That work we expect to complete over the coming weeks, review it with the President, make a final policy decision. But it has not been going well in Afghanistan. I would refer and defer to Secretary Mattis' assessment and he testified to that effect this week.

And I think there are steps we need to take to at least prevent further deterioration while we get our new policies in place. What we are following now are the policies of the prior administration and we need to take some steps to stem the effects of those while we get our policies in place.

Mr. ROHRABACHER. Thank you very much, Mr. Secretary.

Chairman ROYCE. We go to Albio Sires of New Jersey.

Mr. SIRES. Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Mr. Secretary, thank you very much for being here.

Mr. Secretary, I was not born in this country. I was born in Cuba. Growing up as a little boy, what I remember is the process of indoctrination where the premise of the indoctrination was the destruction of America. Everything that was evil was America. We have a situation now where we have a White House that seems to ignore the fact that Russia was meddling in our democracy. The most important thing in this world, I think, is the democracy that we have here. And the fact that some of these intelligence agencies have confirmed Putin's involvement in this.

I ask you why are we treating Russia with kid gloves? Why are you coming before us and telling us to give you flexibility when the premise of Russia is to destroy this country? I think the fact that we have a bipartisan effort now with this legislation to put some sanctions on Russia and to send a strong message that this is something that we will not allow—I just cannot understand why this White House seems to treat this man with such kid gloves? Why don't we just talk and tell the reality, tell the people of America from the White House?

I know you have spoken about it. Other members have spoken about it, but can you tell me, please, so I can rest a little better?

Secretary TILLERSON. As I have characterized the relationship with Russia and I did this after walking out of President Putin's office and went immediately to a press avail in Moscow, the relationship between the United States and Russia is at an all-time low post-Cold War.

Mr. SIRES. But it is not us. It is their doing.

Secretary TILLERSON. And it is getting worse.

Mr. SIRES. Excuse me, I don't mean to interrupt. I don't have too much time. But it is their efforts to undermine us.

Secretary TILLERSON. And it is getting worse and the two greatest nuclear powers on the planet cannot have this kind of a relationship. We have to move it to a different place and that is what I have been asked to do, is to determine whether we can move the relationship to a different place that doesn't present the kind of threats to us and to the world that I am concerned the current relationship does and further deterioration would.

And I fully appreciate and share the sentiment of all you just said, but the issue is do we want to make the relationship worse and where will that leave us? What is next? Or do we want to see if we can stabilize it and begin to deal with—there is a large number of issues——

Mr. SIRES. But Mr. Secretary——

Secretary TILLERSON [continuing]. On the table between us including meddling in the elections. And do we want to try to deal with those toward some resolution? It may very well be that when we have progressed this discussion with them to some point where I will be the one to tell you we are getting nowhere. We are getting nowhere.

Mr. SIRES. Mr. Secretary, I think you are going to the other extreme now.

Secretary TILLERSON. I will be the first to come back to you and tell you——

Mr. SIRES. We are going to the extreme where we seem to be just giving into a lot. There are messages you can send without going to a nuclear war. You know, there are things that we can do and send strong messages to this country.

Secretary TILLERSON. Sanctions are very useful tools. Unilateral sanctions are not quite as useful as multi-lateral sanctions. And we are, as we think about additional sanctions, one of my challenges and I take this as my responsibility, is how do I bring other allies along with us to say to them you must respond in this way as well. In order for these sanctions to be the effective pressure that I know we all want and that you desperately want, I agree with that. We can take unilateral action, but if we take it alone and we get little support from others, they will be somewhat hollow and Putin will know they are hollow.

So this is a bit of a tactical discussion you and I are having at this point, not a fundamental discussion around intent, objectives. Our interests are completely aligned, let me assure you. This is really a tactical difference of opinion I think.

Mr. SIRES. Well, I do hope that you send this message to the President. And tell him that a lot of people are looking at how he behaves toward Russia. And quite frankly, I am very concerned. Thank you very much, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman ROYCE. Thank you. We go to Steve Chabot of Ohio.

Mr. CHABOT. Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Thank you, Secretary Tillerson for being with us here today. I have been a member of this committee for two decades now. I have chaired the Middle East Subcommittee and the Asia and Pacific Subcommittee as well. The issue I would like to discuss with you this morning is Taiwan.

As a founding member of the Congressional Taiwan Caucus and having been to that nation—and I use that term nation intentionally—quite a few times, I take the commitments of our country that we have made with Taiwan very seriously. I believe that you do, too.

Taiwan is a close ally of ours. It is one that truly exercises freedom and democracy and can be a role model to other nations facing an aggressive bullying neighbor. Taiwan faces an unrelenting threat from China which has nearly 600 ballistic missiles aimed directly at Taiwan. Although Taiwan enjoys de facto independence, China's ultimate goal, as we know, is the annexation of the island. Therefore, the Taiwan Strait remains a potential hot spot.

The PRC's aggression toward Taiwan has only grown over the years. The PRC more and more is referring to Taiwan as a core interest to them. They continue to block Taiwan's participation in international gatherings and the world, including the United States, embarrassingly, usually yields to China's bullying.

Further, China continues its long campaign to pressure nations around the world to stop their recognition of Taiwan. And Panama just this week announced its intention to yield to that pressure.

Fortunately, the 38-year-old Taiwan Relations Act is still alive and in place and this historic legislation has thus far maintained peace and stability, but we must be clear to the PRC that if push comes to shove, the United States will stand with Taiwan.

Now Mr. Secretary, a couple of questions. China would never allow us to determine who they can meet with. Yet, because of fear of offending China principally, we won't allow high Taiwanese officials to set foot in this city, our Nation's capital, Washington, DC, right here.

Some years back, a couple dozen Members of Congress, including myself, had to get on a plane and fly to New York City one evening after votes to meet with the President of Taiwan, President Chen. I know some other members are nodding because they were on that same plane with me. Because he wasn't allowed to come here at our Nation's capital.

Now an important bill to remedy this, which I have introduced in previous Congresses as well, H.R. 535, the Taiwan Travel Act, would allow the President and Vice President, Foreign Minister, and Defense Minister to come here. It is being marked up tomorrow in the Asian Pacific Subcommittee and I would welcome the administration's support for that measure and I appreciate your comment, please.

Secretary TILLERSON. Well, thank you, Congressman. You have summarized it quite well in terms of the situation as we see it today between China and Taiwan. As you know, the China-U.S. relationship has been defined for the past 50 years by our One China policy and our agreement around One China policy. They have their interpretation of what that means and we have ours and we

have agreed that we will accommodate each other's interpretation. But that has led to 50 years of stability in the region. It has prevented conflict and has allowed for this enormous economic growth that has gone on, much of which we have benefitted from.

As we begin our dialogue with Chinese leadership with this new administration, as you know, there was some questioning of our commitment to One China early on. The President has reaffirmed that we are committed to the One China policy. We are also completely committed to the Taiwan Relations Act, of fulfilling all of our commitments to them under that act. But we are also in a discussion with China now about what is our relationship going to be for the next 50 years? How do we enter another era of stability and absence of conflict? And Taiwan, clearly to the Chinese, is a part of that discussion.

So it is important as we engage with them that we are able to fulfill our commitments to Taiwan, which we have every intention of doing. And that the question is, is the One China policy sustainable for the next 50 years? And those are the kind of discussions we are having. They are extremely complex in many regards. But this is what we seek as another 50 years of stability and no conflict with China in the Pacific region. Taiwan is a big element of that. North Korea is a big element of that. Their island building and militarization of islands is a significant element of that. All of these are in our discussion with them about how do we define this relationship for the next half century to ensure we have a continued era of no conflict and stability.

Mr. CHABOT. Thank you. My time has expired.

Chairman ROYCE. We go now to Gerry Connolly of Virginia.

Mr. CONNOLLY. Thank you. Thank you, Mr. Secretary, for being here today.

Mr. Secretary, I guess I am wondering what the Trump Doctrine means. Because to some of us it looks like making America great again in the realm of foreign policy means unilateral withdrawal and disruption. We renounced our own Trans-Pacific Partnership Trade Agreement. We have threatened to renegotiate NAFTA with our two largest trading partners and have had unfriendly assertions with both.

We have renounced the Paris Climate Agreement, signed by 195 countries. We have now joined the happy company of two, Nicaragua and Syria. What a proud moment for our country.

We have threatened the NATO alliance with being "obsolete" and refused in Europe at the moment it was expected to reaffirm Article 5 and our commitment to it.

We have embraced Russia in a way that is disturbing, I think, for most Americans. The President personally championed Brexit to the enormous consternation of our closest ally, the United Kingdom.

He has embraced strongmen—Duterte of the Philippines; Erdogan of Turkey; Putin of Russia, el-Sisi of Egypt—while lecturing our closest allies about their commitments.

And in your budget, he has proposed a 32 percent cut in the Function 150 and Function 300 international affairs functions of the budget that would cripple our ability, frankly, to engage in serious diplomacy. And of course, there is the U.N., with constant

threats of pulling out of specialized agencies and even peace-keeping operations.

Mr. Secretary, how does a reasonable observer of that sorry and lamentable litany not conclude otherwise than this constitutes a serious unilateral withdrawal from long term post-World War II commitments, values, and policies of the United States Government?

Secretary TILLERSON. Congressman, my assessment of all as I listened to that entire list of areas, we can go down them. The withdrawal from TPP was by and large supported by most people in this body and up here on the Hill. There was little support——

Mr. CONNOLLY. Mr. Secretary, I know we could pick one or two from the litany.

Secretary TILLERSON. Well, I am picking your list.

Mr. CONNOLLY. Are you going to go down the whole list? Because we are going to run out of time.

Secretary TILLERSON. Well, if you are not interested——

Mr. CONNOLLY. I am interested, but I am just worried about time and my question really wasn't about a particular item on the list. It was, does this add up to a radical alteration in our foreign policy? You are the Secretary of State.

Secretary TILLERSON. It does not add up to a radical alteration of our foreign policy. I think in my statement I made a couple of comments that in my view and in my assessment, many of our institutions have not—have never responded to the post-Cold War era. With the fall of the Soviet Union, a whole array of dynamics were unleashed globally. After 9/11, a whole new array of threats were unleashed. And we have continued to try to address those with the old constructs. Not that the constructs are not valid and not that the constructs don't give us the frame and the relationships, but we have to begin to examine the effectiveness of those.

And I think what the President is doing is he is examining all of these elements and we are questioning whether they are as effective as they should be and whether our partners and allies have come as far as we have come in commitments. So I would call this an elevated level of engagement, not in any way withdrawal.

I think what people are questioning is because we are making certain demands of allies and partners and we are having this very frank, open, honest conversation with them that needs to occur. It needs to occur so that——

Mr. CONNOLLY. Mr. Secretary——

Secretary TILLERSON [continuing]. If people take a difficult as a decision around this as we take, that will strengthen our alliances. There will be greater commitment toward this, not less.

Mr. CONNOLLY. Mr. Secretary, to call this an elevated involvement in the world would embarrass even George Orwell. I yield back.

Chairman ROYCE. We go to Mr. Joe Wilson of South Carolina.

Mr. WILSON OF SOUTH CAROLINA. Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Our prayers are with our colleagues who are not here today due to the baseball practice shooting: Congressman Jeff Duncan of South Carolina, Congressman Mo Brooks of Alabama, and Congressman Ron DeSantis of Florida.

Mr. Secretary, I especially appreciate your Exxon service. My heritage is Exxon. My great grandfather started with Standard Oil

in Richmond in 1890. My grandfather was a division manager of Standard Oil in New Jersey and South Carolina. My dad was a sales representative for SO Humble. And my brother has been an oil shopper for Exxon. So I know of the integrity of the company that you have led.

Also, I was really pleased to see of your Scout background. All credit to my wife, we have four Eagle Scouts in our family. So thank you for what you have done.

With so many global challenges, the rogue nation, North Korea, continues to push against international norms, and threatens our Nation's security and the security of our allies. I am concerned that large cuts in our foreign affairs budget will leave us at a disadvantage and the distinct national security role played by our diplomats so capably.

I appreciate your willingness to make significant reforms to the Foreign Affairs budget in support your continuing the State Department's critical missions around the globe.

So Secretary Tillerson, on the threat of the unstable and dangerous North Korean regime, each week there are reports of nuclear developments, missile tests, ridiculous videos showing Americans being killed, and Americans being unlawfully detained. There is bipartisan support and concern.

Recently, Congressman Adam Schiff and I introduced H.R. 2732, the North Korea Travel Control Act, which would prohibit travel to North Korea. Given the recent release of Otto Wormbier and Dennis Rodman's travel to North Korea, do you support the prohibition of U.S. tourist travel to North Korea?

Secretary TILLERSON. We have been evaluating whether we should put some type of travel visa restriction to North Korea. We have not come to a final conclusion, but we are considering it.

Mr. WILSON OF SOUTH CAROLINA. And my concern, indeed, that tourists go there is simply supporting a dictatorial totalitarian regime. And I say this with my colleague, Congressman Eliot Engel. He and I are the only two Members of Congress who have actually been to Pyongyang. But it was on a congressional delegation, not as a tourist.

Thank you very much for your service.

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

Mr. DEUTCH. Thank you, Mr. Chairman. And even as we pray for the Majority Whip and the others who were injured this morning, I would just like to take a moment to acknowledge and express our gratitude to the Capitol Police who permit us to do our job every day, keeping us safe as well as all who are here in this room today. So we are grateful for what you do.

Mr. Secretary, thank you for being here. I wanted to first add my voice to those who have spoken out against the budget and in support of a robust international affairs budget. I would just point out that a 32 percent cut to the State Department cannot be solely about cost savings to the U.S. Government when the defense budget is being increased by 54 percent. American leadership, as you know, Mr. Secretary, has always been and must continue to be about more than just military might.

Next, I wanted to ask you about a hearing yesterday in the Senate Foreign Relations Committee. You were asked about payments

made to Palestinian prisoners and their families, hundreds of millions of dollars per year payments that are made to those who stab or ram or shoot Israelis, payments to suicide bombers, payments that only incite violence and frankly prevent movement toward a two-state solution.

The issue came up, as you pointed out, in bilateral meetings. And yesterday, in response to the question you said they have changed that policy. Their intent is to cease payments to families who have committed violence and murder against others.

Can you provide clarity on the supposed change of policy, since Palestinian officials quickly responded by saying that there are no plans to stop these payments to families of Palestinians killed or wounded in carrying out these attacks?

Secretary TILLERSON. Those were assurances that were given to me in the most recent trip to Bethlehem. We have had conversations with them and told them they cannot continue these types of payments and expect the U.S. and the American people to see any explanation for why they do that. They have indicated they would. They indicated to me they were in the process of changing that. They did say we have to support widows and orphans. I said widows and orphans is one thing. Attaching payments as recognition of violence or murder is just something the American people could never accept or understand. So we will continue this dialogue with them. We have been quite clear as to our view.

Mr. DEUTCH. I appreciate your making that clear. Unfortunately, it appears that that position has not yet changed.

Finally, I want to raise an issue that I have raised every single time the Secretary of State has sat before this committee in the 7 years that I have served here. And that is the case of my constituent, Robert Levinson. Bob went missing in 2007. He is, Mr. Secretary, the longest held American hostage.

As you know, Bob was not part of the 2016 deal that saw five America citizens released from Iran. But as part of that deal, commitments were made by Iran to assist in Bob's case. I have no doubt that there are those in Iran that know where Bob is or how to locate him. I hope that the administration is making every effort to prioritize engaging on Bob's case. Unfortunately, the Levinson family has not received much high-level communication since January. I would like to acknowledge two of Bob's seven children who are here with us today, his eldest son, Dan, and his youngest son, Doug.

So first, Mr. Secretary, I just would like to ask one, will you commit to meeting with the Levinson family?

Secretary TILLERSON. We are happy to provide an update on anything we know and just to assure you, as you know, regrettably, we have a number of American citizens who are detained illegally.

Mr. DEUTCH. I understand. I understand that. I would ask on behalf of——

Secretary TILLERSON. I just wanted to let you know, we have our attention on—we treat them as individual cases.

Mr. DEUTCH. Will you meet with the family, Mr. Secretary?

Secretary TILLERSON. Yes.

Mr. DEUTCH. Will you either designate a senior level position in the Department or fill the position of Special Envoy for Hostage

Negotiations to liaise on a regular basis with the Levinson family and others?

Secretary TILLERSON. We are evaluating people to fill that position. I would tell you though and I think it is important, we do not stop our efforts just because we do not have someone in that role and I hope the evidence of our success already during this short term of our administration of securing the release of people who have been detained, I hope people take encouragement from that and I promise you that we have efforts underway for every detained person.

Mr. DEUTCH. I understand that. Just sadly, it is 10 years now. So I am just focused on Bob. I would ask that you raise Bob's case at every opportunity that you have.

Can I ask you, Mr. Secretary, whether you have plans to meet with the Iranians?

Secretary TILLERSON. I have no current schedule to meet with the Iranians.

Mr. DEUTCH. If you don't do it, which I think is a mistake, it is imperative that you press our allies to raise Bob's case in their communications with the Iranians or any international fora. Ten years is simply too long for a family to go without their husband, father, and grandfather. Bob, Mr. Secretary, is going to become a grandfather for the seventh time in a matter of weeks. He should be home celebrating this joyous moment with his family. I appreciate your efforts and urge you to do everything you can to bring him home.

Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman ROYCE. Thank you. We go to Mike McCaul of Texas.

Mr. MCCAUL. Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Thank you, Mr. Secretary for being here. It is good to see a fellow Texan back in the Secretary of State position.

I just got back from Mexico City. I chair the U.S.-Mexico Inter-Parliamentary Group. I just want to let you know that it was a very productive, civil, and respectful meeting on security, energy issues, and NAFTA, in terms of how we could put energy under the NAFTA umbrella. I know you know more about that topic than I do. I think that would be certainly a win-win for both of our countries.

I want to ask you about transnational criminal organizations. I had Secretary Kelly testify before my committee, stating it is one of the greatest threats facing the United States. He said that the cartels share ties with terror networks that we are currently fighting overseas, that they are threats to the fabric of American society and have the ability to sneak drugs and people, including potential terrorists, and dirty bombs into the United States. And finally, he stated the nexus between criminal networks and terrorist networks is real and I would predict will get more sophisticated. Do you agree with Secretary Kelly's comments?

Secretary TILLERSON. Yes, I do. That is why we have undertaken this joint effort with our counterparts in Mexico around trans-criminal organizations, designed around getting at the supply chain of how illicit narcotics, but also human trafficking and other illicit activities, are carried out across our borders. We clearly see the connections of these activities with terrorist organizations all the

way back to and including ISIS. Working with our Treasury counterparts, this is part of our global effort to deny terrorist financing as well.

But this effort really gets at the challenge to our own national security, but also the health and well-being of our citizens in terms of the number of drug-related opioid deaths. So it is a very comprehensive effort that we have had. We are advancing with cooperation from our Mexican counterparts. I think you are going to see a very different approach to how we attack the problem of the cartels.

Mr. MCCAUL. That is great to hear. I think we have long neglected this. We had a classified briefing with Admiral Tidd yesterday, the SOUTHCOM commander, and without getting into the details of that, I know that you are aware of that threat and it does worry me as the chairman of the Homeland Security Committee what is coming from terror ties into the Western Hemisphere and potentially across that U.S.-Mexico border which I think is why getting security both at the border with Mexico, but also Mexico's southern border is so important. Let me just thank you for your attention to that and I look forward to working with you on that.

With that, Mr. Chairman, I will yield back.

Chairman ROYCE. Karen Bass of California.

Ms. BASS. Thank you, Mr. Chair. Mr. Secretary, I appreciated the discussion that we had the other day. I wanted to talk to you in regard to Africa and what our policy is on Africa. I appreciated that you were clear that you understand the significance of the continent and the role that we play there, but it is still not really clear what our overall policy is.

I am in my fourth term here and for the first time in the last couple of months, I have had a number of visits from our allies in the AU who have come and expressed a lot of concern about what the direction is that our country is taking in regard to Africa. They have read the budget. They understand the numbers and they understand that a budget really reflects your values, your policy, and your direction. And so they have come to me asking where is the United States going in regard to Africa.

And when I think of the continent, there are three different things that come to mind. And I raise these in reference to the cuts in the budget. So from the national security perspective, we know that on the continent of Africa, there are many fragile democracies that can easily collapse and that quickly open the door to terrorism. So I am concerned about the cuts to the democracy programs, as well as to the cuts to U.N. peacekeeping. And I know that we pay a considerable share, but we also don't send our troops and other countries do.

In terms of humanitarian assistance, especially including health and cutting food aid, and when we had the crisis with Ebola, we certainly know how quickly that could have spread to the United States. So our interest is very much at stake.

And when I think of the economic perspective on Africa, and we have discussed the tremendous opportunities for U.S. businesses, U.S. jobs, but then I look at the budget cuts regarding OPIC and MCC, the African Development Foundation, and all of those are

key institutions to really lay the basis for our businesses to do business on the continent.

So one of my questions to you is you described a process that you are going through with the State Department, a listening tour, to look at how to run things more efficiently. And usually what happens in processes like this is that you have the process first and then you come up with the number that you need to actually deliver what the State Department and USAID should do.

So my question is were you involved in determining the 30 percent cut or was it imposed on you? And is your review process designed to fit into the cut?

Secretary TILLERSON. We had an interactive process with the OMB director. We gave him a pass-back budget. We were then given the budget back that I am here today to present. And so my view is if these are the resources that are going to be available to us, how do we want to prioritize the areas that we can have greatest impact. And I indicated this in my opening statement.

I think in terms of Africa, and I appreciate the discussion you and I had the other morning. I thought it was quite useful. We share the same list of both concerns and opportunities. I would point to the fact that we have a lot of other areas of our budget that we can bring resources to bear on these particular concerns and issues. We have money in the ISIS budget that allows us to address some of the threats of an emergence of ISIS on the continent of Africa either in North Africa and certainly we are keeping our eye on Libya or through the Sahel. And we are working with other multi-national partners to defend against and not allow a reemergence on the continent itself.

Ms. BASS. Thank you. And Mr. Secretary, I am sorry to interrupt, but I am about to run out of time. I wanted to ask you about one other area. I had heard that before you were confirmed that a message was sent to the State Department to go through and identify any program that was focused on women. And I want to know, number one, was that true? And there is a specific program, the African Women's Entrepreneurial Program and I don't know, I can't tell from the budget detail whether that is scheduled to be cut. And then just returning from South Sudan and knowing that rape is used as a weapon of war, very concerned about family planning services. And I mean birth control. I am not referring to abortion at all, but whether or not we would seek to eliminate birth control, especially in countries where we know that rape is used as a regular practice of war.

Secretary TILLERSON. I am not aware of any directive that was sent before my arriving there. We certainly have not carried out any directive of that nature while I have been there.

Ms. BASS. Thank you very much.

Chairman ROYCE. We go to Ted Poe of Texas.

Mr. POE. Thank you, Mr. Secretary, for being here. Thank you for your long-time service. As a fellow Houstonian, I want to congratulate you on your position. I appreciate you being here as well. I live in Humble, Texas, so you can assume where we got our name from.

First, I want to thank you for your personal involvement in the release of Sandy Phan-Gillis, a Texan who had been imprisoned

unlawfully by China for over 2 years. She was unlawfully in prison there. She was on a mission from Houston to work on economic things in China and arrested when she got on the plane. But thank you for your personal involvement and the President's involvement. Now she is released and she is back home in Houston. I want to thank you for that on behalf of their family.

I want to go over several things and I will eventually have a question as well. The State Department can lead the effort to designate the IRGC as a sponsor of terror. I personally think that the State Department should designate them as a sponsor of terror under Executive Order 13224 and I would hope that would be on your radar to do. They are doing bad things throughout the world on behalf of terrorism and destroying the human rights of many people.

I would like to know what the policy is of the U.S. toward Iran. Do we support the current regime? Do we support a philosophy of peaceful regime change? There are Iranians in exile all over the world. Some are here and then there are Iranians in Iran who don't support the totalitarian state. So is it the U.S. position to leave things as they are or to support a peaceful, long-term regime change?

I want to mention Russia, second issue. I was in Georgia in 2008 about a week after the Russians invaded and I know Congressman Smith was there when the Russians actually did invade. Russia took one third of the country. Basically, the world said that is not nice and nothing happened.

And then in 2014, they took Crimea. They are in Eastern Ukraine now. And does our policy, U.S. policy state that that was unlawful and it is still unlawful and that those territories in Georgia must be returned to Georgia and to Crimea and as well as Eastern Ukraine be returned to Ukraine or are we just going to accept a Russian invasion of those territories?

And the last thing I want to mention is Pakistan. I think Pakistan is playing us. We give them money. That money ends up in the hands of bad guys in Afghanistan who hurt Americans. I personally think that Pakistan should not get any American money. They get $500 million a year, not counting the military. They should be designated as a state sponsor of terror and they also should be removed from the major non-NATO status that they have. But I know this has been a discussion for years, to try to get Pakistan on board to do the right thing. They don't. What are we going to do? I heard your comments earlier. Are any of those things that I mentioned options?

So Iran, Russia, Pakistan, and I will let you comment on that.

Secretary TILLERSON. Well, our Iranian policy is under development. It has not yet been presented to the President. But I would tell you that we certainly recognize Iran's continued destabilizing presence in the region, their payment of foreign fighters, their export of militia forces in Syria and Iraq, and in Yemen, their support for Hezbollah. And we are taking action to respond to Iran's hegemony. Additional sanctions actions have been put in place against individuals and others.

We continually review the merits, both from a diplomatic standpoint but also the international consequences of designating the

Iranian Islamic Revolutionary Guard in its entirety as a terrorist organization. As you know, we have designated the Quds.

Our policy toward Iran is to push back on this hegemony, contain their ability to develop obviously nuclear weapons, and to work toward support of those elements inside of Iran that would lead to a peaceful transition of that Government. Those elements are there, certainly as we know.

Mr. POE. Excuse me, Mr. Secretary, I am out of time and I would just expect—I would like a written response to those questions. And I have a constituent named Claudia who sent me some excellent questions to ask you and I hadn't gotten there. I will submit these to the record as well.

Chairman ROYCE. Without objection.

Mr. POE. And thank you very much for your service and being here today. I yield back.

Chairman ROYCE. William Keating of Massachusetts.

Mr. KEATING. Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I think I speak for all my colleagues this morning, it has been difficult through this hearing not to keep in our minds our colleague, Steve Scalise, and our other colleagues, the staff, and Capitol Police who were injured, and their families.

And I want to thank you, Mr. Secretary, for your willingness to serve your country.

This committee has had a great experience, as long as I have been here, working in a bipartisan fashion with the administration trying to find the areas of commonality. And I mean this sincerely. I am not going down this path. It is just a clarification, if I could. For our ability to interact with the administration, nothing more than that. But I want to get a better idea to clarify the position of Jared Kushner in the administration. He has a major foreign policy position. But is he coordinating with you? What is your experience? Has he ever engaged in foreign policy discussions without prior coordination with the State Department? How would you define his role?

Secretary TILLERSON. Mr. Kushner is a senior advisor to the President, so he does attend our discussions, not all, but discussions we have in the West Wing from time to time. And I would say there is a clear recognition by him as to where foreign policy is conducted. It is in the State Department. It is by the Secretary of State. So I would say his role is one of any other senior advisor in the West Wing. He has freedom and I have invited him, as I have others serving the National Security Advisor McMaster and others, to call if there are issues that arise in the West Wing, let me know so we have visibility so we can begin talking about how we want to address those.

Mr. KEATING. Do you have any instances where he hasn't coordinated with State or yourself before engaging in discussions with foreign nationals or officials?

Secretary TILLERSON. You would have to ask him as to whether he has.

Mr. KEATING. Thank you. Thank you, Mr. Secretary. You spoke earlier about the working relationship with China in terms of North Korea. And there have been positive steps. I want to congratulate you on your work in that regard. But one of my concerns

is the fact that as China might move away from trade opportunities to try and pressure North Korea, Russia seems to be creeping in replacing that vacuum with their own trade opportunities and other interactions with North Korea. Have you addressed this to Russia? This is a problem, I think we will have in dealing with the North Korea situation because if Russia just comes in and tries to fill that vacuum, then our work with China won't be as effective as it could be.

Secretary TILLERSON. We have seen that occur already as China has withdrawn certain support. Russia has backfilled that. Yes, North Korea is among our top issues, items that I speak to Foreign Minister Lavrov frequently about. I also had very extensive discussions directly with President Putin in the Kremlin when I saw him. We are asking for their help.

I think Russia is evolving its own position relative to North Korea and we are looking for more support from them. I think two indications of late, one was their affirmative vote in the U.N. Security Council for the additional sanctions on North Korea. Typically, at best the Russians would abstain. This time they actually voted for these additional sanctions. I think that indicates that they see it differently. They have also made their own public statements that they see these activities by North Korea as being a threat now to Russia. So that is part of our dialogue with the neighborhood is look, this is not just a threat to us. This can become a threat to you as well.

Mr. KEATING. Well, thank you Mr. Secretary. I yield back.

Chairman ROYCE. Thank you for yielding back, Mr. Keating. Now we go to Mr. Darrell Issa of California.

Mr. ISSA. Thank you. Mr. Secretary, I was delighted when you were named and I keep reminding my friends that one of the last great Secretaries we had was George Schultz who for 6 years before, not immediately, but just before had run a global enterprise, one that was responsible for building large and small cities. And so I am going to kind of segue from that to one of the areas you inherited that I want you to be aware has been the intention of this committee and of the Oversight Committee.

During the George W. Bush era under General Williams and others, the State Department began a standard design/build process. This allowed the State Department to go from an aging Embassy system that lacked security—and it was falling behind where most of the money was being spent just trying to keep crumbling Embassies going—to getting new modern facilities that were secure and predictable in operation.

Upon the change of administrations, there was a change under Hilary Clinton and she began going back to the old practice of New York wine and cheese liberals happily designing works of art. And I am trying to be over the top for a reason because if you go to Great Britain where you find that glass palace on an undersized lot that we can't use that we are paying extra, what you find is a return to Embassies that might be works of art. They may make great statements about America's prowess and place in the world, but you are not being given, as you know, enough money to build Embassies just to provide security, the likes of which we didn't have at Benghazi. And we didn't have in a lot of other places. By

the way, I was also thrilled when Ambassador Patrick Kennedy abruptly left with the team that I am glad to see go.

So now my question to you is with the President's current budget quite frankly reduced in that area, can you by changing back to a process of efficient design and build, can you begin to get us caught up to where never again will we have people die because they have a facility that lacks the basic security required by your own regulations?

Secretary TILLERSON. Thank you for the question, Congressman. The current budget around security, both security services as well as Embassy construction, will allow us to maintain our program pretty much through 2018. We will begin to have planning difficulties in '19 at this level and we are in discussions, certainly we will have discussions with OMB about that.

But I think to your point about our execution against Embassy construction, it really is an execution issue and I agree we need to get back to standard designs, fewer scope changes. We don't need to be unique every place. I am a fit for purpose guy and I think we need to build what is needed for us to deliver on mission. And there are some execution issues.

I have been reading reports from OIG of audits they have been doing, the various projects and I recognize a lot of the deficiencies. I have seen them in the private sector when the private sector struggled with major constructions projects. So I think we have a lot of opportunity to improve that and get back to fit for purpose approach.

Mr. ISSA. I would like to follow up with another area on that and very briefly. Because you have OCO funding and because if we really look at your facilities around the world, they are often facilities in which Title 10 individuals and others assigned to you need to operate or at least coordinate in dangerous areas. So I might suggest that a very good investment of several billion dollars over the next several fiscal years would be to springboard ahead to have those facilities able to house both the diplomatic mission and coordinate other missions in the area. And I am thinking particularly of Africa and some of the other hot spots.

What I would like to do is segue though to two things. One is you have 1,000 Marines available to you. This was a post-Benghazi decision to plus up. I can tell you that when I hear that Papua New Guinea's facility gets stopped and a whole new one is getting designed and part of the justification is they needed room for Marines, again, Papua New Guinea, that perhaps looking where you best would have those 1,000 Marines could well be a good investment in moving them around. And of course, having them match facilities to the greatest extend possible that you plan on having and would otherwise build.

Lastly, the President's budget did a 50 percent cut in an office which was Conflict Stabilization Operations which is under State, and the Office of Transition Initiatives which is under USAID. We had previously sent your agency under the last administration letters asking you to combine those two. And with the budget having a 50 percent cut, could you consider 100 percent cut by combining them, deciding who gets this job either State or USAID, but not both?

Secretary TILLERSON. Well, again, I think part of our whole redesign is to look at exactly the kind of issues you have identified of where have duplicative work efforts, overlap of work, not just within the State Department, but we find it interagency in Ag, Commerce, Defense. And so this is going to be examining all of these areas which ultimately I suspect will lead certainly to combined efforts. Delivering on mission for less cost.

Mr. ISSA. Thank you. I yield back.

Chairman ROYCE. Thank you. I appreciate that. This committee will recess at 10 minutes before noon to allow us to join our colleagues on the House Floor and following the prayer and pledge, there will be brief remarks from the Speaker and the Democratic leader concerning the shooting incident this morning. Then this hearing will resume afterwards at 12:30 or so. I would like to thank the Secretary for his flexibility. We will adjourn here no later than 1:30. So at this time, let me go to Mr. David Cicilline of Rhode Island.

Mr. CICILLINE. Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Thank you, Mr. Secretary for being here. I think it is very clear that the devastating cuts proposed in this budget would make it nearly impossible for America to lead the world and it is why it has been decried by virtually every serious diplomat, scholar, and development expert. So I want to associate myself with the remarks of my colleagues about this budget and what it would mean for our diplomatic work.

I have very specific questions, Mr. Secretary, which I would ask you to answer with a yes or no if you can, so I can get through as many of them as possible.

First, Mr. Secretary, I assume you are familiar with the First Amendment and the rights that it affords to the American people?

Secretary TILLERSON. Yes.

Mr. CICILLINE. And do you believe that an open and unrestricted press is a vital part of a transparent and accountable government?

Secretary TILLERSON. Yes.

Mr. CICILLINE. And in your observations, do China and Russia have a free and unfettered press, free from government influence?

Secretary TILLERSON. No.

Mr. CICILLINE. And so do you believe that Chinese and Russian media sources reliably and accurately report meetings or conversations between U.S. Government officials and their governments?

Secretary TILLERSON. Not likely.

Mr. CICILLINE. So do you believe that it impacts the narrative or sends any type of message to the leaders of Russia, China, or other authoritarian-leaning governments when American media is excluded from reporting on significant events involving yourself, the President, or other senior American diplomats?

Secretary TILLERSON. I am not sure I understood that one.

Mr. CICILLINE. Do you believe it impacts the narrative or sends a type of message to the leaders of other countries when American media is excluded from reporting on significant events involving you, the President, or other senior American diplomats? You may remember a meeting in which American media was excluded and Russia media was permitted in the Oval Office?

Secretary TILLERSON. It is hard for me to say what impact that particular limited incident had.

Mr. CICILLINE. Next, Mr. Secretary, you are aware that the Chechen Government, which is an arm of Vladimir Putin, has been engaged in a concerted campaign of kidnapping, detention, torture, and murder of gay men in Chechnya, are you not?

Secretary TILLERSON. I am aware of those reports, yes.

Mr. CICILLINE. And my colleagues and I sent you a letter raising this issue on April 7th of 2017 and my question is did you discuss the issue of these atrocities being carried out in Chechnya when you met with the Foreign Minister Lavrov on May 10th or any other government officials at any other time?

Secretary TILLERSON. Those are on our pending list.

Mr. CICILLINE. So you have not discussed them at all?

Secretary TILLERSON. We did not make our way through all the issues in the meetings we had.

Mr. CICILLINE. Are you aware whether the President has raised this issue with President Putin?

Secretary TILLERSON. I am unaware of whether he has or not.

Mr. CICILLINE. But will you here today in this hearing, condemn the torture and murder of gay men in Chechnya and state that is the policy of the United States Government at the highest levels that the Russian Government must protect the lives and safety of all of its citizens including the LGBT community?

Secretary TILLERSON. That is our position globally.

Mr. CICILLINE. And in Russia as well?

Secretary TILLERSON. Last time I checked, Russia is part of the globe.

Mr. CICILLINE. So that is a yes?

Secretary TILLERSON. Yes.

Mr. CICILLINE. Next, Mr. Secretary, I assume you are familiar with the events that took place in Washington, DC, outside of the Turkish Embassy on May 6th?

Secretary TILLERSON. I am.

Mr. CICILLINE. I assume you do not believe it is appropriate for a foreign security force to assault Americans on American soil?

Secretary TILLERSON. I do not.

Mr. CICILLINE. Have you or the President had conversations with President Erdogan or the Turkish Ambassador about this incident?

Secretary TILLERSON. We called the Turkish Ambassador over to the State Department immediately and spoke to him. I have had face-to-face conversations with the Foreign Minister Cavusoglu on the margins of the NATO meeting. The matter is under investigation by Washington, DC, police and the court system and we are awaiting conclusion of that investigation for further action.

Mr. CICILLINE. So once those prosecutions are concluded, you will consider actions in response to this egregious attacks?

Secretary TILLERSON. We want our action to be consistent with what the investigation shows.

Mr. CICILLINE. And do you believe it is the purview of the United States Government to sell weapons to the very same security forces who committed this attack?

Secretary TILLERSON. It is under evaluation.

Mr. CICILLINE. Next Mr. Secretary, when can Congress expect to receive the administration's plan to defeat ISIS and end the conflict in Syria?

Secretary TILLERSON. We have an recent update with the President on the plan going forward, both militarily, diplomatically, and then how to confront ISIS, the D-ISIS campaign globally, both in the communications networks and to deny them the financing. It is a global approach.

Mr. CICILLINE. When can Congress expect a presentation of those plans?

Secretary TILLERSON. I am not aware that there has been a request for one.

Mr. CICILLINE. Consider this one, at least from one Member of Congress. And finally, Mr. Secretary, would you say that our past efforts to counter Russian aggression in Europe and Eurasia have been successful?

Secretary TILLERSON. It is a work in progress and it requires work every day.

Mr. CICILLINE. But has it been successful?

Secretary TILLERSON. We have had some success. I think if you look at how certain countries in East Europe have progressed, progress in the Balkans, but challenged.

Mr. CICILLINE. So my question is in light of that, after an unprecedented attack against our own elections, evidence of Russian attempts to hack and influence elections throughout Europe, as well as other mischief, how do you propose to adequately counter the Russian threat with the budget that is decimated by almost 60 percent in the account for countering Russian aggression? We haven't been successful and your budget proposes cutting it by 60 percent. How can we be successful in countering Russian aggression with those kinds of resource reductions?

Secretary TILLERSON. Our engagement is going to continue with those nations in East Europe that are most threatened. If we had additional funds, we would fan that back out to do more than some other countries, but we are going to remain engaged with those countries.

Chairman ROYCE. We go briefly to——

Mr. CICILLINE. Mr. Chairman, may I ask unanimous consent that the following three documents be placed in the record?

Chairman ROYCE. Without objection.

Mr. CICILLINE. Thank you.

Chairman ROYCE. We are going to go briefly to Scott Perry of Pennsylvania and then we will recess.

Mr. PERRY. Great to see you. I for one, although I might take some differences with some of the lines in the budget request, am thrilled that we finally have a commander in chief that is interested in balancing the budget of the United States and I do consider that a national security priority.

With that, Mr. Deutch asked you about the Palestinian Authority and the 10 percent increase. And I will tell you, at least one of us and probably more than one that is concerned and somewhat tired of continuing to fund the PA and hearing somewhat of the same rhetoric where we are going to discuss it. We are considering it. We have a commitment to end this stipend to murderers and terrorists and I am just wondering if you have a glide path and I don't want to get into any discussion that would imperil your ability to be effective in this regard, but is there some way that you are using to

assess how they are doing with that and to claw back some of that funds and use it for other things if they fail to comply with their commitment, whatever that is?

Secretary TILLERSON. Well, I think the President has been very clear with the Palestinian Authority over actions he expects them to take and he has indicated that he has a certain window of patience and a certain window under which he is going to remain engaged and be interested and at some point he is going to become disinterested.

Mr. PERRY. Okay.

Secretary TILLERSON. And if we become disinterested, that will certainly alter our level of support.

Mr. PERRY. So we will just note, we will be monitoring and we will probably look to follow up to see if that, in fact, takes place.

You also had a conversation regarding the IRGC and designating them. I would like to throw the Muslim Brotherhood in there as well, two organizations, actors if you will, that have the specific interest of the destruction of the West, particularly the United States. And while there might be some good components, if you want to characterize it that way for these organizations, I would like to engage in a little bit of a short conversation about designating each one of those sponsors of terrorism—what the pitfalls might be of doing so. What are the American people missing because they know they are bad actors. So what are we missing that we need to know about that it is deleterious to designate these obvious sponsors of terrorism for what they are?

Secretary TILLERSON. Well, as you just noted, the Muslim Brotherhood, which I think reportedly would have up to 5 million members, has become somewhat segregated within its own ranks with the number of organizations within the Muslim Brotherhood, continuing to commit themselves to violence and terrorism. We have designated those organizations.

At the top of the quality chain—if I can call it that—there are elements of Muslim Brotherhood that have now become part of governments. There are members of Parliament in Bahrain that are parts of government. There are members in Turkey that are parts of government. And so in designating the Muslim Brotherhood in its totality, as a terrorist organization, I think you can appreciate the complexities this enters into our relations with then the Government of Bahrain, and other governments where the Muslim Brotherhood has matriculated to become participants and in those elements they have done so by renouncing violence and terrorism. So that is one of the complicating issues around just taking a whole designation of Muslim Brotherhood. But I will tell you it is on our watch screen. We have not taken our eye off of it and we revisit this question periodically because it comes up in our foreign relations with others as well.

Mr. PERRY. And I certainly appreciate the answer. I just hope that we do not allow the more moderate ones, the ones that denounce violence, to have the organization use them to be the umbrella under which they conduct all these other things, which is the specific downfall of the United States and do continue vigilance.

Finally, and the last question, Mr. Chairman, with your indulgence, the deal with Saudi Arabia and I couldn't get an answer on

specifically how we were monitoring their support, the continued support of the exportation of Wahhabism, Salafism, and the terror that goes along with that fundamentalist view of Islam around the globe.

Do you know of any metrics that the Department is following to support their claim that they are working on that? What are we gauging that? How are we doing to determine whether they are following along with that portion of the agreement?

Secretary TILLERSON. One of the outcomes of the President's summit in Riyadh was the creation of the Center to counter extreme Muslim messaging with Saudi Arabia. The Center now exists. It was inaugurated while we were there. The Center has a number of elements to attack extremism around the world. One of the elements that we are visiting with them about and they have already taken steps, the Saudis, is to publish new textbooks that go into the schools that are in the mosques around the world. These textbooks are to replace textbooks that are out there today that do advocate extreme Wahhabism viewpoints around the justification for violence.

We have asked that they not just publish the new textbooks, we have asked that they retrieve the existing textbooks so we get those back. That is just one example. This Center is going to have a very broad range from social media to broadcast, to how young Imams are trained in the theological centers. And we are working with them today with the establishment of the new center to determine what are the measures that we will hold ourselves accountable to. That is one of the charges that the State Department is working with the Saudis and others as we bring this Center up to an operating level.

Mr. PERRY. Thank you, Mr. Secretary. My time has expired and I yield.

Chairman ROYCE. And without objection, the committee stands is recess and will return at approximately 12:30.

[Recess.]

Chairman ROYCE. We will begin at this time and we will begin with questioning from Mr. Ami Bera from California.

Mr. BERA. Thank you, Mr. Chairman. And thank you, Mr. Secretary, for your patience in this reconvening.

Now this is a tough day today, but it is with thanks to the Capitol Police. It is with thanks to the men and women that not only protect us, but all across this country, protect not only communities across the country, but the men and women that are around the world protecting who we are.

You know, I have stated this previously in committee. A world led by American leadership is a better world and we can see that if we look back at the second half of the 20th century and the post-World War II world order. American leadership—leading with our values, with our morals—has created a better world and most around the world recognize that. And that has really been predicated on a foreign policy plank that has three legs, certainly, our defense, but also development and diplomacy.

And my concern with this budget is that it cuts off two of those legs on that stool and that stool is going to collapse. It devastates the diplomacy and development budget.

Now I know it is not your budget, Mr. Secretary, but as Members of Congress who have a responsibility for setting priorities, etcetera, I have grave concerns and can talk about a number of areas that I find very troublesome in this budget. I am going to focus—I am a physician by training with a public health and global health background, and have some real deep reservations about some of the cuts to our global health development, some of the cuts to USAID, particularly a 15 percent cut to maternal and child health programs. That is very worrisome to me, the impact that those cuts potentially have around the world.

I think America is a great Nation, but a great Nation leads by our values and our morals and we don't withdraw from the world. So my concern is if those cuts go into effect, the number of women that potentially will suffer, the number of women that potentially will die. I think some of the cuts with regards to a potential billion dollar reduction from PEPFAR, the zeroing out of family planning funds, are going to have devastating impacts.

I watched them and read the testimony and the question of our colleague across the Capitol, Senator Shaheen, discussing the extension of the Mexico City policy. I heard your answer to that, that your office would be studying the impact of the extension of the global gag rule.

Can you give us assurances that in that 6-month time frame when you get that report back, if we are seeing adverse impacts, that you would make recommendations to reverse that policy?

Secretary TILLERSON. Congressman, thank you for the attention to that particular matter. I can't commit to you that I would seek a reversal of that policy. As I explained to Senator Shaheen yesterday, our implementation of the policy was structured in a way and engagement with a number of our health partners to mitigate any effect on delivery of their activities. We said we would do a 6-month check to see if it is impacting them and one provision I left out in my response to her yesterday is if it is impacting any particular areas of our healthcare that we did not intend to impact, then in consultation with the Secretary of HHS, I as Secretary of State can issue waivers and allow the funding to continue. So the reason we want to do the 6-month check is to see what impact does it have.

Mr. BERA. Mr. Secretary, will you commit to providing us the results of that report and what you find at that 6-month check?

Secretary TILLERSON. We would be happy to share that.

Mr. BERA. Great. I also have real reservations about the impact of PEPFAR. Now PEPFAR was started by a Republican President and has been a remarkable program saving thousands, if not hundreds of thousands of lives in Africa. I think President Bush would suggest that that is his proudest accomplishment.

I would like to hear further commitment as we look at how we engage in global health around the world with partnerships—and I understand that it is our responsibility to evaluate each program, that we have limited resource and limited funds—but I would like to have this commitment that we are going to look at how we work with nonprofits around the world, how we work with allies and other countries around the world to continue relieving suffering.

Secretary TILLERSON. That is a fundamental element of our approach to how we manage these reductions. Even with these cuts, the $1 billion cut to PEPFAR, we will continue to be the leader in health issues globally and PEPFAR is clearly recognized as a model program that should be replicated elsewhere.

Mr. BERA. Thank you. I yield back.

Chairman ROYCE. Thank you. We are going now to Mr. Paul Cook, vice chairman of the committee, of California.

Mr. COOK. It is good to see you again, Mr. Secretary. I missed some of the testimony and I hope I am not being redundant, but I wanted to talk about the Muslim Brotherhood, the impact in Qatar, and quite frankly, Turkey, and the strained relationship, and how it is so difficult to find out one day you have an ally and the next day you might have an adversary. And I know that is going to be very, very challenging with the Saudis and what has happened in the past few weeks, as well as the on-going political situation in Turkey which affects the whole Middle East and our policy.

If you could address that, I would appreciate it. I talked to you, I think last week, about the same thing. But Secretary Mattis had some input on it Monday night and it is one which doesn't necessarily have a military solution, but you are going to be right in the eye of the storm.

Secretary TILLERSON. Our relationship with Turkey is extremely important to the United States. It is also extremely important to NATO, to Europe and clearly we are concerned about the evolution of events, particularly since the coup attempt in Turkey. I have traveled to Ankara and obviously President Erdogan has been here. So our level of engagement with Turkey is at a very high level of communication and engagement.

And where we have issues of concern, we are talking about those, discussing them. Clearly, they have some issues with how we are executing our military plans in Syria to defeat ISIS. We are concerned about their engagements with Russia. The European Union is concerned about the relationships. Turkey sits at an extremely important place geographically, but also geopolitically. So it is an important relationship. It is quite complex right now and our objective is not to worsen that relationship, but find ways to re-engage and strengthen it so that we can have some influence over the choices that they are making, particularly with respect to freedoms within the country, continuing their role and their construct as a democracy.

Mr. COOK. Thank you, sir. I yield back.

Mr. SMITH. Would the gentleman yield?

Mr. COOK. Sure.

Mr. SMITH. I thank my good friend for yielding. Mr. Secretary, I would ask you if you would to your thought about the waivers for the Mexico City policy in answer to my friend and colleague, Dr. Bera. I would hope that you would not go that route. That would have the perverse impact of incentivizing foreign non-governmental organizations to be noncompliant with the Mexico City policy.

And I would point out to my colleagues that back in 1985, after Ronald Reagan first announced the Mexico City policy at the U.N. Conference in Mexico City, hence its name, there were large num-

bers of NGOs, foreign NGOs, that said "We are not going to comply." I offered the amendment on the floor of the House of Representatives in 1985 which passed. And I fully expect we will have an all-out legislative battle on the floor again which I would welcome, with a policy that seeks to hold harmless unborn children in our foreign aid.

Global health ought to be inclusive, not exclusive of unborn children who we know now beyond any reasonable doubt are harmed in a way that is violence against children, whether it be by dismemberment or chemical poisoning. Abortion is violence against children and it also has consequences in the negative for women.

And the Mexico City policy, as you know so well, has three exceptions: Rape, incest, and life of the mother, which tracks what Ronald Reagan did and what George W. Bush did and what the first Bush did when he initiated the policy as well.

And at the end of the day when it only applied to family planning organizations, when I offered the amendment on the floor, Olympia Snow and others said none of the groups are going to accept it. At the end of the day, all but two accepted it. And that was IPPF, based out London and Marie Stopes International. They all accepted it.

So I would encourage you, waivers would be an incentive to a foreign, non-government organization, and again American taxpayers through the polling have shown clearly that they do not want our foreign aid subsidizing and enabling the killing of unborn children overseas or anywhere else. That is why the Hyde Amendment domestically enjoys such strong support. So I just would offer that thought.

Chairman ROYCE. We go now to Lois Frankel of Florida.

Ms. FRANKEL. Thank you, Mr. Chair, and welcome, Mr. Secretary of State.

I think today is the day where we all recognize our common humanity as my thoughts are with my colleague and the other folks impacted by the shooting. So I will try and be kind and gentle. I am always kind and gentle, aren't I?

So in a very kind and gentle way, I want to say that I am sad to say that I think your budget is inhumane and dangerous. Okay. I had to say that.

I don't want to turn this into an abortion fight at all, because that was not part of my remarks, but I just want to counter my colleague who I respect very, very much and just say that women having full access to reproductive choice and care is imperative for them to have a full and productive life and I think it is important to the security of their community. But I am going to move on.

I wanted to mention, I remember the President said, I think he said he inherited a mess in talking about international affairs, so to me it is very perplexing that he inherits a mess and then you come in with a budget with almost a one-third cut in State Department activities.

Over 120 retired Four Star Generals sent a letter opposing the cuts, saying this is not the time to retreat. Secretary Mattis, when he was Commander of U.S. Central Command says, "If you don't fully fund the State Department, then I need to buy more ammunition." I guess this is the Trump doctrine because he is putting bil-

lions of more dollars into ammunition and cutting, as my colleague said before, two of the legs of our national security which are diplomacy and development.

I want to focus on what I think is one of the crown jewels of our development efforts and that is our global health investments. I know you would probably agree that diseases do not recognize international borders. Every year, almost 80 million people from other countries visit the United States. This was in 2016 and Americans took more than 77 million international trips. We have hundreds of thousands of military living overseas. So U.S. global assistance helps not only to protect people in other countries, but it protects the United States.

I hope you would agree that these health initiatives help keep countries stable. When you have, one of my colleagues mentioned famine, but if you have disease, you have famine, you have inhumane conditions, it promotes not only people trying to escape the country, but it destabilizes countries creating an environment for terrorism.

George Bush, one of his greatest achievements was PEPFAR, which put us on track to end AIDS as a public health threat by 2030. I know you yourself have said it is a model for the world to follow, yet the President's budget cuts this by $1.1 billion.

The Global Fund, which controls the spread of malaria, TB, and HIV, also is being cut by $225 million. And I know people have said why should we care what is happening in these other countries? I think that is going to the questions I want to ask you which is this, Mr. Secretary, why should we care about diseases in other countries?

Secretary TILLERSON. Well, Congresswoman, I think you just gave the explanation for why we should care and I do not think——

Ms. FRANKEL. —all right, well, I will go on.

Secretary TILLERSON. What I would point to, I know we are focused on the cuts. I think it is important to also focus on how much we still will be committing and spending toward these diseases, toward our global health efforts. We are not zeroing health out. These were difficult choices that were made in the budget. We do believe that we can attract others and other funding and enable the continuation of these programs. And there is no stepping back from our commitment on PEPFAR to the countries. We are going to fully meet the commitments on our AIDS programs in PEPFAR. We are fully meeting our commitments, fulfilling our 5-year pledge to Gavi. We don't intend in any way to abandon our efforts or abandon our view of how important these issues are.

Ms. FRANKEL. Thank you, Mr. Secretary.

Chairman ROYCE. We go to Mr. Lee Zeldin of New York.

Mr. ZELDIN. Thank you, Mr. Chairman. And thank you, Mr. Secretary, for being here.

A few questions. First, I want to ask about Iran. There is a lot of agreement that Iran has violated the spirit of the JCPOA. Have you seen any evidence that Iran has violated the letter of the JCPOA?

Secretary TILLERSON. Well, we will await the quarterly report from IAEA to see if they have found any specific violations. I have read the entire JCPOA agreement now for myself, so I can under-

stand this spirit and intent. Quite frankly, it is a poorly constructed agreement. The bar for Iran's compliance is pretty low. And so it should not come as a surprise to people that they are able to comply. It is not that difficult for them to comply.

Having said that, we intend to have a rigorous application of the compliance requirements and a rigorous confirmation from the IAEA that they are complying.

The whole spirit and intent question is one that obviously is always open to interpretation by both sides. And importantly, remember the JCPOA is a multi-lateral agreement, so we have partners I would say that were on our side of the table, best I can tell. They will have their interpretation of that as well.

Mr. ZELDIN. Thank you. And your predecessor pointed out that it was a political commitment. It wasn't a treaty. It wasn't an executive agreement. It was a political commitment, one that we didn't even ask for a signature on, an unsigned political commitment.

Does the administration recognize Jerusalem as the capital of Israel?

Secretary TILLERSON. The administration has not expressed a specific view in that regard.

Mr. ZELDIN. I would state my own position. I believe strongly that the administration should recognize Jerusalem as the unquestionable capital of Israel.

Will the administration eventually move the American Embassy in Israel to Jerusalem?

Secretary TILLERSON. That decision is under evaluation by the President. Obviously, he will have to make a decision coming up on whether to extend a final decision on that or not. He has not made that decision to my knowledge.

Mr. ZELDIN. And the President was absolutely correct during the campaign when he had stated his position and intent then of moving the Embassy and I would encourage him to go with his instinct from the campaign and follow through with that pledge.

How do you believe the United States can better leverage our foreign aid that we provide to the Palestinian Authority?

Secretary TILLERSON. Well, I think again our engagement with them and our making clear on our expectations of how aid is utilized. One thing I would like to clarify from this morning's hearing, several times in the questions people suggested our support to the Palestinian Authority was increasing next year. That is inaccurate. It is actually going down about $20 million, if I remember correctly.

And to remind everyone, our aid does not go directly to the Palestinian Authority. It is given to them by way of Israel and we work closely with them as to how that money is delivered and for what purposes it is delivered.

Mr. ZELDIN. And I appreciate that point. And I would offer that whatever the United States can't do to the Palestinian Authority, legally, we should also have the position that we also cannot do for the Palestinian Authority indirectly.

I cosponsored the Taylor Force Act, as I know a number of my colleagues in the House and the Senate did as well. I believe it is now one that has bipartisan support over on the Senate side. And I wish a better leverage of the aid that is provided for the Palestinian Authority which includes providing certifications that the

Palestinian Authority is not inciting violence. And as in the name Taylor Force Act, the United States Military Academy graduate, the Palestinians are not only inciting violence to target innocent Israelis, but they are doing so to target Americans as well.

Secretary TILLERSON. Congressman, just so you are clear. It was with that strong bipartisan sense of the Congress that we have taken the position with the Palestinian Authority in a very unequivocal way, that you either take care of this yourself or someone else is going to take care of it for you. And those are the words I have used with them.

Mr. ZELDIN. And you have strongly stated in recent statements where you have mentioned that the President brought this up with Abbas, that you have received assurances. It is in the news today that there are Palestinian officials pushing back on your position that the Palestinian Authority has agreed to stop providing these payments to financially reward terror and I really do wish you the absolute best as Secretary of State in your pursuit here. And I would love to talk to you further about those efforts moving forward in the weeks, months, and years ahead. I yield back.

Chairman ROYCE. We go now to Mr. Joaquin Castro of Texas.

Mr. CASTRO. Thank you, Chairman. Thank you, Secretary, for being here today and for your testimony. Obviously, cooperation between Congress and the State Department is important, but I am concerned over what looks like a lack of cooperation within the Executive.

The policy of the White House and the State Department has not been completely aligned over the last several months. For example, mere minutes after you stated that the Saudi and Emirate blockade of Qatar hindered U.S. military action against ISIS, President Trump took to Twitter to praise the blockade.

As you attempted to form an international coalition to isolate North Korea for its nuclear weapons program, President Trump called North Korean leader Kim Jong Un "a smart cookie" and said he would be "honored to meet him" hurting your efforts.

Your efforts to assure our European and Asian allies have our commitment to alliances have similarly been undercut by the White House and the President.

It was reported that when Prime Minister Netanyahu and President Trump stood up at their press conference and broached the idea of a one state solution instead of a two state solution, that you were in an airplane somewhere else and that the State Department was not part of those discussions.

So my question is how can Americans and our allies around the world have confidence in your word, in the State Department's position, and most of all that it represents what President Trump believes?

Secretary TILLERSON. Congressman, just to be clear, there is no gap between the President and myself or the State Department on policy. There are differences in terms of how the President chooses to articulate elements of that policy. In the instance of the Qatar example that you gave where I made a statement, the State Department. I then attended a bilat with President of Romania with President Trump and then he made his statement in the Rose Garden. I was involved in writing his comments in the Rose Garden

to reflect the strong message he wanted to send which was not just to Qatar, but he said to everyone, to all countries, to stop the funding, stop the killing, stop teaching your young people hate. That was the way he wanted to deliver. He wanted to deliver a very strong message——

Mr. CASTRO. Mr. Secretary, I know that.

Secretary TILLERSON. There is no daylight between he and I.

Mr. CASTRO. I hear you. Jared Kushner has been given, reportedly given a big portfolio with respect to foreign affairs. Who is responsible for the foreign affairs of our country? Is it the Department of State and yourself or is it Mr. Kushner and the White House?

Secretary TILLERSON. It is the Department of State and myself and that has been reconfirmed by the President to me on multiple occasions.

Mr. CASTRO. And part of the reason I ask these questions, in February I was in Japan and South Korea and this was the biggest question people had. When we look to the United States, who speaks for the President reliably? Whose word can be trusted?

I know you can understand how important that is for our allies and also for our adversaries. So why would the State Department be left out of any discussion about one of our most important foreign policy issues, whether you are going to have a one state solution or a two state solution? You can see how that is quite strange and bizarre.

Secretary TILLERSON. Well, I think that came out of the bilateral private meeting between the President and Prime Minister Netanyahu. And I think to be fair, what the President was indicating is that whatever approach the two sides, the Palestinians and the Israelis, want to take to achieve a peace accord, we will support. I think what he was saying is we are prepared and he is prepared to put his shoulder to the wheel to see if we can move a process along and he is going to be unconstrained to exploring any and all other alternatives. Because the alternatives everyone has pursued now for so many years have not produced a result. And I think these are some of the changes that people have a difficult time perhaps understanding tactically.

Mr. CASTRO. And thank you for that.

Secretary TILLERSON. The President is saying let us explore everything.

Mr. CASTRO. Let me just make one last comment. First, I don't mean it as a knock on your leadership or your record at the Department. I believe that you have put in a very difficult position. And it is not just yourself. It is other members of the Cabinet where they essentially will make a statement, believing what they believe to be the President's position, only to have the President go on Twitter or otherwise make a contradictory statement. But in all of it, it is very unsettling for Americans to try to understand where our Government is headed, where the President is headed. But even more unsettling for allies who are not in the United States and have no other indicators than what they hear on the news. So we would just ask, I would just ask for I guess more thoughtfulness from the Executive Branch on how they approach these things.

Chairman ROYCE. So we go now to Mr. Ted Yoho of Florida.

Mr. YOHO. Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Mr. Secretary, good seeing you again. Appreciate your being here.

As we talked the other day about 10 years ago, there were 25 conflicts around the world. Today, there are over 75. There are certainly no shortages of great challenges in the world. But with the challenges come great opportunities, so I see great things in store for you, for our Nation, and hopefully for the world.

I feel some of my colleagues aren't accepting the fact that we are $20 trillion in debt and that austerity measures are coming. We have reports where we are going to be in 5 to 6 years and we are looking at Puerto Rico. We are looking at Greece and we don't want to go there.

So we do have to reform some of these programs and that leads to the current budget, that we continue the programs that work and we get the results. We get the results that we are looking for and get rid of the programs that aren't working.

We were in the DRC with Chairman Royce and I remember sitting there at the table with the ministers and we are going around and talking about things and I asked the people at that table, and keep in mind we have given hundreds of billions of dollars. What do you do for your social programs? And they asked me, what do you mean? I said feeding the hungry, housing, healthcare. And he goes we have you. Those aren't good programs and we need to reform those and we need to put pressure on those kind of countries.

The comment that President Trump said make America great again, put America first. I truly believe in that. And I think it has taken out of context because the only way we can become great or we can become first at whatever we do is to look out for the partners that we are working with and that comes through diplomacy in your agency. And I have a lot of confidence in your business acumen that you can transfer those to the State Department. I have watched you since you have come in and I am just a big fan of what you can do.

I know we are in separate branches of government. And look at this committee—I chair the Asia Pacific Subcommittee as we talked about—of how we can partner together to work on those commonalities.

And with that as you know yesterday, Panama terminated the diplomatic relationships with Taiwan. It is the latest in China's effort to restrict Taiwan's international space and including the blockade of Taiwan delegation at the World Health Assembly. To me, this is unconscionable to say to another nation, and I feel like what other people have said, they are a nation that I recognize. And I know it is in a tough situation because we have had that policy since President Nixon. But saying that and China says they are going to be a reliable partner to bring North Korea to the table.

When we look at what China has done, they have increased their trade with North Korea, 37.4 percent in the first quarter. Chinese imports of North Korean iron has increased 270 percent in January and February, yet no Chinese firms have been subjected to U.S. secondary sanctions. I have heard you talk about that. It looks like we are moving in that direction. And I commend you for that. Can we realistically rely on China in lieu of their past experience or actions?

Secretary TILLERSON. Well, first just to remind you that our North Korea policy really went into effect late February, early March when we began to execute that and so we recognize there was a lot of activity going on early in the year and through the first quarter and that is what we have been trying to attack.

We recognize what China is doing to put pressure on smaller countries. They are using the power of their trading relations. They are using the power of aid that they have gone in and provided to smaller countries. And in my trip that I recently made down to Australia and New Zealand in my meetings I have had with members of ASEAN, we are hearing this directly from them, that they are not only feeling this pressure, it is being put right in front of them to say you either sever relations with this and so or we are going to end our trading relationships with you.

Even large countries are being threatened in this way. And our conversations with the Chinese about this next 50 years of stability and prosperity, we are being clear to them that you are destabilizing what has been a stable relationship with these actions. If this is where you are going, you are going to create instability and you are going to take this balance that has maintained a period of non-conflict, you are going to upset that balance.

Mr. YOHO. Right.

Secretary TILLERSON. So these are the kind of high-level discussions we are having with the most senior levels of the Chinese leadership. You have to think about where does this go? Where does this lead? And what are you going to force as a response to that? So we are very mindful of it. We see it happening and we see it as threatening stability in the region.

Mr. YOHO. I agree. And I am out of time. My last statement is I hope we stay in honor of the Taiwan Relations Act as we have in the past.

Mr. Chairman, thank you.

Chairman ROYCE. Thank you. Thank you, Mr. Yoho. As I mentioned before, this hearing will conclude at 1:30. The Secretary has been very flexible and he does have other commitments. So if the members will be brief and not be compelled to use their full time, we want to give everyone a chance in the next 20 minutes. And we will go to Robin Kelly of Illinois.

Ms. KELLY. Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Thank you, Secretary, for coming to the House Foreign Affairs Committee. You are actually the first government witness I believe to appear before the full committee, so I thank you for that.

The official mission statement of the State Department reads, "The Department's mission is to shape and sustain a peaceful, prosperous, just, and democratic world and foster conditions for stability and progress for the benefit of the American people and people everywhere."

In your testimony, you stated that the State Department's primary focus is to protect our citizens at home and abroad. And to me, that sounds more like the mission of the Defense Department than the State Department. So has the mission of the U.S. State Department changed somewhat under President Trump?

Secretary TILLERSON. The mission statement that you just read is one that is very powerful. And that I would certainly support.

Having said that, it was a statement developed under previous administrations.

Part of this redesign opportunity we have in front of us, a lot of the elements that we learned out of the listening sessions, was there is some confusion over the mission. And that confusion doesn't just exist as of today. It has existed for some time.

I think we do owe it to ourselves with the input and help of our colleagues in the State Department to do a better job of articulating what is the enduring mission of the State Department that endures regardless of what political party may be in place at any given time because the State Department is here constant. We understand that the will of the American people changes and can change from one election to the next, but the State Department must have a mission that delivers regardless of what the policy decisions may be that change from time to time.

And I think that is a conversation we really need to have with ourselves inside the State Department, with our colleagues, and that is the mission statement that I am in search of is what will endure regardless of who may be occupying the White House.

Ms. KELLY. Thank you. I do agree with most of my colleagues said about the budget cuts. I have a lot of concern and a recent article by Mike Mullin and James Jones, two distinguished military leaders, specifically cited cuts to USAID as risking U.S. national security. And they go on to specifically say that "in the 21st century, weapons and war fighters alone are insufficient to keep America safe."

Mr. Chairman, I ask to submit the entire article into the record.

Chairman ROYCE. Without objection.

Ms. KELLY. I also have concerns about the staffing up that needs to be done because that will help you do the job you need to do if you have the people you need to have. Is there a backlog of policy recommendations now because of the lack of staffing?

Secretary TILLERSON. There really is not. And again, I want to recognize that every job is filled today, either a Deputy Assistant stepped up to be the Acting Assistant, or an Acting Assistant has stepped up to be the Under, if necessary. And these are remarkably good people, competent, dedicated. I have had a lot of conversation with them about how I know it is difficult to be the acting, but they are doing a superb job. I have great confidence in them. They travel with me when I go overseas. These are the people that help me develop the policy. They are executing the policy and they are doing an extraordinary job.

Ms. KELLY. Okay. Because of time, I will yield back.

Chairman ROYCE. Thank you for yielding back. We go to Brian Mast of Florida.

Mr. MAST. Thank you, Chairman. Thank you, Secretary, for your time today. Just a couple quick questions. Do you have any plans to bring Vladimir Putin a red reset button?

Secretary TILLERSON. I don't think you can reset anything. We are where we are. We just have to address the conditions as they exist.

Mr. MAST. Do you foresee turning a blind eye if Russia were to invade any other sovereignty?

Secretary TILLERSON. Certainly not.

Mr. MAST. Do you anticipate President Trump whispering in the ear of the Russian President saying he would have more flexibility after the next election?

Secretary TILLERSON. I would not expect that President Trump has any intent to do anything other than to try to restore this relationship to something that is in the interest of the American people.

Mr. MAST. Do you anticipate mocking the threat of the Russian influence on the United States by saying the 1980s want their foreign policy back?

Secretary TILLERSON. I think we will be articulating our own view toward Russia which I have described in some respects today.

We take the relationship with Russia as serious. They are a global nuclear power. Having said that, we have a number of troubling issues with them in front of us to deal with.

Mr. MAST. Do you think there is any level of funding that can make up for actions like that?

Secretary TILLERSON. I think this is going to be just very hard work of diplomacy, coupled with some strong actions that have been taken already and the prospect of what the Congress can enable us to do with stronger actions if we cannot get progress.

Mr. MAST. Do you believe that it is more important, the words and the actions that you undertake, than any level of funding that you try to meet?

Secretary TILLERSON. Well, today, in restoring that relationship, it is not an absence of funds that is in any way preventing us from continuing to work to identify our areas where we may find cooperation to begin to build some level of trust and confidence. Funding is not an issue in terms of how we are working with Russia today.

Mr. MAST. Thank you for your remarks. I yield back.

Chairman ROYCE. We go now to Dina Titus of Nevada.

Ms. TITUS. Thank you, Mr. Chairman. And thank you, Secretary. I, too, share my colleagues' concerns about the devastating budget cuts and also about the lack of senior leadership at the State Department. I don't see how we can move forward in a leadership role in the world with those two things, those two problems hanging over us.

But I want to go back to the questions that Mr. Castro raised. I don't believe our country has a singular voice when it comes to foreign policy. And that concerns our allies and it also emboldens our adversaries because nobody knows who to believe. Now he mentioned several examples, Qatar, the incident that occurred recently; the peace talks in the Middle East. But I would like to bring up a couple of others.

You weren't part of the discussion to withdraw from the Paris Climate Agreement. And I believe you have said that you are opposed to that, that we should not have done that. I would like to ask you why you think this was a bad idea and is there any way with all this limited funds that we can move forward in any way as a leader on climate change?

The second one I would like to ask you to address is in the written statement, you say the U.S. and I quote, "Will continue to be the leader in international development, global health, democracy,

and good governance initiatives, and humanitarian efforts." Yet, the President has said that we don't really care about what other countries are doing internally, only how they relate to us. It is not up to us to interfere. I believe the quote was, "We are not here to tell other people how to live, what to do, and who to be."

Would you tell us how that kind of jives with what you have said?

Secretary TILLERSON. With respect to the decision to withdraw from the Paris Climate Accord, I was part of that interagency process. What I would point out to you is this is a decision the President could easily have taken the first week after inauguration, that he clearly indicated in his campaign he intended to.

I think it is noteworthy that he took some time to think about it. He deliberated on it. We had a couple of different sessions on it with him. He waited until he took his first overseas trip and attended the G-7 so he could hear directly from others that the issue is quite important to. And then he came home. He had one more deliberation. It was on a telephone conference call which I participated.

I was free to express my views. I took a counter view to the decision that was made, but I fully appreciate the elements behind why he took the decision.

Ms. TITUS. Can you tell us why you have a counter position? Why you don't think it was a good idea to pull out?

Secretary TILLERSON. As I have expressed publicly, and I expressed to the President, I think having our seat at the table around the Paris Climate Accord to continue to have influence on the issue itself, continue to represent America's efforts because America has done an extraordinary job of dealing with our own greenhouse gas emissions without heavy-handed regulation. And just because we have walked away from targets that were set under Paris is in no way indicative of our intent to walk away from that continued improvement.

I think America's businesses and private and public enterprises have no intent of changing that commitment. So my view was, as a diplomat, it is an opportunity for engagement. And I take every opportunity for engagement I can. This is an issue that is very important to many of our allies.

Ms. TITUS. I agree.

Secretary TILLERSON. So I think having the opportunity to engage, that is the reason I argued for staying in.

Ms. TITUS. And how about the second point about just okay with whatever you do in your own country?

Secretary TILLERSON. I think what the President was indicating is he is not into government building, or changing governments. I think what he is indicating is, in his view, mistakes have been made in the past by involving ourselves with countries and then expanding our involvement to want to now change their culture, change their heritage, change who they are, change the way they live their lives.

And I think what he was saying is there is a lot of conflict that can be created when we try to go too far in imposing our way of life on others, that we have to recognize and respect the history of countries, the history of the regions, their culture, and not create

new areas of conflict just because we think they should be doing things differently. I think that is the intent.

And I think there is a lot of merit in that and I think when I reflect on the conflicts around the world and how did we get there and why do they exist, a lot of it is grounded in these areas. We continue to believe that if we can de-conflict areas, bring peace to areas, we have a much better chance of engaging on many things like human rights, freedom, democracy, which we want to and will continue to promote.

Ms. TITUS. My time is up. I appreciate that. So after we go in after the war is over, we don't have any responsibility for doing any nation building? That is okay, my time is up.

Chairman ROYCE. Francis Rooney of Florida.

Mr. ROONEY. Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Mr. Secretary, thank you for your service. Thank you for leaving private industry to serve your country.

As a person who has been in and out of the State Department for many years and has had commercial relationships with the Agency for International Development, I want to thank you for bringing a business-like and pro-taxpayer approach to funding the Department.

What you said is true. It is about what you can accomplish and what kind of people you have, not necessarily what you spend to get there. For example, like the record reflects, the Department has spent over $29 million to subsidize an organization you and I know personally, the World Economic Forum. I wonder what the taxpayers would think of that.

I want to applaud you in your budget for scrapping the disaster known as the U.S. Institute of Peace. If every taxpayer from Florida to California could see that building, we would have a revolt on our hands.

And lastly, I wish you would reconsider the $10 million you have in there for the U.N. Human Rights Council. That is on top of $17½ million that we have spent in the last few years to try to buy friendship with Israel, that I will tell you, I will bet you a steak dinner, is not going to work.

So I guess I just want to know what can we do, who agree with you, to have your back to encourage you to stay tough and to reinforce your effort to bring reform, to eliminate wasteful spending, and to position the Department to live effectively in the 21st century?

Secretary TILLERSON. Well, Congressman, first, thank you for the support we already receive from the Congress and the input which is really important for us to have an understanding of what the priorities are in the minds of the Congress and in particular the House because you are closest to the face of the American people and I recognize that.

I think in terms of some of these cuts to international organizations, we are looking at those one by one by one and really asking ourselves, what is the cost of benefit here? And in some areas, we either are going to reform those or we are going to withdraw from them. And we actually are using this exercise, and everyone is well aware of what we are going through here where we are taking a very close look as to what do we, the American people, get in re-

turn for this investment or this funding that we provide. And that is very much not as a threat, but as a tool to use so they understand this time this is a serious conversation. We need to get to a serious conclusion. If you don't want to change, if you don't want to reform, that is fine. Just let us know and we will try a different approach.

The Human Rights Council at the U.N. is one that we are currently engaged in and Ambassador Haley is directly engaged in. She and I have spoken about we are either going to reform this thing and make it reflect what it should be reflecting or we are going to withdraw our support for it and try to find other means that we can approach human rights issues on a multi-lateral basis with partners who see it the same way we do.

Mr. ROONEY. Thank you, Mr. Secretary. I yield my time.

Chairman ROYCE. Thank you. Norma Torres from California will be our last speaker.

Ms. TORRES. Thank you, Mr. Chairman. And welcome, Secretary. Thank you for staying as long as you have and accommodating our tough day today.

I understand that later this week you are traveling to Miami for a conference about security and prosperity in Central America, specifically the northern triangle area. I want to make you aware that we in Congress have been working very hard on a bipartisan way to deal with the crisis we have in this area.

And I want to make sure that you understand that while our President may not think that we should be building up other governments, our national security is very dependent on the democracy and democracy issues within our closest neighbors to the south. We have to be very proactive at dealing with the very corrupt governments that have become a culture of our neighbors. We have to deal with the narcotraffic issues and the money laundering that happens in this region because they are our partners in our national security.

So thank you for making a commitment to working there, but I also want to make sure that you understand that this is important to Congress. We passed this resolution unanimously here in Congress.

The world looks at the United States for leadership on the global stage. Unfortunately, the President's words and actions have been undermining American leadership. Part of the problem is that we don't have a fully staffed, functioning State Department. Another problem is that there is a conflict of mixed messages that come across when the President tweets and you have a different response and his press team has a different response.

Mr. Secretary, my question to you is are the President's tweets the official foreign policy of the United States?

Secretary TILLERSON. I am not going to comment extensively on the President's tweets. The President has his own means that he wishes to communicate through and he communicates a lot of different messages with those.

Ms. TORRES. I understand that, sir. But is it an informed decision based on facts that he is tweeting out and is this our policy, U.S. policy?

Secretary TILLERSON. I am not involved in how the President constructs his tweets, when he tweets, why he tweets, what he tweets.

Ms. TORRES. It seems to be a game that goes back and forth. This is not meant to be a gotcha question. This is simply wanting to clarify for other world leaders. I was just on a trip to Mexico with a delegation of U.S. Members of Congress and part of the insecurity with our closest neighbor to the South is the fact that the President puts out tweets and people don't know. These leaders don't know if this is informed policy and if this is truly how the United States intends to conduct business.

Secretary TILLERSON. What I would say with our neighbors in Mexico to the South, and you mentioned the Miami conference that I will be going to tomorrow to address both economic and security issues in the triangle area, this conference is being co-sponsored by the State Department, Department of Homeland Security, our Mexican counterparts, the Foreign Ministry, and the State Minister of Mexico. This is something that came out of our Mexico City engagement because we recognize we have a common issue in trans-migration that is a problem for Mexico, a problem for us.

And what we are doing and this gets to our approach to the budget question and concerns that we are not going to be able to carry out our foreign policy objectives. These are some of the innovative approaches we are taking. We are bringing the Inter-American Bank, the World Bank, we are bringing a number of private sector entities to Miami. The Vice President is coming to give the keynote address at the lunch, so I think——

Ms. TORRES. Do you know who is not coming? Do you know who is not coming and it is not because you did not invite them. But the Attorneys General of all three countries are not coming simply because their governments think that there is instability happening here in the U.S. and they have left them out. And I think it is important at this conference, sir, that we call them out on that.

Secretary TILLERSON. Well, as you know, a lot of our assistance in those three countries is to strengthen law enforcement, strengthen the ability of Attorney Generals to prosecute, strengthen the courts to make those cases stick on corruption in particular.

We have made progress and the reason we are focusing on the triangle area is because we made progress. We think we are very close to pushing this over the hump, so to speak, and we want to bring in a lot of others to help with this so that we aren't doing it alone.

Chairman ROYCE. Well, I want to thank the Secretary for this time with the committee. This has been a challenging day in Congress. It is a tough world out there. Excuse me, we are at 1:30 and I made my commitment that we would adjourn.

Mr. SCHNEIDER. I appreciate that and thank the

Secretary for speaking here today and sharing your time so generously. On behalf of those of us who were not able to ask questions, I request that we may submit them to you and get a response in writing.

Chairman ROYCE. Absolutely.

Secretary TILLERSON. I look forward to any other questions and I am sorry we were unable to have a dialogue with each of you as well. Again, I understand the circumstances entirely.

Chairman ROYCE. And as I said at the beginning of the hearing, that absolutely is something we will do and I do want to convey on behalf of all of the members here, the committee looks forward to working with you, Mr. Secretary, on many policies, including your reorganization efforts. You have heard our concerns and we look forward to receiving your legislative proposals for the Department's reorganization once they are ready.

Again, I thank you for being prepared to respond to the other members who did not get an opportunity here today. I thank you and we stand adjourned.

[Whereupon, at 1:33 p.m., the committee was adjourned.]

# APPENDIX

## Material Submitted for the Record

**FULL COMMITTEE HEARING NOTICE**
**COMMITTEE ON FOREIGN AFFAIRS**
U.S. HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
WASHINGTON, DC 20515-6128

**Edward R. Royce (R-CA), Chairman**

June 14, 2017

**TO: MEMBERS OF THE COMMITTEE ON FOREIGN AFFAIRS**

You are respectfully requested to attend an OPEN hearing of the Committee on Foreign Affairs, to be held in Room 2172 of the Rayburn House Office Building (and available live on the Committee website at http://www.ForeignAffairs.house.gov):

**DATE:** Wednesday, June 14, 2017

**TIME:** 9:00 a.m.

**SUBJECT:** The FY 2018 Foreign Affairs Budget

**WITNESS:** The Honorable Rex W. Tillerson
Secretary of State
U.S. Department of State

**By Direction of the Chairman**

*The Committee on Foreign Affairs seeks to make its facilities accessible to persons with disabilities. If you are in need of special accommodations, please call 202/225-5021 at least four business days in advance of the event, whenever practicable. Questions with regard to special accommodations in general (including availability of Committee materials in alternative formats and assistive listening devices) may be directed to the Committee.*

# COMMITTEE ON FOREIGN AFFAIRS

MINUTES OF FULL COMMITTEE HEARING

Day *Wednesday* Date *6/14/2017* Room *2172*

Starting Time *10:05* Ending Time *1:35*

Recesses [1] (*11:55* to *12:40*) (____ to ____) (____ to ____) (____ to ____) (____ to ____) (____ to ____)

**Presiding Member(s)**

*Chairman Edward R. Royce*

*Check all of the following that apply:*

**Open Session** [✓]
**Executive (closed) Session** [ ]
**Televised** [✓]

**Electronically Recorded (taped)** [✓]
**Stenographic Record** [✓]

**TITLE OF HEARING:**

***The FY 2018 Foreign Affairs Budget***

**COMMITTEE MEMBERS PRESENT:**

*See attached.*

**NON-COMMITTEE MEMBERS PRESENT:**

*none*

**HEARING WITNESSES: Same as meeting notice attached? Yes** [✓] **No** [ ]
*(If "no", please list below and include title, agency, department, or organization.)*

**STATEMENTS FOR THE RECORD:** *(List any statements submitted for the record.)*

*IVR - Rep. David Cicilline*
*IVR - Rep. Tulsi Gabbard*
*IVR - Rep. Robin Kelly*
*SFR - Rep. Gerald Connolly*
*SFR - Rep. Adriano Espaillat*
*QFR - Chairman Edward Royce*
*QFR - Rep. Eliot Engel*
*QFR - Rep. Dana Rohrabacher*
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*QFR - Rep. Steve Chabot*
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*QFR - Rep. Albio Sires*
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*QFR - Rep. David Cicilline*
*QFR - Rep. Brian Fitzpatrick*
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*QFR - Rep. Lois Frankel*
*QFR - Rep. Tulsi Gabbard*
*QFR - Rep. Joaquin Castro*
*QFR - Rep. Dina Titus*
*QFR - Rep. Norma Torres*
*QFR - Rep. Brad Schneider*
*QFR - Rep. Adriano Espaillat*
*QFR - Rep. Ted Lieu*

**TIME SCHEDULED TO RECONVENE** _____
or
**TIME ADJOURNED** *1:35*

**Full Committee Hearing Coordinator**

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*FULL COMMITTEE HEARING*

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The New York Times https://nyti.ms/2qXIid7

The Opinion Pages | OP-ED CONTRIBUTOR

# Colin Powell: American Leadership — We Can't Do It for Free

By COLIN POWELL MAY 24, 2017

At our best, being a great nation has always meant a commitment to building a better, safer world — not just for ourselves, but for our children and grandchildren. This has meant leading the world in advancing the cause of peace, responding when disease and disaster strike, lifting millions out of poverty and inspiring those yearning for freedom.

This calling is under threat.

The administration's proposal, announced Tuesday, to slash approximately 30 percent from the State Department and foreign assistance budget signals an American retreat, leaving a vacuum that would make us far less safe and prosperous. While it may sound penny-wise, it is pound-foolish.

This proposal would bring resources for our civilian forces to a third of what we spent at the height of Ronald Reagan's "peace through strength" years, as a percentage of the gross domestic product. It would be internationally irresponsible, distressing our friends, encouraging our enemies and undermining our own economic and national security interests.

The idea that putting Americans "first" requires a withdrawal from the world is simply wrongheaded, because a retreat would achieve exactly the opposite for our citizens. I learned that lesson the hard way when I became secretary of state after a decade of budget cuts that hollowed out our civilian foreign policy tools.

Many had assumed the Cold War's end would allow us to retreat from the world, but cuts that may have looked logical at the time came back to haunt us as tensions rose in the Middle East, Africa, the Korean Peninsula and elsewhere. Confronting such challenges requires not just a military that is second to none, but also well-resourced, effective and empowered diplomats and aid workers.

Indeed, we're strongest when the face of America isn't only a soldier carrying a gun but also a diplomat negotiating peace, a Peace Corps volunteer bringing clean water to a village or a relief worker stepping off a cargo plane as floodwaters rise. While I am all for reviewing, reforming and strengthening the State Department and the United States Agency for International Development, proposals to zero out economic and development assistance in more than 35 countries would effectively lower our flag at our outposts around the world and make us far less safe.

Today, the world is witnessing some of the most significant humanitarian crises in living memory. With more than 65 million people displaced, there have never been more people fleeing war and instability since World War II. The famines engulfing families in South Sudan, Yemen, Nigeria and Somalia put more than 20 million people at risk of starvation — further destabilizing regions already under threat from the Islamic State, Al Qaeda, Boko Haram and Al-Shabaab.

Do we really want to slash the State Department and the U.S.A.I.D. at such a perilous moment? The American answer has always been no. Yet this budget proposal has forced us to ask what America's role in the world is and what kind of nation we seek to be. The president's budget director, Mick Mulvaney, has described

these cuts as "not a reflection of the president's policies regarding an attitude toward State." But how is a 32 percent cut to our civilian programs overseas anything but a clear expression of policy?

True, many in Congress have effectively declared the administration's budget proposal "dead on arrival," but they also acknowledge that it will set the tone for the coming budget debate. That's the wrong conversation. Our diplomacy and development budget is not just about reducing spending and finding efficiencies. We need a frank conversation about what we stand for as that "shining city on a hill." And that conversation begins by acknowledging that we can't do it on the cheap.

Diplomacy and aid aren't the only self-defeating cuts in the administration's proposal. A call to all but eliminate two key export-promotion agencies — the Overseas Private Investment Corporation and the Trade and Development Agency — would harm thousands of American workers and actually add to the deficit. And any cuts to our economic development investments in Africa and elsewhere would undermine our ability to build new customer bases in the world's fastest-growing markets.

With 95 percent of the world's consumers outside our borders, it's not "America first" to surrender the field to an ambitious China rapidly expanding its influence, building highways and railroads across Africa and Asia. China is far from slashing its development budget. Instead, it's growing — by more than 780 percent in Africa alone since 2003.

Since the release of its initial budget request in March, the administration has started to demonstrate a more strategic foreign policy approach. This is welcome, but it will take far more than a strike against Syria, a harder line on Russia, increased pressure on North Korea and deeper engagement with China to steer American foreign policy. It also takes the resources to underwrite it.

America is great when we're the country that the world admires, a beacon of hope and a principled people who are generous, fair and caring. That's the American way. If we're still that nation, then we must continue to devote this small but strategic 1 percent of our federal budget to this mission.

Throughout my career, I learned plenty about war on the battlefield, but I learned even more about the importance of finding peace. And that is what the State Department and U.S.A.I.D. do: prevent the wars that we can avoid, so that we fight only the ones we must. For our service members and citizens, it's an investment we must make.

Colin Powell was the secretary of state from 2001 to 2005.

A version of this op-ed appears in print on May 26, 2017, on Page A27 of the New York edition with the headline: Leadership Isn't Free.

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**Statement of CARE USA**
**Submitted to the House Committee on Foreign Affairs**
**Hearing on "The FY 2018 Foreign Affairs Budget"**
**June 14, 2017**

We thank the Committee for the opportunity to provide the views of CARE USA regarding the Administration's fiscal year 2018 (FY18) budget proposal and ask that this statement be included as part of the official record. With more than 71 years of experience in providing emergency humanitarian assistance and long-term development assistance in over 94 countries around the world, CARE has serious concerns that the Administration budget proposal would inflict long term damage on our national security and global development needs. This budget will jeopardize millions of lives, and reverse decades of efforts to bring sustainable development, opportunity, health and dignity to people around the world. In short, this proposed budget would inflict human and political costs that far outweigh any potential budget savings.

In many countries around the world, the relief, hope and skills brought by U.S. humanitarian and development programs are often the only direct knowledge people have of the United States. These programs create a more stable world by providing assistance, opportunity and tangible improvement to people's lives. Stepping back from this leadership role would not just impact the lives of millions, it would mark the end of the American era – the point where the United States decisively turned its back on those most vulnerable, allowing the exploitation of human needs to go unchecked.

While the U.S. faces its own economic challenges, shifting less than 1% of the federal budget from these programs will not solve America's deficit concerns. Instead, such cuts would take away from core national security investments and preventative interventions in order to seek political gain at the expense of the world's most vulnerable people.

Therefore, CARE urges this Committee to use its constitutional authority to protect the International Affairs account, oppose any disproportionate cuts to international humanitarian and development programs, fully exercise its oversight authorities, and preserve critical expertise within the U.S. Government.

**Our Current Challenges**

Our global political system is currently facing the largest humanitarian needs we have known in modern human history, with 65 million people living in displacement, and over 30

million facing deadly famine conditions. Unfortunately, these numbers continue to grow every day. Conflict, extreme weather, pandemics, and natural disasters continue to impact millions.

Despite these growing challenges, and political suggestions to the contrary, U.S. foreign assistance programs are working:

- In many areas where the U.S. Agency for International Development (USAID) is implementing agricultural development and food security programming, extreme poverty has dropped between 7 and 36 percent, child stunting has dropped between 6 and 40 percent, and more than 10 million smallholder farmers are now able to apply new technologies and management practices.[1]
- Partners currently supported by OPIC are sustaining livelihoods for nearly 1 million smallholder farmers, allowing them to grow themselves out of poverty and creating future markets for trade.[2]
- In 10 years, U.S. malaria programing has saved 6 million lives, many of them children.[3] Over the last eight years, 4.6 million children have been saved from dying of preventable diseases because of U.S. assistance.[4]
- In FY2016, U.S. investments in family planning and reproductive health provided 26 million women and couples with the tools they need to time and plan their pregnancies, prevented 8 million unintended pregnancies, and averted 3.3 million abortions.[5]

Globally, recent estimates show that 10.7 percent of the world's population lives on less than US $1.90 a day, down from 12.4 percent in 2012 and 35 percent in 1990.[6] This progress shows that the fight against global poverty is winnable if there is sufficient political will.

While many, including some within the current Administration, continue to promote a disingenuous narrative that U.S. foreign aid is inefficient, ineffective, and of inferior quality, the evidence points towards U.S. development programs as a leading standard in the international community. In particular, USAID has led the way towards more nimble, efficient, transparent, and effective systems of addressing global poverty and its challenges. Recent changes within USAID have resulted in huge gains towards evidence-based approaches that seek to distill best practices and achieve sustainable, independent development.[7] In addition, a recent 2017 GAO

[1] Investing in our Shared Future: How a Confident and Capable USAID is Building on a Proud Legacy of U.S. Development Leadership (USAID Exit Memo, Gayle Smith, January 2017)
[2] Exit Memo, Overseas Private Investment Corporation (Elizabeth Littlefield, January 5, 2017)
[3] Investing in our Shared Future: How a Confident and Capable USAID is Building on a Proud Legacy of U.S. Development Leadership (USAID Exit Memo, Gayle Smith, January 2017)
[4] *5000th Baby Born at UNFPA- Supported Clinic for Refugees in Jordan*, March 8, 2016.
[5] *Just the Numbers: The Impact of U.S. International Family Planning Assistance, 2016*. Guttmacher Institute, May 2016.
[6] World Bank, updated October 2016. http://www.worldbank.org/en/topic/poverty/overview
[7] For example, 1,425 evaluations completed by USAID since 2011, and of those completed between 2011 and 2014, 71% were used to support and/or modify a project or activity. Investing in our Shared Future: How a Confident and Capable USAID is Building on a Proud Legacy of U.S. Development Leadership (USAID Exit Memo, Gayle Smith, January 2017).

study found that USAID and the MCC's evaluations far exceeded the quality of those conducted by other foreign assistance agencies.[8]

After all, the role of U.S. assistance is to help communities become self-reliant and self-sustaining, create the conditions where assistance is no longer needed. CARE has long supported this philosophy and we have worked ourselves out of a job in some locations by building the capacity of local organizations and governments to continue programs and address their own needs.

Make no mistake, the challenges the world faces today are immense, and the level of human need in the world is reaching record proportions. Now is the time for the U.S. to lead in the fight against poverty and conflict, not rescind its role or retreat into complacency.

**A Proposal for a Darker Future**

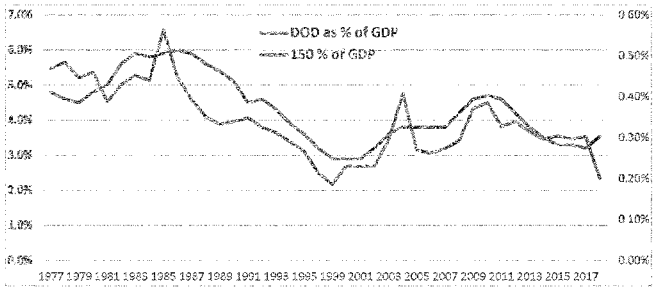
Despite the dire realities that face millions around the world, threatening global stability and our own national security, the Administration's FY18 budget proposal calls for an end of U.S. leadership abroad through the dismantling of life-saving international development and humanitarian programs. The proposed budget does not support a sustainable future and ignores known threats - brewing conflicts, potential crises, and possible disasters or pandemics. Instead, the Administration's proposal actually adds fuel to current global fires, leaving us with a darker future. CARE, along with a number of other implementing and advocacy organizations, have estimated the impacts of these proposed cuts by account (see addendum). The aggregate human cost of these proposed cuts is staggering.

If accepted, the Administration's proposed cuts to this critical one percent of the budget would be historic, making us less safe, not more. This budget marks a dramatic departure in budgeting processes which unifies spending on defense and development. Since 1977, increased funding to the Department of Defense has generally been complemented by increased support for the International Affairs account (figure 1).[9] Past administrations, Republican and Democratic alike, have understood that development and diplomacy are critical parts of our national security strategy. This budget proposal counters our national security goals by threatening our country's ability to safeguard against the desperation and instability often caused by extreme poverty and suffering.

[8] *Agencies Can Improve the Quality and Dissemination of Program Evaluations*, GAO-17-316: Published: Mar 3, 2017. Publicly Released: Mar 3, 2017.

[9] Data obtained through the Office of Management and Budget's historic tables.

**Figure 1: Defense and International Affairs (150 Account) Spending (% of GDP)**
(in 2016 dollars)




The Administration's FY18 budget proposal includes ending effective development programs in numerous countries, eliminating the Development Assistance (DA) account, and significantly reducing life-saving humanitarian assistance – including ending the leading U.S. international food aid program, Title II Food for Peace, which helps protect and grow food security around the world. The Administration specifically proposes a 43 percent cut to International Disaster Assistance (IDA), which saves lives by providing emergency food, water and sanitation in South Sudan, Yemen, Nigeria, and Somalia, where famine is growing, and to displaced persons and refugees everywhere. In addition, the Administration demands that the IDA account become the sole provider of emergency food assistance, without providing any additional funding to offset those impacted by the elimination of Title II Food for Peace programing or lessen the impacts of remaining IDA funds having to also meet non-food needs.

Ending the Development Assistance account, and merging such activities with reduced funding from the Economic Support Fund (ESF), will result in a dangerous reprioritization away from long-term development in favor of short term political gains. The Administration's budget proposal seeks to uproot current strategies that are in mid-progress and stop proven programs that have improved economic conditions around the world. For example, across the 19 current Feed the Future focus counties, the Administration's budget proposal would eliminate all agricultural development activities in 8 countries, and would drastically reduce funding for an additional 9 countries. [10] Abandoning the successful work done in these countries would

[10] Feed the Future countries slated for elimination of agricultural development assistance include: Liberia, Malawi, Mozambique, Rwanda, Senegal, Zambia, Cambodia, and Tajikistan. Feed the Future countries slated for significant

dismantle progress, disregard existing U.S. Government strategies, and jeopardize programs authorized under the recently passed Global Food Security Act (P.L. 114-195).

In addition, the proposed cuts to global health programing would have a severe impact on women around the world – setting back their access to health care, their ability to feed their families, confront and shift the social norms that contribute to gender-based violence, and access opportunities and economic engagement.

**Implications for Women and Girls**

CARE puts women and girls at the heart of development and humanitarian efforts because our decades-long experience in the field has demonstrated that this investment brings about meaningful, sustainable impact. Similarly, U.S. investments in supporting women and girls bring high returns for economic growth, well-being, and democratic governance, which maximize the benefits gained from the investment of United States' taxpayer dollars. If women were able to participate in the economy equally, it would yield a 26 percent increase in global GDP, or $28 trillion in 2025.[11]

Most of the world's women have the role of ensuring that families are fed, often through farming and/or food purchase supported by livelihood activities. By supporting women entrepreneurs, small business owners, and farmers to become more self-reliant, we create a cascading effect beyond the women themselves, helping them lift their families and their communities out of poverty. U.S. assistance opens up opportunities for women and girls to access the education, skills, and economic empowerment they need to be catalysts for broader economic growth in their countries. Healthier economies abroad means stronger economic trade partners for Americans, benefiting us all.

Women and girls also comprise the majority of those displaced by conflict and natural disasters and, in this context, they are highly vulnerable to violence, exploitation, and poor health including malnourishment and reproductive health issues such as maternal death. U.S. Government assistance supports women and girls in emergencies, saves lives and, by being gender smart, can ensure efficient use of much-needed humanitarian aid. In order to be productive members of their communities and economies, however, women must be healthy and safe from violence.

U.S. assistance in preventing violence against women – which affects an estimated 35 percent of women worldwide – has a life-changing impact on the women and girls it serves.[12]

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cuts include: Ethiopia (-24%), Ghana (60%), Kenya (-39%), Mali (-9%), Tanzania (-82%), Uganda (-72%), Bangladesh (-34%), Nepal (-37%), and Guatemala (-29%). As presented in the proposed FY18 budget tables for Operating Unit, Account, Objective, and Program Area. *FY 2018 Congressional Budget Justification - Department of State, Foreign Operations, and Related Programs.*

[11] McKinsey & Company. *The Power of Parity: How Advancing Women's Equality can add $12 Trillion to Global Growth: Executive Summary.* September 2015. Page ii.

[12] World Health Organization. *Global and regional estimates of violence against women: prevalence and health effects of intimate partner violence and non-partner sexual violence.* 2013. Geneva, Switzerland.



Note: All pages of the material submitted for the record by Mr. Cicilline have not been reprinted here but may be found in its entirety on the Internet at http://docs.house.gov/Committee/Calendar/ByEvent.aspx?EventID=106115

MATERIAL SUBMITTED FOR THE RECORD BY THE HONORABLE TULSI GABBARD, A REPRESENTATIVE IN CONGRESS FROM THE STATE OF HAWAII

**Articles to Support Question 1**

## How Kosovo Was Turned Into Fertile Ground for ISIS

https://www.nytimes.com/2016/05/22/world/europe/how-the-saudis-turned-kosovo-into-fertile-ground-for-isis.html

Extremist clerics and secretive associations funded by Saudis and others have transformed a once-tolerant Muslim society into a font of extremism.

By CARLOTTA GALL

MAY 21, 2016, New York Times

PRISTINA, Kosovo — Every Friday, just yards from a statue of Bill Clinton with arm aloft in a cheery wave, hundreds of young bearded men make a show of kneeling to pray on the sidewalk outside an improvised mosque in a former furniture store.

The mosque is one of scores built here with Saudi government money and blamed for spreading Wahhabism — the conservative ideology dominant in Saudi Arabia — in the 17 years since an American-led intervention wrested tiny Kosovo from Serbian oppression.

Since then — much of that time under the watch of American officials — Saudi money and influence have transformed this once-tolerant Muslim society at the hem of Europe into a font of Islamic extremism and a pipeline for jihadists.

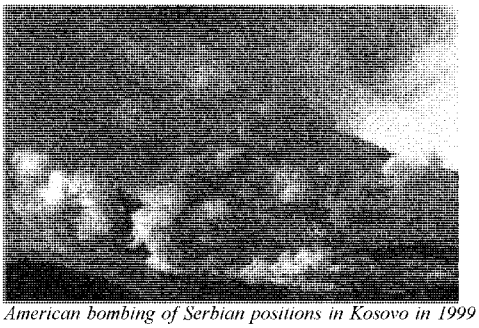
Kosovo now finds itself, like the rest of Europe, fending off the threat of radical Islam. Over the last two years, the police have identified 314 Kosovars — including two suicide bombers, 44 women and 28 children — who have gone abroad to join the Islamic State, the highest number per capita in Europe.

They were radicalized and recruited, Kosovo investigators say, by a corps of extremist clerics and secretive associations funded by Saudi Arabia and other conservative Arab gulf states using an obscure, labyrinthine network of donations from charities, private individuals and government ministries.

"They promoted political Islam," said Fatos Makolli, the director of Kosovo's counterterrorism police. "They spent a lot of money to promote it through different programs mainly with young, vulnerable people, and they brought in a lot of Wahhabi and Salafi literature. They brought these people closer to radical political Islam, which resulted in their radicalization."

After two years of investigations, the police have charged 67 people, arrested 14 imams and shut down 19 Muslim organizations for acting against the Constitution, inciting hatred and recruiting for terrorism. The most recent sentences, which included a 10-year prison term, were handed down on Friday.

It is a stunning turnabout for a land of 1.8 million people that not long ago was among the most pro-American Muslim societies in the world. Americans were welcomed as liberators after leading months of NATO bombing in 1999 that spawned an independent Kosovo.



*American bombing of Serbian positions in Kosovo in 1999 during the air campaign by NATO. Credit Jerome Delay/Associated Press*

After the war, United Nations officials administered the territory and American forces helped keep the peace. The Saudis arrived, too, bringing millions of euros in aid to a poor and war-ravaged land.
But where the Americans saw a chance to create a new democracy, the Saudis saw a new land to spread Wahhabism.

"There is no evidence that any organization gave money directly to people to go to Syria," Mr. Makolli said. "The issue is they supported thinkers who promote violence and jihad in the name of protecting Islam."

Kosovo now has over 800 mosques, 240 of them built since the war and blamed for helping indoctrinate a new generation in Wahhabism. They are part of what moderate imams and officials here describe as a deliberate, long-term strategy by Saudi Arabia to reshape Islam in its image, not only in Kosovo but around the world.

Saudi diplomatic cables released by WikiLeaks in 2015 reveal a system of funding for mosques, Islamic centers and Saudi-trained clerics that spans Asia, Africa and Europe. In New Delhi alone, 140 Muslim preachers are listed as on the Saudi Consulate's payroll.

All around Kosovo, families are grappling with the aftermath of years of proselytizing by Saudi-trained preachers. Some daughters refuse to shake hands with or talk to male relatives. Some sons have gone off to jihad. Religious vigilantes have threatened — or committed — violence against academics, journalists and politicians.

The Balkans, Europe's historical fault line, have yet to heal from the ethnic wars of the 1990s. But they are now infected with a new intolerance, moderate imams and officials in the region warn.
How Kosovo and the very nature of its society was fundamentally recast is a story of a decades-long global ambition by Saudi Arabia to spread its hard-line version of Islam — heavily funded and systematically applied, including with threats and intimidation by followers.



*Idriz Bilalli, an imam in Podujevo, has sought to curb extremists and has received death threats. Credit Andrew Testa for The New York Times*

**The Missionaries Arrive**

After the war ended in 1999, Idriz Bilalli, the imam of the central mosque in Podujevo, welcomed any help he could get.

Podujevo, home to about 90,000 people in northeast Kosovo, was a reasonably prosperous town with high schools and small businesses in an area hugged by farmland and forests. It was known for its strong Muslim tradition even in a land where people long wore their religion lightly.

After decades of Communist rule when Kosovo was part of Yugoslavia, men and women mingle freely, schools are coeducational, and girls rarely wear the veil. Still, Serbian paramilitary forces burned down 218 mosques as part of their war against Kosovo's ethnic Albanians, who are 95 percent Muslim. Mr. Bilalli needed help to rebuild.

When two imams in their 30s, Fadil Musliu and Fadil Sogojeva, who were studying for master's degrees in Saudi Arabia, showed up after the war with money to organize summer religion courses, Mr. Bilalli agreed to help.

The imams were just two of some 200 Kosovars who took advantage of scholarships after the war to study Islam in Saudi Arabia. Many, like them, returned with missionary zeal.
Soon, under Mr. Musliu's tutelage, pupils started adopting a rigid manner of prayer, foreign to the moderate Islamic traditions of this part of Europe. Mr. Bilalli recognized the influence, and he grew concerned.

"This is Wahhabism coming into our society," Mr. Bilalli, 52, said in a recent interview.

Mr. Bilalli trained at the University of Medina in Saudi Arabia in the late 1980s, and as a student he had been warned by a Kosovar professor to guard against the cultural differences of Wahhabism. He understood there was a campaign of proselytizing, pushed by the Saudis.

"The first thing the Wahhabis do is to take members of our congregation, who understand Islam in the traditional Kosovo way that we had for generations, and try to draw them away from this

understanding," he said. "Once they get them away from the traditional congregation, then they start bombarding them with radical thoughts and ideas."

"The main goal of their activity is to create conflict between people," he said. "This first creates division, and then hatred, and then it can come to what happened in Arab countries, where war starts because of these conflicting ideas."

From the outset, the newly arriving clerics sought to overtake the Islamic Community of Kosovo, an organization that for generations has been the custodian of the tolerant form of Islam that was practiced in the region, townspeople and officials say.

Muslims in Kosovo, which was a part of the Ottoman Empire for 500 years, follow the Hanafi school of Islam, traditionally a liberal version that is accepting of other religions.

But all around the country, a new breed of radical preachers was setting up in neighborhood mosques, often newly built with Saudi money.

In some cases, centuries-old buildings were bulldozed, including a historic library in Gjakova and several 400-year-old mosques, as well as shrines, graveyards and Dervish monasteries, all considered idolatrous in Wahhabi teaching.

From their bases, the Saudi-trained imams propagated Wahhabism's tenets: the supremacy of Sharia law as well as ideas of violent jihad and takfirism, which authorizes the killing of Muslims considered heretics for not following its interpretation of Islam.

The Saudi-sponsored charities often paid salaries and overhead costs, and financed courses in religion, as well as English and computer classes, moderate imams and investigators explained.

But the charitable assistance often had conditions attached. Families were given monthly stipends on the condition that they attended sermons in the mosque and that women and girls wore the veil, human rights activists said.

"People were so needy, there was no one who did not join," recalled Ajnishahe Halimi, a politician who campaigned to have a radical Albanian imam expelled after families complained of abuse.

**Threats Intensify**

Within a few years of the war's end, the older generation of traditional clerics began to encounter aggression from young Wahhabis.

Paradoxically, some of the most serious tensions built in Gjilan, an eastern Kosovo town of about 90,000, where up to 7,000 American troops were stationed as part of Kosovo's United Nations-run peacekeeping force at Camp Bondsteel.

"They came in the name of aid," one moderate imam in Gjilan, Enver Rexhepi, said of the Arab charities. "But they came with a background of different intentions, and that's where the Islamic religion started splitting here."

One day in 2004, he recalled, he was threatened by one of the most aggressive young Wahhabis, Zekirja Qazimi, a former madrasa student then in his early 20s.

Inside his mosque, Mr. Rexhepi had long displayed an Albanian flag. Emblazoned with a double-headed eagle, it was a popular symbol of Kosovo's liberation struggle.

But strict Muslim fundamentalists consider the depiction of any living being as idolatrous. Mr. Qazimi tore the flag down. Mr. Rexhepi put it back.

"It will not go long like this," Mr. Qazimi told him angrily, Mr. Rexhepi recounted.

Within days, Mr. Rexhepi was abducted and savagely beaten by masked men in woods above Gjilan. He later accused Mr. Qazimi of having been behind the attack, but police investigations went nowhere.

Ten years later, in 2014, after two young Kosovars blew themselves up in suicide bombings in Iraq and Turkey, investigators began an extensive investigation into the sources of radicalism. Mr. Qazimi was arrested hiding in the same woods. On Friday, a court sentenced him to 10 years in prison after he faced charges of inciting hatred and recruiting for a terrorist organization.

Before Mr. Qazimi was arrested, his influence was profound, under what investigators now say was the sway of Egyptian-based extremists and the patronage of Saudi and other gulf Arab sponsors.
By the mid-2000s, Saudi money and Saudi-trained clerics were already exerting influence over the Islamic Community of Kosovo. The leadership quietly condoned the drift toward conservatism, critics of the organization say.

Mr. Qazimi was appointed first to a village mosque, and then to El-Kuddus mosque on the edge of Gjilan. Few could counter him, not even Mustafa Bajrami, his former teacher, who was elected head of the Islamic Community of Gjilan in 2012.

Mr. Bajrami comes from a prominent religious family — his father was the first chief mufti of Yugoslavia during the Communist period. He holds a doctorate in Islamic studies. Yet he remembers pupils began rebelling against him whenever he spoke against Wahhabism.

He soon realized that the students were being taught beliefs that differed from the traditional moderate curriculum by several radical imams in lectures after hours. He banned the use of mosques after official prayer times.

Hostility only grew. He would notice a dismissive gesture in the congregation during his sermons, or someone would curse his wife, or mutter "apostate" or "infidel" as he passed.

In the village, Mr. Qazimi's influence eventually became so disruptive that residents demanded his removal after he forbade girls and boys to shake hands. But in Gjilan he continued to draw dozens of young people to his after-hours classes.

"They were moving 100 percent according to lessons they were taking from Zekirja Qazimi," Mr. Bajrami said in an interview. "One hundred percent, in an ideological way."

**Extremism Spreads**
Over time, the Saudi-trained imams expanded their work.

By 2004, Mr. Musliu, one of the master's degree students from Podujevo who studied in Saudi Arabia, had graduated and was imam of a mosque in the capital, Pristina.

In Podujevo, he set up a local charitable organization called Devotshmeria, or Devotion, which taught religion classes and offered social programs for women, orphans and the poor. It was funded by Al Waqf al Islami, a Saudi organization that was one of the 19 eventually closed by investigators.

**Secrets of the Kingdom**
Articles in this series examine the society, politics, religion and global influence of Saudi Arabia, one of the world's most secretive countries.

Mr. Musliu put a cousin, Jetmir Rrahmani, in charge.

"Then I knew something was starting that would not bring any good," said Mr. Bilalli, the moderate cleric who had started out teaching with him. In 2004, they had a core of 20 Wahhabis.

"That was only the beginning," Mr. Bilalli said. "They started multiplying."

Mr. Bilalli began a vigorous campaign against the spread of unauthorized mosques and Wahhabi teaching. In 2008, he was elected head of the Islamic Community of Podujevo and instituted religion classes for women, in an effort to undercut Devotshmeria.

As he sought to curb the extremists, Mr. Bilalli received death threats, including a note left in the mosque's alms box. An anonymous telephone caller vowed to make him and his family disappear, he said.

"Anyone who opposes them, they see as an enemy," Mr. Bilalli said.

He appealed to the leadership of the Islamic Community of Kosovo. But by then it was heavily influenced by Arab gulf sponsors, he said, and he received little support.

When Mr. Bilalli formed a union of fellow moderates, the Islamic Community of Kosovo removed him from his post. His successor, Bekim Jashari, equally concerned by the Saudi influence, nevertheless kept up the fight.

"I spent 10 years in Arab countries and specialized in sectarianism within Islam," Mr. Jashari said. "It's very important to stop Arab sectarianism from being introduced to Kosovo."

Mr. Jashari had a couple of brief successes. He blocked the Saudi-trained imam Mr. Sogojeva from opening a new mosque, and stopped a payment of 20,000 euros, about $22,400, intended for it from the Saudi charity Al Waqf al Islami.

He also began a website, Speak Now, to counter Wahhabi teaching. But he remains so concerned about Wahhabi preachers that he never lets his 19-year-old son attend prayers on his own.

The radical imams Mr. Musliu and Mr. Sogojeva still preach in Pristina, where for prayers they draw crowds of young men who glare at foreign reporters.

Mr. Sogojeva dresses in a traditional robe and banded cleric's hat, but his newly built mosque is an incongruous modern multistory building. He admonished his congregation with a rapid-fire list of dos and don'ts in a recent Friday sermon.

Neither imam seems to lack funds.

In an interview, Mr. Musliu insisted that he was financed by local donations, but confirmed that he had received Saudi funding for his early religion courses.

The instruction, he said, is not out of line with Kosovo's traditions. The increase in religiosity among young people was natural after Kosovo gained its freedom, he said.

"Those who are not believers and do not read enough, they feel a bit shocked," he said. "But we coordinated with other imams, and everything was in line with Islam."

**A Tilt Toward Terrorism**

The influence of the radical clerics reached its apex with the war in Syria, as they extolled the virtues of jihad and used speeches and radio and television talks shows to urge young people to go there.
Mr. Qazimi, who was given the 10-year prison sentence, even organized a summer camp for his young followers.

"It is obligated for every Muslim to participate in jihad," he told them in one videotaped talk. "The Prophet Muhammad says that if someone has a chance to take part in jihad and doesn't, he will die with great sins."

"The blood of infidels is the best drink for us Muslims," he said in another recording.

Among his recruits, investigators say, were three former civilian employees of American contracting companies at Camp Bondsteel, where American troops are stationed. They included Lavdrim Muhaxheri, an Islamic State leader who was filmed executing a man in Syria with a rocket-propelled grenade.

After the suicide bombings, the authorities opened a broad investigation and found that the Saudi charity Al Waqf al Islami had been supporting associations set up by preachers like Mr. Qazimi in almost every regional town.

Al Waqf al Islami was established in the Balkans in 1989. Most of its financing came from Saudi Arabia, Qatar, Kuwait and Bahrain, Kosovo investigators said in recent interviews. Unexplained gaps in its ledgers deepened suspicions that the group was surreptitiously funding clerics who were radicalizing young people, they said.

Investigators from Kosovo's Financial Intelligence Unit found that Al Waqf al Islami, which had an office in central Pristina and a staff of 12, ran through €10 million from 2000 through 2012. Yet they found little paperwork to explain much of the spending.

More than €1 million went to mosque building. But one and a half times that amount was disbursed in unspecified cash withdrawals, which may have also gone to enriching its staff, the investigators said. Only 7 percent of the budget was shown to have gone to caring for orphans, the charity's stated mission. By the summer of 2014, the Kosovo police shut down Al Waqf al Islami, along with 12 other Islamic charities, and arrested 40 people.

The charity's head offices, in Saudi Arabia and the Netherlands, have since changed their name to Al Waqf, apparently separating themselves from the Balkans operation.

Asked about the accusations in a telephone interview, Nasr el Damanhoury, the director of Al Waqf in the Netherlands, said he had no direct knowledge of his group's operations in Kosovo or the Balkans. The charity has ceased all work outside the Netherlands since he took over in 2013, he said. His predecessor had returned to Morocco and could not be reached, and Saudi board members would not comment, he said.

"Our organization has never supported extremism," Mr. Damanhoury said. "I have known it since 1989. I joined them three years ago. They have always been a mild group."



*Kosovars celebrating the independence of Kosovo from Serbia in 2008. Credit Bela Szandelszky/Associated Press*

**Unheeded Warnings**

Why the Kosovar authorities — and American and United Nations overseers — did not act sooner to forestall the spread of extremism is a question being intensely debated.

As early as 2004, the prime minister at the time, Bajram Rexhepi, tried to introduce a law to ban extremist sects. But, he said in a recent interview at his home in northern Kosovo, European officials told him that it would violate freedom of religion.

"It was not in their interest, they did not want to irritate some Islamic countries," Mr. Rexhepi said. "They simply did not do anything."

Not everyone was unaware of the dangers, however.

At a meeting in 2003, Richard C. Holbrooke, once the United States special envoy to the Balkans, warned Kosovar leaders not to work with the Saudi Joint Relief Committee for Kosovo, an umbrella organization of Saudi charities whose name still appears on many of the mosques built since the war, along with that of the former Saudi interior minister, Prince Naif bin Abdul-Aziz.

A year later, it was among several Saudi organizations that were shut down in Kosovo when it came under suspicion as a front for Al Qaeda. Another was Al-Haramain, which in 2004 was designated by the United States Treasury Department as having links to terrorism.

Yet even as some organizations were shut down, others kept working. Staff and equipment from Al-Haramain shifted to Al Waqf al Islami, moderate imams familiar with their activities said.
In recent years, Saudi Arabia appears to have reduced its aid to Kosovo. Kosovo Central Bank figures show grants from Saudi Arabia averaging €100,000 a year for the past five years.

It is now money from Kuwait, Qatar and the United Arab Emirates — which each average approximately €1 million a year — that propagates the same hard-line version of Islam. The payments come from foundations or individuals, or sometimes from the Ministry of Zakat (Almsgiving) from the various governments, Kosovo's investigators say.

But payments are often diverted through a second country to obscure their origin and destination, they said. One transfer of nearly €500,000 from a Saudi individual was frozen in 2014 since it was intended for a Kosovo teenager, according to the investigators and a State Department report.

Al Qaeda and other terrorist organizations were still raising millions from "deep-pocket donors and charitable organizations" based in the gulf, the Treasury under secretary for terrorism and financial intelligence, David S. Cohen, said in a speech in 2014 at the Center for a New American Security.
While Saudi Arabia has made progress in stamping out funding for Al Qaeda, sympathetic donors in the kingdom were still funding other terrorist groups, he said.

Today the Islamic Community of Kosovo has been so influenced by the largess of Arab donors that it has seeded prominent positions with radical clerics, its critics say.

Ahmet Sadriu, a spokesman for Islamic Community of Kosovo, said the group held to Kosovo's traditionally tolerant version of Islam. But calls are growing to overhaul an organization now seen as having been corrupted by outside forces and money.

Kosovo's interior minister, Skender Hyseni, said he had recently reprimanded some of the senior religious officials.

"I told them they were doing a great disservice to their country," he said in an interview. "Kosovo is by definition, by Constitution, a secular society. There has always been historically an unspoken interreligious tolerance among Albanians here, and we want to make sure that we keep it that way."

Note: All pages of the material submitted for the record by Ms. Gabbard have not been reprinted here but may be found in its entirety on the Internet at http://docs.house.gov/Committee/Calendar/ByEvent.aspx?EventID=106115

MATERIAL SUBMITTED FOR THE RECORD BY THE HONORABLE ROBIN L. KELLY, A REPRESENTATIVE IN CONGRESS FROM THE STATE OF ILLINOIS

# Politico: Why foreign aid is critical to U.S. national security

By ADM. MIKE MULLEN (RET.) and GEN. JAMES JONES (RET.)
06/12/2017 05:41 AM EDT

In our active duty days, we were honored to help lead the finest fighting force in the world and we strongly support an increase in military spending to maintain the readiness of those forces. But our experiences also taught us that not all foreign crises are solved on the battlefield; in the 21st century, weapons and war fighters alone are insufficient to keep America secure.

That's why we support a robust development budget to advance our national security objectives — and we are not alone in this belief. This week, we will join 14 other experienced former four-star generals and admirals in submitting testimony to Congress that military power alone cannot prevent radicalization, nor can it, by itself, prevent despair from turning to anger and increasing outbursts of violence and instability. Over the past 15 years, our national experience in Afghanistan, Iraq, in the Middle East, and now in Africa has shown clearly that development aid is critical to America's national security.

Unfortunately, the administration's budget would cut 32 percent from the budgets of the U.S. Agency for International Development and the State Department — including a cut of nearly half to development assistance. This is exactly the wrong decision at a time when development efforts in the world's poorest and most fragile countries are needed more than ever. In turn, these severe cuts to USAID would only increase the risk to Americans and to our brave military service members. Congress should reject this dangerous path.

Strategic development assistance is not charity; it is an essential, modern tool of U.S. national security. Foreign assistance should be respected — and budgeted — as an investment in the enhancement of stability in the world's most vulnerable places, not as a no-strings-attached giveaway to poorer nations.

American security is advanced by the development of stable nations that are making progress on social development, economic growth and good governance; by countries that enforce the rule of law and invest in the health and education of their own people. In short, America's interests are served by nations that give their people hope for a more prosperous and safe future.

Conversely, American security is undermined by frail and failing nations where hope is nonexistent, and where conditions foster radicalism, produce refugees, spark insurgency, and provide safe havens for terrorists, criminal gangs, and human traffickers with global reach.

Fighting extremist groups after they emerge as well-trained and well-funded entities is costlier in lives and money than efforts to prevent such groups from forming in the first place. Research suggests that investing in prevention is, on average, 60 times less costly than war and post-conflict reconstruction costs. It is also more difficult. To prevent the expansion of terrorist groups, states must deprive them of ungoverned territory and the oxygen on which they flourish—the belief that the terrorists' radical agenda can provide purpose and meaning to the lives of their recruits. That can be a challenge for Western nations, much less for developing ones with weak governance structures.

A host of international terrorist groups — Al Qaeda, Al Shabaab, Boko Haram and ISIS, among others — have taken root in highly fragile regions and countries with shared characteristics, such as corruption and poor governance, weak institutions, high poverty and inequality, widespread indignity, and low quality of life for ordinary citizens. Local populations frustrated with poor governance and lacking meaningful opportunities to improve their lives or provide for their families are prone to tolerate, if not actively support, extremist groups that challenge government authority or assume the government's role as social-service provider. To combat these groups and prevent such areas from serving as fertile recruiting grounds, training areas and transit routes for violent extremists, the United States and its allies should become much more proactive in helping address underlying conditions that, left unchecked, invite and foment instability.

Congress can, and should, make America safer with a robust and strategic Phase Zero initiative that engages the U.S. government, nongovernmental organizations and the private sector to synergistically prevent conflict and promote security, development, and governance rooted in the rule of law. Such an initiative — accompanied by other targeted reforms to our foreign assistance programs — would fill a dangerous vacuum that military intervention alone simply cannot address. Proactive conflict-prevention strategies are far less expensive in terms of resources and lives expended than reactive use of our Armed Forces.

Development experts under the auspices of USAID, State Department, the Millennium Challenge Corporation, and other federal agencies must be fully committed to a coherent whole-of-government stability-enhancement strategy that will protect America's interests in the modern security environment while minimizing the exposure of our young men and women to harm's way.

The faithful service, courage and sacrifice of our service members deserves and demands that we address and develop the strongest possible strategy for conflict-prevention that our nation can muster. Cutting the International Affairs budget will hurt our country's ability to stop new conflicts from forming, and will place our interests, values and the lives of our men and women in uniform at risk. Congress should reject the administration's proposed cuts and instead fully fund the international affairs budget. Our military is counting on it.

Admiral (Ret.) Michael Mullen served as chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff from 2007 to 2011. General (Ret.) James Jones was commandant of the Marine Corps and served as Supreme Allied Commander-Europe from 2003 to 2006.

**Statement for the Record**
***Submitted by Mr. Connolly of Virginia***

President Trump's FY 2018 international affairs budget represents a unilateral retreat from U.S. global leadership. The Trump Administration has withdrawn from the Trans-Pacific Partnership, balked at our sacred Article 5 commitment to our NATO allies, pulled out of the Paris Climate Accord, and President Trump's budget proposal for FY 2018 decimates U.S. diplomatic missions and foreign assistance abroad. Budgets are value statements, and this budget says, "This Administration doesn't value U.S. global leadership."

Secretary Tillerson's assertion that U.S. foreign policy should sometimes be separate from American values would make our nation's founding fathers roll over in their graves. Our policies must flow from our ideals, and that starts with the budget. U.S. leadership in the world is essential. The hard truth is that when the United States does not act as a forceful advocate for our principles and our interests abroad, we leave a vacuum. When U.S. leadership retreats, adversaries who do not share our interests and values fill that vacuum and endanger U.S. security.

Unprecedented threats to global stability require dedicated, unambiguous American leadership. Russian troops have illegally occupied Crimea and parts of Georgia, and fighting continues in eastern Ukraine. Yet, the President's budget cuts funding to counter Russian aggression by 59 percent. Putin is undermining democratic elections in NATO countries, including our own, but this administration has turned a blind eye to such interference. President Trump has demonstrated more interest in validating false claims of fraudulent voting than combatting a threat certified by 17 U.S. intelligence agencies.

There are 65 million displaced people around the world – the highest since U.N. records began. Thirty million people are at risk of famine in Somalia, Nigeria, Yemen, and South Sudan. The United Nations has called this the largest humanitarian crisis since 1945. Yet, the Administration wants to cut international disaster assistance by 34 percent and eliminate the McGovern-Dole Food for Education Program, which assists more than 40 million impoverished and hungry children every year. At a time when global humanitarian needs are higher than ever, the President has proposed a 32 percent cut to U.S. diplomacy and development programs – our first line of defense. If enacted, this funding level, as a percentage of GDP, would be the **lowest** since World War II.

Earlier this year, I visited Sri Lanka with the House Democracy Partnership (HDP). The oldest democracy in Asia, Sri Lanka is emerging from decades of civil war and undertaking significant political and economic reforms that will benefit its own people and U.S. interests. Our assistance also helps ensure maritime security and freedom of navigation for this strategically located island amid the major sea lanes of the Indo-Asia-Pacific. In Sri Lanka, the creeping influence of Beijing is palpable. Everywhere you look, the Chinese have built a major highway, an airport, a stadium, and in the fishing town of Hambantota, a deep-sea port. Trump's budget would gut U.S. assistance to

Sri Lanka by 92 percent. We need to remember that when the U.S. walks away from our global investments, China is already knocking on the door.

Beyond funding, President Trump has declined to invest in the human resources necessary to carry out the State Department's mission. Secretary Tillerson and Deputy Secretary John Sullivan are the only officials confirmed by the Senate – no undersecretaries or assistant secretaries have even been nominated. President Trump has appointed only 11 out of nearly 190 ambassadors, and his incoherent foreign policies have already driven the chargés d'affaires to resign in Beijing and Doha. For the remaining diplomatic corps, the President's budget would recklessly endanger U.S. diplomatic facilities with a 62 percent cut to the Embassy Security, Construction and Maintenance (ESCM) account. My office has been working with the State Department to address and close 19 outstanding recommendations on diplomatic security made by the Government Accountability Office. Such a devastating cut would grind these necessary improvements to a halt, risking American lives and investments in the process.

This Administration has heard from countless voices in support of a robust international affairs budget. Every Democrat on this Committee, and more than 100 members in total, sent a letter urging Secretary Tillerson to prevent these draconian cuts. And it is not just Democrats. Former Secretary of State General Colin Powell said the proposed budget "signals an American retreat, leaving a vacuum that would make us far less safe and prosperous." And it is not just politicians. More than 120 retired three and four-star generals, 225 business leaders, and more than 100 faith leaders have each rejected the evisceration of the State Department budget. And it is not just civilian and military leadership. The American people support a strong diplomatic presence because they know it keeps us safe – a February 2017 Gallup poll found that 72 percent of Americans support the U.S. playing a leading or major role in global affairs.

Since World War II, we have been and we remain the essential nation. From John Winthrop to John F. Kennedy to Ronald Reagan, our leaders have envisioned America as that shining city on the hill. American values are rooted in respect for human rights, personal autonomy, and individual freedoms. We are a place that people look to for succor and a beacon of hope even in the darkest corners of the world.

You do not make America great again by withdrawing from the world. The Trump Administration is undermining U.S. leadership and endangering American security by slashing resources, failing to nominate senior diplomats, fumbling strategy, perpetuating conflicts of interest, and squandering influence. I look forward to hearing from Secretary Tillerson how this global retreat "Makes America Great Again."

Statement for the Record
Congressman Adriano Espaillat
June 14, 2017

Secretary Tillerson, welcome to our committee.

As the first and only Dominican American in Congress, it's incumbent upon me to highlight the importance of strengthening our relationship with Latin America and the Caribbean. The Caribbean, in particular, is one of our most important trading partners and in 2016 they imported $20 billion worth of American goods and services.

Yet, for your FY 2018 request, Mr. Secretary, you are proposing a ***36% decrease in foreign assistance***!

To put that into perspective, we're talking about a mere $57.7 million to $36.2 million for the ***14 Caribbean nations in our own neighborhood.*** For far too long many have considered that our nation has placed its emphasis and focus away from our neighbors—Latin America and the Caribbean. For the Dominican Republic, we're talking about a proposed ***51% cut for FY 18 for a total of only $10.5 million.*** That same budget requests **$639 billion** for the Department of Defense.

These countries of the Caribbean are important not only because of their proximity, but because of their role in helping to curb and control drug trafficking, human trafficking, and drug smuggling to the U.S.

These cuts are dangerous for our national security. Instead this is a proposal to suspend substantial funding in order to build a wall.

- *A wall will not stop refugees from fleeing for their lives.*
- *A wall will not stop drug trafficking or human trafficking.*
- *A wall will not stop the American spirit that stands with immigrants.*
- *A wall will not keep us safe.*

*And neither will these draconian cuts to the State Department budget.*

I urge you, Secretary Tillerson, ***we can do better***. As global leaders, it's on U.S. shoulders to be a leader on democracy, transparency, and ethics.

Earlier this Congress, I introduced legislation, H.R. 2494, which would amend the Ethics in Government Act of 1978 to require the President to place any financial conflicts of interest into a ***genuine*** blind trust.

President Trump has too many unanswered questions about potential constitutional and conflict-of-interest problems posed by his far-reaching business holdings.

We think the President of the United States' reputation should be beyond reproach and I hope you agree.

Questions for the Record Submitted to
Secretary of State Rex Tillerson by
Representative Edward Royce
House Committee on Foreign Affairs
June 14, 2017

**Question 1:**
The Taiwan Relations Act commits the U.S. to provide defense articles and services to Taiwan in support of its own self-defense. The last time Congress was notified of major arms sales to Taiwan was in December 2015. Does this Administration plan to notify Congress of major arms sale articles to Taiwan this year? If not, are we sending mixed signals to Taiwan that undermines our messages of urging Taiwan to urgently upgrade its defenses and increase its defense spending?

**Answer:**
On June 29, the Administration formally notified Congress of seven proposed defense sales for Taiwan cumulatively valued at $1.42 billion. These notifications are consistent with the Taiwan Relations Act and our support for Taiwan's ability to maintain a sufficient self-defense capability. We remain committed to our One China Policy, based on the Three Joint Communiques and the Taiwan Relations Act. U.S. defense sales to Taiwan are guided by the Taiwan Relations Act and based on an assessment of Taiwan's defense needs. Our longstanding policy on defense sales to Taiwan has been consistent across seven different U.S. administrations. We believe our consistent policy has contributed to the security of Taiwan and also supported the maintenance of peace and stability across the Taiwan Strait.

Questions for the Record Submitted to
Secretary of State Tillerson by
Representative Engel
House Foreign Affairs Committee
June 14, 2017

**Question:**
The tragic September 2012 attack on our diplomatic mission in Benghazi, Libya was a centerpiece of President Trump's campaign and one which he frequently spoke about, often with little regard for the actual facts. House Republicans spent millions of taxpayer dollars on a Select Committee that found nothing beyond what several previous investigations already had established. Yet, the White House has not yet nominated an Assistant Secretary for Diplomatic Security and has proposed cutting funding that would keep our diplomats safe. This includes a 62 percent cut to the Embassy Security, Construction and Maintenance account and a 19 percent cut to the Worldwide Security Protection account. I understand that certain embassy security upgrades that the State Department has long planned for may not be possible if the President's FY 18 budget request is enacted. If the President's FY 18 budget request is enacted, what specifically will State be unable to fund that it previously planned to fund through the Embassy Security, Construction and Maintenance and Worldwide Security Protection accounts?

**Answer:**
The FY 2018 Request provides $2.2 billion in total for the Capital Security Cost Sharing (CSCS) and Maintenance Cost Sharing (MCS) program, combining $337.7 million in new Embassy Security Construction & Maintenance (ESCM) funding, other agency contributions, consular fees retained by the State Department, and resources provided for ESCM in the FY 2017 Security Assistance Appropriations Act (SAAA). The FY 2018 budget request includes language that would clarify that the Department's FY 2018 CSCS-MCS contribution would include ESCM appropriations provided under the SAAA. If ESCM appropriations provided under the SAAA are not utilized for the Department's FY 2018 CSCS-MCS contribution, the Department would need to identify other available funds to support the FY 2018 CSCS-MCS program at the $2.2 billion level.

The FY 2018 Request provides $3.8 billion for Worldwide Security Protection, which fully funds the Bureau of Diplomatic Security and other related security programs.

**Question:**
Will arguments over whether the U.S. assessment rate is three points too high risk obscuring the bigger picture in terms of how much of a relatively low-cost investment peacekeeping is for American taxpayers?

**Answer:**
The President's request sets forth the goal of reducing the U.S. peacekeeping assessment rate to no more than 25 percent. By seeking to reduce the assessment rate, the Department is pursuing the objective of ensuring a more equitable distribution of financial responsibility for UN peacekeeping operations among UN member states.

This objective is consistent with current law. Section 404(b)(2) of the Foreign Relations Authorization Act, Fiscal Years 1994 and 1995 ("1994-1995 Authorization Act"), limits the amount of appropriated funds that can be used for payment of U.S. assessed contributions to a UN peacekeeping operation to 25 percent of the total of all assessed contributions for that peacekeeping operation. Unlike previous years, when Congress raised the 25 percent cap through annual appropriations acts, Congress has not increased the 25 percent cap for fiscal year 2017. As long as the actual U.S. assessment rate exceeds 25 percent, the cap limits the ability of the Department to use appropriated funds to pay the entire amount of U.S. peacekeeping assessments, and the United States will go into arrears as a result.

I believe UN peacekeeping activities are a good investment of taxpayer dollars. UN peacekeeping missions represent a global commitment of resources to address threats to peace and security in troubled regions of the world. We have a responsibility to make that commitment as efficient and as effective as possible and we are working to do so.

**Question:**
There are currently 20 million people in four countries (South Sudan, Nigeria, Somalia, and Yemen) facing famine and a historic number – 65 million – of displaced people around the world, the largest number since World War II. Not only is this a major humanitarian crisis, but it also has a major impact on our national security. If we do not support refugees around the world in the short term, the United States and our allies will be forced to provide far more resources in the long run.

With the Administration's proposed cuts to International Disaster Assistance (34 percent) and Migration and Refugee Assistance (10 percent), how can the United States respond to these humanitarian crises as a leader in the international community? What will we be unable to respond to with these cuts?

**Answer**:
The United States is committed to doing our fair share to respond to humanitarian crises and providing lifesaving assistance to those who need it most. With our FY 2018 budget request, we will remain a leading contributor of humanitarian assistance. This request would focus funding on the highest priority areas while asking our international partners to step up their efforts and contribute more.

The proposed percentage of humanitarian funding requested as part of the FY 2018 State/USAID foreign assistance budget remains the same as in FY 2016, roughly 22 percent, and the relative priority of these interventions has not diminished.

Both development and humanitarian assistance are necessary to help prevent and mitigate humanitarian crises. The Administration's goal for FY 2018 is to balance humanitarian and development interventions to help prevent the next humanitarian crisis.

Humanitarian funding decisions are based on need, as assessed by international and non-government organizations, USG field teams, assessments, and in close coordination with local governments and our implementing partners. The Department and USAID continually work to support populations with the greatest humanitarian need, and to assess whether implementing partners have the operational capacity and access to the people in need.

**Question:**
How will the reduction in budget and personnel affect the Department's diversity and inclusion efforts at the recruitment - entry level and retention mid-level and senior level and advancement?

**Answer:**
The recruitment budget for FY17 has not been affected. We will reassess our recruitment programs in light of the FY18 budget when announced.

The Department will work to ensure that any reduction in budget and personnel does not negatively affect the Department's diversity, inclusion and retention efforts.

**Question:**
How are you coordinating with the Defense Department and the White House to develop a comprehensive national security strategy that effectively utilizes both our military and civilian tools?

**Answer:**
Defense, diplomacy, and development provide the full spectrum of military and civilian tools as critical components of a comprehensive national security strategy. Combining these key elements of statecraft in the right way and at the right time ensures the protection of the United States' core national security interests. The utilization of both military and civilian capabilities as complementary elements of national power requires that they be applied accordingly to match the context of the day based on the worldview and security framework established in a national security strategy. The Department of State, Department of Defense, USAID, and the other national security agencies are collectively working through the established interagency process to deliver a balanced and flexible national security strategy—one that balances the application of defense, diplomacy, and development in the most logical and prudent way to achieve our foreign policy and national security objectives. Additionally, the Department of State and USAID as well as the Department of Defense are in the process of developing their respective agency-level strategic plans. The development process includes interagency collaboration and engagement at the highest organizational levels to ensure alignment across their respective agency plans as well as with the broader objectives of our national security strategy.

**Question:**
Do you see a need for State Department to reassert its role in areas where other government agencies, including but not limited to the Department of Defense, have increasingly duplicated aspects of the State Department mandate in recent years?

**Answer:**
The State Department is continually working to ensure that the execution of our role in national security and foreign affairs is both efficient and effective to achieve our mission and mandate. This effort includes working closely with our interagency partners on national security and foreign policy issues to ensure we are limiting any duplication of efforts in our operational mandates and supporting processes around the world. As the lead foreign affairs agency, the State Department will continue to lead and assert its role in areas pertaining to foreign affairs, and will also continue to engage and collaborate accordingly with our interagency partners to

maximize our collective efforts to advance and protect the interests of our country and its citizens.

**Question:**
In your testimony, you discussed the degree of confusion that exists around the State Department "mission." What do you see as the mission of the Department?

**Answer:**
The mission of the State Department is to lead America's foreign policy and create conditions for a better, more secure, more prosperous United States. We are working on behalf of the American people to carry out the President's foreign policies.

The Department is currently undertaking a redesign project, which is an employee-led initiative jointly conducted by State and USAID to examine how we can structure our processes, workforce, and technology to better achieve our mission, from which the vision for the future will emerge. In July, we convened a group of key leaders from State and USAID – across Civil and Foreign Services and from a diverse range of bureaus – to articulate core tenets for each organization: Purpose, Mission, and Ambition. We are currently asking for employee feedback on these draft statements, which will help guide and inspire the redesign, and set clear context and decisions on our direction.

**Question:**
What impact will not having fully staffed consular sections have on revenue generation for the Department and on timelines for visa issuance?

**Answer:**
The first responsibility of government is the security of its own citizens, and we will orient our diplomatic efforts toward fulfilling that commitment. The provision of consular services is one of the Department's highest priorities, a national security imperative, and a powerful driver of the U.S. trade and tourism sectors, and it will remain so as we examine possibilities to reorganize the State Department.

Predating the current hiring freeze, the CA and the Bureau of Human Resources (HR) anticipated that the demand for consular services would outpace the hiring of Entry-Level Officers. To address this deficit, the Department developed a range of hiring programs to diversify the pool of candidates available for assignment to entry-level consular positions, including Appointment Eligible Family Member Consular Adjudicators (CA-AEFMs), Civil Service Adjudicators, members of the Consular Fellows Program (CFP), and Register Candidate Consular Fellows. The CFP targets candidates with existing language skills in Arabic, Mandarin Chinese, Portuguese, Russian, and Spanish. These alternative hiring programs are funded by consular fees. The White House recognized the importance of the CFP in Executive Order 13780, which directed that "the Secretary of State shall immediately expand the Consular Fellows Program, including by substantially increasing the number of Fellows." The Department will hire up to 98 Consular Fellows in August 2017, the largest ever such class. To satisfy urgent staffing gaps, we prioritize and deploy Temporary Duty (TDY) staff. CA's TDY program has grown dramatically in the past two years; in FY2015, our personnel completed 684 TDY assignments, more than a 156 percent increase from the previous year. In FY2016, our personnel completed 675 TDY assignments.

**Question:**
How many hiring waivers have you issued? For which posts? DGHR

Of the hiring waivers you issued, how many were for Employed Family Members? For which posts?

**Answer**

We are still compiling the data, but expect that approximately 1,466 hiring freeze exemptions will be approved by August 10. These include Civil Service, Foreign Service, Consular Fellows, Eligible Family Members (EFM), and Locally Employed Staff. Of these exemptions, we expect that approximately 763 will be for EFMs.

In response to question #4g, EFM exemptions have been granted on a global basis based on priorities submitted by each Regional Bureau.

**Question:**
Will you issue waivers to the current pipeline of Pickering and Rangel fellows allowing them to begin A-100 as planned?

**Answer:**
A waiver is not necessary. The Department is unable to offer this year's cadre of Fellows a spot in an A-100 class at this time, as has been customary. However, the Department offered Fellows the opportunity to join the Consular Fellows Program as an alternative to waiting until the next A-100 class. Fellows who chose to begin their service as Consular Fellows would be placed in the next available A-100 class upon completion of their one or two two-year Consular Fellows tour(s).

**Question:**
Pickering and Rangel Fellows: Will you commit, consistent with Congressional intent, to increase, as a proportion of overall hiring, the number of Pickering and Rangel fellows recruited through these programs?

**Answer:**

We support increases to the Rangel and Pickering fellowship programs, subject to the availability of sufficient funding for such increases. The Pickering and Rangel fellowship programs are our premier diversity recruitment programs responsible for 21% of the diversity in the Foreign Service today. We need to increase the diversity of the Foreign Service to have a service that truly represents the diversity of the American people.

**Question:**
What do you believe are the State Department's contractual obligations to Rangel and Pickering Fellows?

**Answer:**

The Department's agreement with each fellow differs by program, and may also differ within each program by fellowship cohort. The basic understanding between the Fellows and the Department is that, in accordance with applicable law, the Department provides funds for

academic tuition and certain other benefits to the fellows each year during the fellowship. Fellows serve internships during the program and also serve in a position at the Department for a specified amount of time following their graduation from school, successful completion of the Fellowship program, and meeting Foreign Service entry requirements.

**Question:**
Do you believe placing Pickering and Rangel Fellows into the Consular Fellows program meets Congressional intent, or the long term goal of improving diversity of the Foreign Service? If yes, how?

**Answer:**
The Pickering and Rangel diversity recruitment programs increase diversity in the Foreign Service. Fellows are trained to and expect to join the Foreign Service upon the completion of their degrees and Foreign Service entry requirements. Normally, Fellows enter the Foreign Service as career conditional officers in the regularly scheduled entry level A-100 classes.

The Department is unable to offer this year's cadre of Fellows a spot in an A-100 class at this time, as has been customary. However, the Department offered Fellows the opportunity to join the Consular Fellows Program as an alternative to waiting until the next A-100 class. Fellows who chose to begin their service as Consular Fellows would be placed in the next available A-100 class upon completion of their one or two two-year Consular Fellows tour(s).

**Question:**
Given contractual obligations and that OMB has lifted the hiring freeze, why can't the State Department issue waivers and begin A-100 classes for Pickering and Rangel fellows?

**Answer:**
A waiver is not necessary. The Department is unable to offer this year's cadre of Fellows a spot in an A-100 class at this time, as has been customary. However, the Department offered Fellows the opportunity to join the Consular Fellows Program as an alternative to waiting until the next A-100 class. Fellows who chose to begin their service as Consular Fellows would be placed in the next available A-100 class upon completion of their one or two two-year Consular Fellows tour(s).

**Question:**
Are Consular Fellows full members of the Foreign Service?

**Answer:**
Sections 303 and 309 of the Foreign Service Act of 1980 authorize the Secretary to appoint individuals to serve on a limited, non-career appointment (LNA) in the Foreign Service. In May 2011, the Under Secretary for Management approved the use of this authority to meet the growing demand for consular services. Consular Fellows are members of the Foreign Service in a non-career capacity while serving overseas and perform the same consular duties as their Foreign Service generalist counterparts. Consular Fellows comprise the bulk of consular LNAs used by the Department and may serve up to five years, with the ability to extend for a sixth year with approval of the Director General. The Department is reviewing options for extended

lengths of service as a result of E.O. 13780, issued March 6, 2017, which states that "the Secretary of State shall immediately expand the Consular Fellows Program, including by substantially increasing the number of Fellows [and] lengthening or making permanent the period of service."

Consular Fellows are assigned to consular positions established for entry-level Foreign Service Officers (ELOs). They help to fill consular positions for which ELOs are unavailable or not available in a timely manner. Consular Fellows may apply to become Foreign Service Generalists or Specialists, but they must meet all applicable qualifications and complete the standard application and assessment processes.

**Question:**
Why have you frozen sending State Department detailees to the National Security Council? What impact do you think the lack of State Department personnel at the WH, engaged in the NSC process, will have on ensuring State's equities and institutional knowledge are part of the larger decision making process.

**Answer:**
The State Department and the National Security Council conducted a needs assessment to determine the expertise that State can provide to NSC through detail assignments. The result of this collaborative effort is that State will continue to detail a total of 33 employees to the NSC plus two administrative staff. Currently, State is in the process of assigning 16 personnel to join 19 State colleagues already assigned to the NSC.

**Question:**
Has the State Department issued hiring waivers for offices such as the Bureau of Medical Services?

**Answer:**
On April 13, 2017 the Department granted the Bureau of Medical Services (MED) an exemption to hire 20 clinical specialists in order to fill high priority medical positions. This was based on position-by-position justifications; MED did not receive a blanket exemption. Other bureaus that have approvals for exemptions to the hiring freeze include the Bureau of Intelligence and Research, the Bureau of Near Eastern Affairs, the Bureau of East Asian and Pacific Affairs, the Bureau of European and Eurasian Affairs, the Bureau of International Narcotics and Law Enforcement Affairs, Overseas Buildings Operations, the Executive Secretariat, Policy Planning, the Bureau of South and Central Asian Affairs, and the Bureau of Human Resources.

**Question:**
The 2016 State Authorities Act required the Department to start a pilot program for mid-level entry into the Foreign Service. Please provide an update on efforts to establish this program.

**Answer:**
The Department proposes to create a pilot program that permits lateral entry from the government-wide Civil Service workforce and from the private sector to the Foreign Service. The pilot program will be designed to meet the needs of the Service, specifically in specialist

categories and generalist career tracks where specific expertise and outstanding talents are in deficit. For Foreign Service Generalists, the Regional and Functional bureaus will identify specific areas of scientific, linguistic, technical, or global skills and expertise that are in deficit, and HR will recruit for these specific skillsets. Civil Service, and private sector candidates may apply for mid-level conversion to specific skill codes that have been identified with deficits. For Foreign Service Specialist, the Department will review each of the 15 specialties not currently being brought in at the mid-level to determine if a need, whether due to a skill or personnel deficit, exists.

Final review and implementation of the program will continue after the Department's redesign is completed, and a determination is made as to how this program will best fit into the redesign.

**Question:**
Please provide an update on the Department's effort to undertake, consistent with the requirement in the 2016 State Authorities Act, a Foreign Service Families Workforce Study. The Foreign Service Families Workforce Study has been prepared and is currently under review before transmitting to Congress. The study shows that the challenges facing both the family members of Foreign Service employees and the management of overseas missions have resulted in interesting and creative dynamics in the area of Foreign Service family member employment. A key factor for both tandem employees and family members is setting realistic expectations about opportunities and potential challenges. It is important to note, however, that tandems and EFMs comprise two analytically distinct groups.

a. Has the Department analyzed comparable public, private and nonprofit entities to see how State Department Foreign Service compensation and benefits compares, particularly in the areas of children's education and housing? Please disaggregate findings by grade and by location/Post.
b. From analysis to date, what has the Department determined to be the impact on the Foreign Service of a lack of quality options for spousal employment?
c. For Foreign Service spouses that desire to work, whether it is in the Mission, remotely from their homes, or in the host country economy, what further efforts will the Department undertake to better leverage this underutilized human resource at Post and/or support EFMs who are seeking meaningful avenues of employment?

**Answer**:
a. The Department provides housing to our officers overseas as directed and in accordance with Section 156 of the Foreign Relations Authorization Act. Our education allowances are in accordance with the mandate to provide an opportunity comparable to U.S. public education, and the allowable amounts vary by location.
b. The Foreign Service has a very low attrition rate. Many family members find fulfilling options for employment overseas, depending upon the employment opportunities available, both inside the mission and in the local economy. Employment options for family members vary from post to post, and, where legally possible, include opportunities to work outside our missions in the local economy in fields such as education, consulting, and running home-based businesses.

Family members apply for positions inside a cross-section of offices at U.S. missions overseas which vary from administrative support to entry level Foreign Service equivalent.
c. The current agency redesign phase is considering how best to leverage the experience of EFMs for work in our overseas missions. The Department also continues to seek new bilateral work agreements to enable family members seeking employment outside the mission to obtain work permits. Programs managed by the Bureau of Human Resources' Family Liaison Office help family members advance the portability of their skills that many find necessary during the course of the spouse's Foreign Service career.

**Question:**
Do you believe that State Department should have the lead role in directing U.S. security sector assistance? If not, why not?

**Answer:**
The Department of State's role in the provision of security assistance is a crucial one. Security assistance is a powerful tool that the United States can use to strengthen our alliances and partnerships around the world and mitigate threats that require a collective response—terrorism, organized crime, restraints on the freedom of navigation, and much more. Security assistance is an instrument that inherently implicates every aspect of our foreign policy – whether because of the sensitivity of the partner, regional balance, the type of assistance, or the program's overall impact on bilateral and regional goals and relationships. It is also a tool that we must use in conjunction with the other pillar of foreign policy: diplomacy.

State Department security assistance supports regional stability in the face of terrorist threats, in particular ISIS and other organizations such as Al-Qaeda, Boko Haram, and al-Shabab. State Department security assistance also strengthens security relationships to bolster regional and global security; increases U.S. influence, secure access and legal protections to facilitate deployment of U.S. forces; improves interoperability with U.S. and coalition partners; advantageously shapes partners' capabilities to support strategic priorities; and promotes the U.S. defense industrial base as our international partners' first and best option for procuring defense articles. Further, our security assistance helps build security sector institutional capacity to ensure the long-term sustainability, effectiveness, professionalism, and resilience of partner and ally nations, and it promotes post-conflict stability to improve partners' internal security and reduce threats to the United States and our partners.

It is the job of the State Department to ensure that our security assistance aligns with and advances this country's goals in light of the broader diplomatic and defense relationship, and that the assistance provided across the various U.S. government agencies advances a single, coherent strategy— whether it be in the provision of major munitions in Iraq or Lebanon, border security programs in Eastern Europe, maritime capacity building in Vietnam, or military justice programs in Mexico.

The State Department works to ensure that any investments we make in foreign security forces advance both political and security purposes; that they account for the political balance between civil and military institutions in the recipient country; that they are based on mutual, enduring interests between our countries; and that they do not cause long-term, unintended effects in the country or region.

**Question:**
A lack of government wide policy guidance a harmonized planning cycle on security sector assistance is commonalty cited as a one of challenges to effectively coordinating this assistance and avoiding duplication.

Do you see this as an area for the State Department to take a lead policy-setting and coordination role?
a. What specific reforms do you think would be helpful in State reasserting such a role and providing effective and responsive coordination for the USG?
b. I believe that we should be making it easier, not harder, for our partners and allies to access U.S. security assistance, but the suggestion that some or all of our assistance will be converted to a "loan program." How will this impact the ability of our partners to access U.S. security assistance?
c. How will you work with Congress, the Defense Department and the White House to see that State Department retains and regains its role in overseeing security sector assistance?
d. Do you believe the State Department should have the lead on security assistance relationship with foreign governments?
e. What impact do you think allowing DOD to serve as a substitute provider of security assistance will have on sources of leverage the Department of State has with various governments around the world when State's budget is being slashed?

**Answer:**
It is the responsibility of the State Department to ensure that our security assistance aligns with and promotes U.S. objectives in light of the broader diplomatic and defense relationship, and that everything the various entities of the U.S. government are doing in foreign security sectors advances a single, coherent strategy. The Department has longstanding practices for coordinating the deployment of its security assistance funds, including processes such as the development of the Integrated Country Strategy, the development of the Mission Resource Request, various interagency planning forums, and program-specific proposal review processes.

The State Department is also working with the Department of Defense to develop processes to synchronize security assistance planning and programming across the two departments, in light of DoD's expanded assistance authority. Secretary Mattis and I have established a new State Department-DoD Security Sector Assistance Steering Committee that is taking on this important task. The Steering Committee will oversee a process to ensure that State and DoD are optimizing our respective department resources and individual authorities to advance U.S. national security priorities and partnerships.

Both State and DoD will benefit from this coordination, as close collaboration permits the agencies to maximize our limited resources and capitalize on each agency's unique expertise and authorities.

(a) I have designated the Assistant Secretary for Political-Military Affairs (PM) as the lead coordinator for State in the joint planning, development, and implementation of programs for DoD's new section 333 assistance authority, which consolidated and codified several security sector assistance authorities in the FY 2017 NDAA. This is in line with the requirement for the Department to designate an individual responsible for program coordination at the lowest appropriate level. In fulfilling its role as lead section 333 coordinator, PM manages a

consultative and inclusive planning and approval process to ensure that Departmental priorities and policy concerns are reflected in security sector assistance plans and programs.

At the same time, the Office of U.S. Foreign Assistance Resources (F) maintains overall responsibility for ensuring the alignment of foreign assistance resources with Administration policy and strategies and exercises the delegated authority to concur with section 333 programs.

(b) The Department will pursue loans with partners that the U.S. government has determined as able to fulfill their financial commitments without significant risk or are developing military capabilities that advance core U.S. foreign policy priorities.

It is not yet clear whether a transition from grants to loans will lead to a reduction or an increase in the amount of U.S. defense articles and services purchased, granted, and/or loaned around the world. Partners may have the opportunity to borrow more than they received in the past in grant assistance, allowing recipients to purchase more American-made defense equipment and services. However, not all recipients may be appropriate loan partners for the United States, due to their limited national budgets or other circumstances that could limit their ability to repay the loan. Some recipients may not be willing to accept or be able to repay a loan from the U.S. government, which must, by law, be offered at an interest rate of no less than five percent and with a term of no more than twelve years. In some circumstances, past FMF recipients may also choose to seek loans or assistance from other international suppliers. However, these possibilities are mitigated by the fact that some of the largest recipients will continue to be funded with FMF grant funds at significant levels, and by the high quality of defense articles and services produced by the United States compared to other possible suppliers.

(c) In addition to the Department's aforementioned processes for coordinating and overseeing security assistance, we are also working with DoD to develop processes that synchronize security assistance planning and programming across the two agencies. This includes the new State Department-DoD Security Sector Assistance Steering Committee that Secretary Mattis and I have established which is accountable for ensuring the joint approach is fully embraced.

Congress has helped us by ensuring that DoD's new Section 333 authority is structured in a way that promotes State and DoD's collaboration. Specifically, Section 333 stipulates that assistance should be jointly formulated by the two departments and provided with the concurrence of the Secretary of State. Working with DoD, we have begun to put in place the necessary structures and processes to efficiently and effectively meet these requirements.

(d) The Department's role in the provision of security assistance to partner nations is a crucial one. Security assistance is a powerful tool that the United States can use to strengthen our alliances and partnerships around the world and mitigate threats that require a collective response.

The Department works to ensure that any investments we make in foreign security forces advance both political and security purposes, account for the political balance between civil and military institutions in the recipient country, are based on mutual, enduring interests between our countries, and do not cause long-term unintended effects in the country or region.

(e) The Administration's request gives the United States a range of tools to build the capacity of foreign militaries, including FMF grants, FMF loans, and DoD assistance programs.

I am confident that the new State Department-DoD Security Sector Assistance Steering Committee will effectively validate security assistance requirements for countries that directly support this Administration's top goals and ensure that there is a fully coordinated State and DoD approach to meet those requirements.

**Question:**
What are the trends in visa applications? How do they compare to 2014, 2012, 2010?

**Answer:**

Nonimmigrant Visas

Nonimmigrant visa applications are subject to a number of variables which can, and often do, change within a short period of time. This makes long range forecasting or projections challenging and subject to revision.

In FY 2016, applications leveled off as the surge in applications caused by visa reciprocity changes in China diminished. Visa demand to date in FY 2017 has decreased from FY 2016 by 4.8% and it is not expected to rise above current levels for the foreseeable future.

Immigrant Visas

The annual limits governing the issuance of numerically controlled family-sponsored, employment-based, and diversity visas results in a fairly steady level of applications each year. The historical rate of increase in applications for non-numerically controlled visa categories such as immediate relatives has been under two percent for most years. The FY 2016 immigrant visa application increase was artificially high, as consular sections continued to work off the 2014 backlog in USCIS immediate relative petitions. The 2014 backlog also resulted in an artificially low application total for FY 2014, as there were fewer applicants whose cases were ready for interview.

The FY 2017 application totals have begun to return to normal levels, and are expected to be approximately 635,000. It is expected that immigrant visa applications will increase by approximately one percent annually, subject to trends in USCIS petition processing which impacts the rate of overseas application.

**Question**
What role do you believe technology can play in helping to modernize the State Department? With the budget numbers, how do you foresee being able to pay for these technology enhancements that the State Department so desperately needs?
Challenges with the Department's technology platforms, both from a functionality and cyber security perspective, are repeatedly cited as serious impediments to the efficient and effective functioning of the Department, both in Washington and at Post. Addressing these challenges will undoubtedly be a costly endeavor in the short run, but would constitute significant efficiency and security gains.

**Answer:**

The IT Strategic Plan underscores the Department's need for technology to support its global mission and deliver innovative diplomacy, more secure IT infrastructure, and advanced IT

business management. The Department continues to evolve its planning and is evaluating future investments in IT based on proposals that emerge from the efficiency review project we are currently undertaking. The Department will prioritize funding to directly support IT initiatives aligned with the Department's IT Strategic Plan and proposals that emerge from the review. Key areas of focus include IT initiatives such as: providing access to global cloud hosting services, improving digital mobility, knowledge management and security, modernizing key business systems, building improved analytics capabilities, and strengthening cyber defense and IT infrastructure. Among these focus areas, cybersecurity is a continued priority for the Department, and re-directing funds to its IT infrastructure is critical. Not only will this support continuing IT security efforts, but improving the Department's IT infrastructure creates a solid foundation for future IT modernization and providing tools to improve mission effectiveness and efficiency.

**Question:**
Following the intrusions by Russia into the State Department email systems in Nov 2014, what recommendations were made to help protect the State Department's network? How far along the department in implementing those recommendations? What resources will you need to make sure the State Department's IT infrastructure is secure and up to date?

**Answer:**
Recommendations following this cybersecurity event were to enhance the Department's existing capabilities with increased communication between stakeholders, to identify gaps and weaknesses in policy and capabilities, and to improve the technical security posture of the Department's networks and assets. The creation of a unified Cyber Security Steering Committee (CSSC) and the Joint Security Operations Center (JSOC) has improved communication and focus on cybersecurity issues. These are examples of initiatives the Department established and continuously refines as part of a cybersecurity program that supports the Department's global information assets and operations. To advance this mission, the Department developed a cybersecurity strategy to unify and assess the maturity of current and future cybersecurity capabilities in the Department's cyber program. With this strategy and a new operational framework in place, the Department is following a risk management approach to threats and vulnerabilities. The Department's strategy and framework has enabled a greater focus on policy, more effective cyber hygiene, and a stronger cyber defense.

**Question:**
How specifically does your proposed budget and reform agenda address shortcomings in the Department's technology, including hampering mission effectiveness, failing to meet document archival and record-keeping requirements, and exposing the Department to cyber security threats?

**Answer:**
The Department's IT Strategic Plan provides a framework for how the Department can be more effective in providing modern IT to its diplomats. IT initiatives such as cloud computing, improving knowledge sharing, improving mobility, providing stronger analytics, and modernizing business/mission systems are ways the Department plans to address IT gaps. Specifically regarding records management, and as noted in the 2016 Senior Agency Official Report for Records Management and the 2016 Federal Email Management Report, the Department has not fully met its December 31, 2016, deadline of OMB/NARA Mandate M-12-18 Goal 1.2 to manage email in an accessible electronic format. Conversely, the Department has

met OMB/NARA Mandate M-12-18 Goal 1.2 for its primary email systems by capturing and storing all email on its classified and controlled unclassified information networks within a central repository. The Department is actively working on developing robust search and access functionality for this central repository in order to lower its risk and fully meet the NARA success criteria pursuant to the 2016 Federal Email Management Report. Additionally, the Department is evaluating its non-central email systems in order to validate if they meet both regulatory requirements and NARA success criteria before we will certify that we have fully met OMB/NARA Mandate M-12-18 Goal 1.2. The Department anticipates launching a new user interface for its centralized email system in 2017, as the system which manages this activity is currently undergoing evaluation based on the required NIST Risk Management Framework process to acquire a full Authorization to Operate (ATO).

**Question:**
Will you conduct a review of Department travel procedures and contracting mechanisms as part of your effort to improve the Department's ability to meet mission requirements effectively and with greater efficiency?

**Answer:**

The redesign task force includes a group that is focused on review of management support. That work stream will identify opportunities to streamline administrative support functions at the bureau and agency levels to ensure front-line effectiveness.

Even as this redesign work is underway, the Department's Transportation and Travel Management Division within the Bureau of Administration continually reviews its travel policies and procedures, stays well-informed of travel law, and tracks industry changes in a persistent effort to improve the Department's ability to meet mission requirements effectively and efficiently. The Division also conducts active outreach to solicit traveler feedback on the impact of the Department's travel policies and measure service delivery. In 2015, the Division established a Travel Working Group (TWG) to advance the Department's goals for improving travel programs, comprised of representatives from all regional and functional bureaus. In 2016, the Department also added a customer advocate to the Department's travel service contract, and instituted regular survey mechanisms.

The Department complies with the Fly America Act and the General Services Administration's (GSA's) City Pair Program. The City Pair Program is estimated to save the US government $2.4 billion in FY17 through the use of fixed contract fares, and the program also provides other benefits such as guaranteed last seat availability and fully changeable/refundable "unrestricted" fares. In certain instances set forth in the Federal Travel Regulations and the Foreign Affairs Manual, the Department may grant a waiver from the use of a City Pair flight. The International Rate Desk, a service provided by the travel service contract to identify comparable routings on complex itineraries, has historically reduced costs for the Department.

The Department has actively engaged with GSA senior travel leadership to advocate for policies and best value contract awards that provide flexibility for the traveler while still containing costs. Representatives from the Department's travel office participate on GSA's interagency Source Selection Board to make recommendations on the annual City Pair fares awards. In FY17, the voices of our State representatives were integral to the award of several non-stop carriers in key markets which had been awarded via connector routes the previous year,

drawing on broad customer feedback and analysis that these less direct routes were negatively impacting the Department's mission.

The Department is also represented on GSA's executive level Senior Travel Official Council and actively engaged in discussions on federal travel policy and contract award criteria, particularly as it relates to international travel.

**Question:**

Where are you in the process of reporting to Congress on progress against Performance Goals from 2014 – 2017?

a. What is your plan for updating the Strategic Plan?

b. Can we expect the plan to provide greater clarity in terms of how you are interpreting "issues of strategic interest" and "countries of strategic concern" as outlined in your FY18 budget request?

**Answer:**

The recently published FY 2016 Annual Performance Report (APR) conveys indicator target and result data for all performance goals and agency priority goals from the Department of State-USAID FY 2014-2017 Joint Strategic Plan. The FY 2016 APR serves as the closeout report for accomplishments under the FY 2014 – FY 2017 Joint Strategic Plan.

The FY 2018-2022 JSP is currently under development in accordance with the process, timeline and requirements laid out by OMB and the Government Performance and Results Act – Modernization Act of 2010 (GPRA-MA). The Secretary of State and USAID Administrator provide the overall policy guidance and the Secretary's Policy Planning Staff (S/P) is providing additional guidance and prioritization among the full range of foreign policy and foreign assistance issues and how those policy priorities should be articulated in the JSP's strategic goal and objective framework. The Department intends to release the FY 2018-2022 JSP by February 2018, concurrent with the FY 2019 President's Budget. The JSP is being coordinated with our budget and reform priorities and will inform future budget requests as well as providing greater clarity as to our shared goals and objectives and how we plan to achieve our redefined mission.

**Question 14 & 14a:**

The President's budget for the State Department references maintaining current HIV treatment levels within PEPFAR, while focusing on 12 countries to achieve epidemic control. Were those countries chosen because of burden of disease, ease of getting to epidemic control or some other strategic reason? Do you expect to see a rise in HIV infections or deaths in countries no longer receiving funding?

Should we expect to see PEPFAR results slow and HIV treatment numbers start to stagnate?

**Answer:**

PEPFAR will continue to invest in over 50 countries, maintain life-saving antiretroviral treatment (ART) for all of the people we support, provide services for orphan and vulnerable children, ensuring that the most vulnerable and key populations have access to essential services

to prevent and treat HIV and accelerate progress toward controlling the pandemic in a subset of countries.

PEPFAR has a unique opportunity to accelerate its progress toward reaching epidemic control by 2020 through the UNAIDS 90/90/90 framework and expansion of HIV prevention in 13 high-burden countries while sustaining support to all countries and populations where PEPFAR works. These 13 countries were prioritized based on several factors: HIV/AIDS burden; rate of new HIV infections (HIV incidence); number of AIDS-related deaths; and the potential for achieving epidemic control in the next 3.5 years – by 2020. In the last 6 months, PEPFAR has already shown that through the U.S. investments in PEPFAR and the Global Fund, the rate of new infections in three high HIV- burdened countries (Malawi, Zambia, and Zimbabwe) has decreased by more than 50 percent. This tremendous impact demonstrates that PEPFAR's prevention and treatment programs are beginning to control these countries' HIV epidemics.

Beyond these 13 high-burden countries, in addition to maintaining life-saving ART to all people it currently supports, PEPFAR will continue to expand both HIV prevention and treatment services, where possible, through increased performance, efficiency gains, and shared responsibility of all partners.

We are committed to our foreign assistance investment achieving even greater outcomes and impacts through the use of granular data, linked to expenditures to increase the efficiency and effectiveness of these key programs. In countries where PEPFAR is not the primary HIV funder and/or service delivery provider, we will continue our work with partner governments, the Global Fund to Fight AIDS, Tuberculosis and Malaria, UNAIDS and others to ensure access to services by all populations.

**Question 15:**

The President's budget proposed a steep cut to HIV funding at the State Department, almost 17 percent, and a shocking 50 percent cut to other global health programs. While the myriad of global health programs are funded through different budget channels, at the country-level these programs are often intertwined to better serve patient needs and maximize outcomes across different disease targets.

Will the PEPFAR program be able to mitigate the impact of broader global health funding cuts and still meet its goals? How?

**Answer**:

PEPFAR began in 2003 as a compassionate emergency program under the Bush Administration, bringing life-saving HIV prevention and treatment services around the globe where the epidemic had decimated communities. PEPFAR was expanded by the Obama Administration and has been reauthorized twice by significant bipartisan majorities to focus on life-saving HIV prevention, treatment and care services. Through the compassion and generosity of the American people, PEPFAR has saved and improved millions of lives, accelerating progress toward controlling and ultimately ending the AIDS epidemic as a public health threat.

PEPFAR has transformed the global HIV/AIDS response, supporting nearly 11.5 million people with life-saving antiretroviral treatment, a 50 percent increase since 2014. Nearly 2 million babies have been born HIV-free to pregnant women living with HIV – almost twice as many as in 2013. Also, nearly 6.2 million orphans, vulnerable children, and their caregivers

have been provided with care and services. PEPFAR continues to expand its impact by using data to drive accountability, find efficiencies, increase transparency, and leverage partnerships, including with the private sector.

**Question:**
Africa's pending "youth bulge" and global population growth could lead to as many as 100 million people living with HIV by 2030. Biomedical prevention, including vaccines and microbicides, is obviously critical in the fight against HIV/AIDS. USAID is supporting clinical trials of AIDS vaccine research through its partner IAVI and development of a proven microbicide ring with its partner IPM.

What impact will eliminating budget lines for vaccine and microbicide research at USAID have on achieving control of the HIV epidemic?

**Answer:**
Biomedical prevention products, including HIV vaccines and microbicides, are critical in the fight against HIV/AIDS, particularly with the impending "youth bulge" in Africa. Opportunities to control the epidemic are more promising than ever given the advancing biomedical science to develop globally effective HIV vaccines and microbicides.

USAID intends to increase its efforts to leverage partners' expertise and resources, strengthen country capacity to conduct their own research and development (R&D), and strategically utilize market shaping and innovative financing tools to incentivize private companies to invest in R&D.

While the United States will continue significant funding for global health programs, other stakeholders must do more to contribute their fair share to global health initiatives.

**Question:**
The investments that USAID has made in the field of AIDS prevention have recently produced positive results. Specifically, in 2016, the first microbicide was shown to safely reduce a woman's HIV risk in two large studies - a turning point that could not have been possible without crucial support and leadership from USAID (though it is also important to note that US government's contribution to microbicide research and development leverages significant levels of support from other international, public and private donors).

Given the U.S. government's investments in microbicides is now paying off with discovery of a safe and effective product, is the State Department and the Administration concerned about the negative impacts of the elimination of microbicide funding such as: halting access to a microbicide product which is now being provided to thousands of high-risk women in in Africa and halting regulatory applications to license this product for widespread use worldwide, potentially preventing many thousands of new HIV infections?

**Answer:**
More than half of the new HIV infections in sub-Saharan Africa occur in young women age 15–24, according to recent UNAIDS reports. USAID has played a critical role in efforts to control

the HIV/AIDS epidemic through research and development (R&D) investments in targeted microbicide products for HIV prevention for young women. USAID's current investments support R&D, regulatory approval, and introduction of several microbicide products.

USAID will continue work with other donors and the private sector to leverage resources to provide adolescent girls and young women with new biomedical HIV prevention tools, including microbicides.

**Question**

On April 4th, the State Department announced that the United States will no longer provide funding to the UN Population Fund – the leading and, sometimes, only provider of maternal health services, post-rape care and other vital reproductive health services in humanitarian crises. On May 15th, State released guidelines for the implementation of the Mexico City Policy, which – for the first time ever – will apply to all global health assistance programs. Experts tell us that this policy will turn back the clock on years of progress by causing more unintended pregnancies, more maternal and newborn deaths, and more unsafe abortions. And the budget before us today zeroes out funding for family planning and reproductive health programs – an elimination that will lead to two million more unsafe abortions and 12,000 maternal deaths.

Can you explain how the Trump Administration believes that these policies will advance U.S. development goals, including achieving an AIDS-free generation and ending preventable maternal and child deaths?

a. Which U.S. government departments and agencies are covered by the recent expansion of the Mexico City Policy?

b. How will the State Department monitor the impact of the Mexico City Policy guidance on specific global health programs? On access to women's health care (including family planning services, rates of unsafe abortion and maternal mortality)? Will there be a metric to measure the impact?

c. If service disruptions are found to occur, or data on programs, such as the PEPFAR DREAMS programs, indicate negative impact due to the Mexico City Policy, how will the State Department address these disruptions and ensure programmatic outcomes continue to be achieved?

d. Will the State Department continue to monitor the effects of the Mexico City Policy after the six-month mark for effects that may not be evident in the short term?

**Answer:**

Protecting Life in Global Health Assistance (PLGHA) applies to approximately $8.8 billion in funds appropriated to the Department of State, the U.S. Agency for International Development, and the Department of Defense, as well as to other agencies receiving funding from these departments and agencies to conduct global health activities, including the Department of Health and Human Services, the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention and the Peace Corps. Under this policy, "global health assistance" includes funding for international health programs, such as those for HIV/AIDS, maternal and child health, malaria, global health security, and family planning and reproductive health. Protecting Life in Global Health Assistance applies to global health assistance to, or implemented by, foreign NGOs, including those to which a U.S. NGO makes a sub-award with such assistance funds.

The State Department is working with affected agencies and departments to collect information on the extent to which the expanded policy may affect our global health programs. Interagency representatives continue to meet regularly to assess progress and challenges related to implementing the PLGHA policy.

Ambassadors and agency heads in our overseas missions with PEPFAR and other global health programs have been notified about implementation of the PLGHA. USAID, HHS, DOD, and the State Department have begun notifying implementing partners and other stakeholders about the expanded policy. Affected departments and agencies are also preparing for a review of the PLGHA's effect on programs which will provide an opportunity to recommend changes to the policy's implementation or scope, should they be needed to address unintended consequences.

Within PEPFAR, we will monitor women's access to critical HIV services such as HIV testing services, treatment, as well as prevention programs as part of our DREAMS partnership. PEPFAR collects site level data that is very detailed on who is receiving these services including age, sex, geographic location, and implementing partners. Because these data have been collected on a quarterly basis over the past several years, we will be able to monitor whether or not there are any significant changes in results after the implementation of the policy.

**Question 19:**

Studies have shown that linking services, including reproductive health and HIV, leads to better health outcomes and better use of foreign assistance dollars. A recent World Health Organization review found that integrating family planning and HIV services leads to higher-quality and better-used services, and is cost-effective. The U.S. has been making great strides toward better linking programs, and it is alarming to see the funding for much of this work eliminated. The proposed elimination of funding for reproductive health and family planning will compound the harm caused by proposed funding cuts to HIV/AIDS and undermine prevention and treatment initiatives, and have serious effects across global health programs.

How will the State Department continue to move toward integrating HIV and reproductive health/family planning services in light of the drastic cuts to FP/RH funding, as well as the restrictions imposed by the Mexico City Policy?

**Answer:**

The FY 2018 budget request will allow PEPFAR to continue prioritizing smart investments that save lives and continue progress toward controlling the HIV/AIDS pandemic, including among women of all ages, maintain its current level of antiretroviral treatment through direct service delivery globally and expand both HIV prevention and treatment services, where possible, through increased performance and efficiency gains.

PEPFAR will continue to work with USAID to assist women with HIV-related pregnancy complications, reduce maternal deaths (including those related to HIV), and prevent new pediatric HIV infections. PEPFAR will also continue to monitor data related to HIV services at the site level, including the impact of any new policies.

No one country alone can end the AIDS epidemic. It will take all partners doing their part to reach this goal.

**Question:**
The world is facing an unprecedented number of humanitarian crises and record levels of forced displacement – from the ongoing conflict and refugee crisis in Syria, to natural disasters, to the famines threatening millions throughout Nigeria, South Sudan, Somalia, and Yemen. We know that women and girls are disproportionately harmed during these crises. Sexual violence, pregnancy-related deaths, and child, early, and forced marriage often increase significantly, while access to lifesaving health care plummets. The United States has long been a leader in addressing these issues. But the decision to cut off funding for the UN Population Fund, or "UNFPA," calls our dedication into question. UNFPA facilitates safe births, works to end child marriage, and supports those who have faced gender-based violence. UNFPA is a lifeline for women and girls in more than 150 countries, including Syria, Yemen, Iraq and South Sudan. These women and girls quite literally have nowhere else to turn.

20. Can you definitively say that no maternal health, reproductive health, or gender-based violence services in humanitarian crisis zones will be lost due to the decision to withhold UNFPA funding?
    a. How is the State Department ensuring that the needs of women and girls affected by these crises are met?

**Answer:**
The Administration will continue to prioritize gender based violence prevention and response and reducing maternal deaths, including in humanitarian settings. The Department and USAID have comprehensive policy frameworks that address the threats posed to women and girls in crisis and conflict while *also* promoting women's active participation in efforts to resolve conflict and mitigate societies' vulnerability to crisis in the first place. With respect to the programming previously implemented by UNFPA, we are working to identify other partners to implement these life-saving activities.

**Question:**
The May 15th implementation guidelines on the Mexico City Policy state that the policy will not endanger lives, noting that USAID's maternal and child health program has worked in 25 countries that together account for more than ⅔ of maternal and child deaths worldwide, and, since 2008, this work has saved the lives of 4.6 million children and 200,000 women.

Given that this work primarily occurred during a period when the Mexico City Policy was not in place, and funding for international family planning was increased, how do you expect this life-saving work to continue?

a. How will you ensure communities continue to have access to family planning and maternal and child health services offered by the most qualified providers?

**Answer:**
As the world's largest bilateral donor to global health programs, the United States remains committed to helping women and their children thrive. Departments and Agencies will reprogram to other organizations any funding they would have awarded to NGOs that do not agree to the conditions set on the acceptance of U.S. funding under Protecting Life in Global Health Assistance.

We are working to streamline efforts to ensure efficiency and effectiveness of U.S. taxpayer dollars. By focusing our efforts on global health programs in maternal and child health, nutrition, and malaria we will continue to save the lives of women and children.

PEPFAR is also working to keep women and children healthy. The DREAMS Partnership aims to reduce HIV infections in adolescent girls and young women.

PEPFAR will also continue to work with USAID to assist women with HIV-related pregnancy complications, maternal deaths related to HIV and new pediatric HIV infections.

**Question:**

In November 2013, the Guinean government committed at a global forum to focus on extreme shortages of frontline health workers in two rural areas. Less than a month later, 'patient zero' of the Ebola epidemic was believed to have been infected in one of these regions. The United States works with many countries on low-cost efforts to strengthen their health workforce's capacity to save lives and halt global threats like Ebola, but these efforts are fragmented across several agencies with no strategy or action plan to maximize their effect, leaving Congress unable to properly oversee them.

Can you commit the Administration will work on an action plan or strategy to strengthen the global frontline health workforce?

a. And can you explain the rationale for eliminating a budgetary allocation for global health security, especially given the broad cuts proposed across global health and growing threats of deadly disease outbreaks?\

**Answer:**

The Administration is working to strengthen the frontline global health workforce to detect and prevent the spread of pandemics and promote national-level compliance with the WHO International Health Regulations. The United States promotes best practices in workforce development by encouraging countries to strengthen their frontline health workforce and build other domestic capacities to find and stop disease outbreaks before they spread across borders and threaten U.S. citizens and the international community, as well as global commerce.

The FY 2018 budget request pursues greater efficiencies and leveraging of resources. The FY 2018 requests using $72.5 million in remaining FY 2015 Ebola supplemental funds to support global health security, which would maintain support for global health security in development programs at FY 2016 levels.

The FY 2018 funding request will enable sustained support for global health security and the building of country-level systems to prevent, detect, and respond to emerging disease threats to the American people. These funds will enable the U.S. government, in partnership with other nations, international organizations, and public and private stakeholders, to prevent avoidable epidemics that could spread to the United States, detect threats early, and respond to disease outbreaks in an effort to prevent them from becoming global pandemics.

**Question:**

USAID plays a critical and distinct role in global health research and development, supporting late-stage and implementation research to advance new drugs, vaccines, diagnostics, and other health tools intended for use in remote and low-resource settings. Since 2000, the agency has supported development of 21 new health technologies with demonstrated track records of saving lives and cutting program costs. USAID's research investments are also critical for American

health, and allow health technologies to be tested in regions of the world with the highest disease burdens, which in turn ensures Americans have access to the most effective, high-performing health tools. Despite these returns, the Administration's FY18 budget proposal slashes USAID funding for global health R&D and even zeros USAID investments in HIV/AIDS research, including novel and urgently needed prevention tools, like microbicides and an HIV vaccine. This work is unique and not duplicative of research happening at other U.S. Agencies. Can you detail why global health research is being deprioritized by Administration's budget at a time when global infectious disease epidemics are on the rise?

**Answer:**

The FY 2018 budget consolidates all U.S. assistance for global HIV/AIDS efforts within the State Department to simplify the management and coordination of these investments. USAID will continue to remain one of the primary implementing agencies for PEPFAR, and will continue to implement a significant share of U.S. global HIV/AIDS assistance in this capacity.

With regard to global health research, USAID intends to increase its efforts to leverage partners' expertise and resources, strengthen country capacity to conduct their own research and development (R&D), and strategically utilize market shaping and innovative financing tools to incentivize private companies to invest in R&D.

**Question:**

What is U.S. policy on the 1997 NATO-Russia Founding Act? Is it still valid? Was it ever binding? Are we observing it? And, does it place any constraints on our efforts to bolster the credibility of NATO's deterrent on the alliance's eastern flank?

**Answer:**

The 1997 NATO-Russia Founding Act (NRFA) – a non-legally binding instrument that remains valid – defines the goals and mechanisms of consultation, cooperation, joint decision-making, and joint action that constitute the core of mutual relations between NATO and Russia. After the end of the Cold War, NATO pursued a strategic partnership with Russia. The NRFA laid the foundation for this relationship. In it, NATO and Russia pledged to refrain from the threat or use of force against each other or other States in any manner inconsistent with the UN Charter or Helsinki Final Act, to respect the independence and territorial integrity of all States and the inviolability of borders, to foster mutual transparency, and to settle disputes by peaceful means. The NRFA does not undermine the ability of the United States to defend NATO Allies or meet our Article 5 commitments.

Unlike the United States, Russia has not met its commitments in the NATO-Russia Founding Act, including to "observe in good faith" its obligations under the UN Charter, and has violated the sovereignty and territorial integrity of Georgia and Ukraine. Russia has also not lived up to its commitments under the Helsinki Final Act, the Charter of Paris, the Budapest Memorandum on Security Assurances, and other key documents that underpin the European security architecture.

Following the Russian occupation and purported annexation of Crimea and aggression in eastern Ukraine, NATO Allies suspended all practical NATO-Russia civilian and military cooperation, but agreed to continue political dialogue with Russia through the NATO-Russia Council at the Ambassadorial level or higher, with Ukraine first on the agenda. Military channels of communication also remain open particularly to clarify events and deescalate

perceived tensions. Also in the wake of Russia's aggression in Ukraine, NATO took steps to enhance our deterrence and defense in all of NATO's major capability areas: nuclear, conventional, and missile defense. For instance, the four NATO battlegroups that make up NATO's enhanced Forward Presence (eFP) in the eastern part of the Alliance were fully deployed as of June 2017. NATO's response to Russia's aggression has been defensive, proportionate, and fully in line with all our international commitments.

**Question:**
During your recent trip to Moscow you did not meet with representatives of civil society or members of the political opposition. Why was that? Do you plan any such meetings in the future? What about advocacy on behalf of political prisoners in Russia or, frankly, anywhere, will you raise their cases? Will you do so publicly?

**Answer:**
I believe that the Department of State's mission is at all times guided by our longstanding American values of freedom, democracy, individual liberty, and human dignity.

While I was not able to meet with civil society groups on my most recent trip, Department officials at all levels, including officials at the United States Embassy in Moscow, Russia, regularly meet with civil society groups. We believe that the Russian people, like people everywhere, deserve a government that supports an open marketplace of ideas, transparent and accountable governance, equal treatment under the law, and the ability to exercise their rights without fear of retribution. Although the space for civil society and free media in Russia has become increasingly restricted, Russian organizations and individuals continue to express a desire to engage with the United States. As long as this continues to be the case, the United States will support opportunities for direct interactions between Russians and Americans, including through peer-to-peer, educational, cultural, and other regional programs that provide exchanges of best practices and ideas on themes of mutual interest.

**Question:**
We are deeply concerned about the situation in Chechnya. Hundreds of men have been rounded up on suspicion of being gay or bisexual, and there are widespread reports of torture, violence and honor killings. Last month, the House Committee on Foreign Affairs passed a resolution expressing their concern about the situation. We understand that various heads of state have raised the issue with Russian President Vladimir Putin. Please describe specifically what is happening to gay and bisexual men in Chechnya.

**Answer:**
I share your concern about the violence against the LGBTI community in Chechnya that has been brought to light by brave journalists at *Novaya Gazeta* and researchers at Human Rights Watch. There have also been reports of mass illegal detentions, systematic torture of hundreds of gay men, and extrajudicial killings.

We have demanded accountability and a full investigation of these reports by the Russian authorities. In addition, we have issued statements from Washington, our Mission to the Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe (OSCE), and our Mission to the United Nations in New York expressing our deep concern over reports of these incidents. We have also

encouraged and welcomed like-minded statements from the OSCE, the Council of Europe, experts at the United Nations, and our allies in Europe.

Victims of the violence have urgent needs, including in many cases the need to relocate outside of Russia. The U.S. is committed to working with likeminded countries and partners, including UNHCR, to be part of an international, long-term response that supports safe, stable, long-term solutions for the victims. The mechanisms at our disposal are not immediate and will take time, but we are looking at any and all options to assist, with an emphasis on those methods that will bring targeted individuals to safety most swiftly and securely.

**Question:**
Can you commit to raising this issue in all your bilateral meetings with Russian officials? Does the President have plans to raise this issue with Putin like other heads of state have done in the past?

**Answer:**
We have demanded accountability and a full investigation of these reports by the Russian authorities. In addition, we have issued statements from Washington, our Mission to the Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe (OSCE), and our Mission to the United Nations in New York expressing our deep concern over reports of these incidents. We have also encouraged and welcomed like-minded statements from the OSCE, the Council of Europe, experts at the United Nations, and our allies in Europe.

For questions about the President's plans for future bilateral meetings with the Russian government, I refer you to the White House.

**Question:**
At your confirmation hearing, you indicated an openness to providing Ukraine with defensive weapons. Is this something that the Department is considering? Should the non-binding Minsk framework be an impediment to Ukraine's right—under international law—to self-defense? Is it in our national security interest that Ukraine controls the entirety of its border and what do they need to accomplish that task?

**Answer:**
While the United States has not provided defensive weapons to Ukraine, we have not ruled out the option of doing so. As I stated previously, Ukraine has a right to defend itself against Russian aggression. We are closely examining how to best use our security assistance funding going forward to bolster Ukraine's ability to defend its sovereignty and territorial integrity. In response to Russian aggression, the United States has committed more than $600 million in security assistance to provide training and equipment to help Ukraine defend its sovereignty and territorial integrity, better monitor and secure its borders, and deploy its forces more safely and effectively.

The United States continues to press Russia to end its aggression in eastern Ukraine and fully implement its Minsk commitments, including a complete and lasting ceasefire, withdrawal of heavy weapons and troops, and allowing OSCE monitors unfettered access, including to Ukraine's international border with Russia. As I have told my Russian counterpart directly, our Minsk-related sanctions will remain in place until Russia fully implements its commitments

under the agreements and our separate Crimea-related sanctions will remain in place until Russia returns the peninsula to Ukraine.

**Question:**

**Lack of Justice in Serbia**
I am deeply concerned with the lack of justice for murders and crimes committed by the government of Serbia during and after the Kosovo War. In particular, there have been no charges brought against anyone for the murders of the three American citizens, the Bytyci brothers, despite widespread understanding of who was behind them.

Serbian President Vucic and Acting Prime Minister Dacic have promised very senior U.S. government officials for many years that they would bring to justice the perpetrators of this crime and the crime of burning our embassy in 2008. They both also made these promises to me.

On January 31st of this year, the respected Humanitarian law Center of Belgrade released a Dossier called, "The cover-up of evidence of crimes during the war in Kosovo: The Concealment of Bodies Operation." This report described mass graves in Serbia containing the bodies of 941 Kosovo Albanians, mainly civilians killed outside combat situations in Kosovo during 1999. According to the report:

The evidence corroborated that the decision to conceal evidence of crimes committed was planned as early as March 1999 at the highest level of the government, and indicated that members of both departments of the Serbian MUP (State Security Department and Public Security Department) and the Yugoslav Army's departments in charge of "clearing up the terrain" were involved in it.

The murder and mass burial of almost 1000 innocent civilians is a crime against humanity, but the perpetrators have gone unpunished. It's long past time for Belgrade to face the facts and bring to justice the people – including high officials in its government – who are behind these very serious crimes.

At the same time, the Serbian stalling and stonewalling has brought no adjustment in policy from the United States, and the European Union's willingness to proceed with Serbia's accession process has been unaffected. This has to stop and has to stop now. Until Serbia brings those who have committed these serious crimes to justice, the EU should not move ahead with Belgrade's accession process and the United States should think twice before advancing our relations with Serbia.

What is the United States doing to press Serbia to bring to justice the murderers of the Bytyci brothers, those who burned the United States Embassy, and those who murdered and buried in mass graves almost 1000 innocent Kosovo civilians? With the ICTY no longer accepting any new cases and closing down at the end of this year and Serbia seemingly unwilling to prosecute anyone for these grave offenses, will you support a new international or special tribunal, similar to that which was established in Kosovo, to prosecute those responsible?

**Answer:**

We share your frustration with the lack of progress in the Bytyqi case and the slow progress in the 2008 Embassy burning case, and raise the issue with Serbian officials at all levels of government, including with Serbian President Aleksandar Vucic. We have also informed Serbian officials that these issues stand in the way of closer bilateral relations. Serbia recently appointed a new Special War Crimes Prosecutor – the position had remained vacant for almost a year-and-a-half – and we have called for the Bytyqi case to be a priority in her work. We are hopeful that that appointment will serve to advance the investigation and prosecution of those responsible for the Bytyqi murders.

There have been some recent developments in the Embassy burning case, as five high level Serbian police officials, including the then-Chief of the Armed Police, have been indicted for allowing the attack to take place. Additionally, the re-trial of seven hooligans involved in the burning itself is scheduled to begin July 21. We will follow both of these prosecutions and continue to insist that those responsible be held accountable. We take seriously the allegations raised by the Humanitarian Law Center, and are reviewing the report.

The United States has strongly supported the International Criminal Court for the former Yugoslavia (ICTY), which served as a model of fairness, impartiality, and independence in the trials of defendants accused of the worst crimes known to humankind: genocide, war crimes, and crimes against humanity. Justice for war crimes committed in the Balkan conflicts of the 1990s will remain a U.S. priority following the close of the Tribunal later this year. It is important to ensure both that justice is done and that heinous crimes do not go unpunished in the future. As the ICTY's work draws down, it is imperative that momentum shift toward national prosecutions. The United States continues to advocate with relevant actors in support of the swift and fair prosecution of the remaining cases, without regard to the ethnicities of victims or perpetrators.

**Questions:**

The budget request includes a mix of grants and loans for our defense partners around the world.

a. How do you intend to determine who gets grants and who gets loans?
b. Have you discussed the transition to loans with any intended loan recipients?
c. Do these countries know that they will no longer be receiving grants?

**Answer:**

The Department of State is planning for a partial transition from foreign military financing (FMF) grants to loans, which we believe will allow us both to maintain key security partnerships and provide value for American industry and taxpayers.

Not all countries may be appropriate loan partners for the United States, due to their limited national budgets or other circumstances that may limit their ability to repay. The Department is in the process of conducting loan feasibility reviews on a country-by-country basis; we are considering each country's importance to U.S. national security, national budget, expected ability to fulfill the terms of a loan agreement, and likelihood of interest.

Pending support for the requested authority from Congress in FY 2018, the Department

will begin discussions with potential loan recipients and determine requirements and priorities for grants and potential loan subsidy costs.

The Administration submitted its FY 2018 budget request to Congress and has made clear that the budget reflects U.S. fiscal priorities and the need for our partners to share a greater portion of the financial burden with the United States for security around the globe. The request includes bilateral allocations for Israel, Egypt, Jordan, and Pakistan, and a request for $200 million in global FMF funding that may be available for targeted bilateral allocations or to cover FMF loan subsidies.

**Question:**
Jordan is a very important partner for the United States in the fight against extremism. Please rationalize the FY18 budget request decrease of our security assistance to Jordan by $100 million from FY 16 and our economic assistance to Jordan by almost $200 million?

a. If you are expecting other countries to cover the shortfall, which specific countries have you already approached to pledge assistance to Jordan? What are their commitments?

**Answer:**

We are committed to supporting the stability and security of Jordan, a critical partner in the region on a range of U.S. national security priorities. Assistance is just one of the many tools we can use to support the Government of Jordan. The President's request for Jordan in FY 2018 is at the same level as the FY 2016 and FY 2017 requests, and is consistent with the level in the existing U.S.-Jordan MOU. Protecting this robust level for Jordan's foreign assistance in the context of the reduction to the State and USAID budget signals a strong commitment to the U.S. -Jordan partnership. We expect to continue working with international partners, including European and GCC countries, in order to secure consistent support to Jordan.

**Question:**
Please rationalize the elimination of our FY 18 security assistance to Tunisia and the decrease in our economic assistance to Tunisia by $20 million?
If you are expecting other countries to cover the shortfall, which specific countries have you already approached to pledge assistance to Tunisia? What are their commitments?

**Answer:**

Tunisia is an important partner and the United States is fully committed to investing in its success. We will continue to engage diplomatically with allies and partners to advance U.S. national interests and shared policy priorities. As we work to streamline efforts to ensure efficiency and effectiveness of U.S. taxpayer dollars, we acknowledge that we have to prioritize and make some tough choices. Focusing our efforts will allow us to advance our most important policy goals.

The Department is shifting our approach to the funding and provision of military assistance globally. The Department's budget request includes $200.7 million in global Foreign Military Financing (FMF) resources, which could support targeted FMF grants or loans to partners such as Tunisia. Shifting some foreign military financing from grants to loans will

better leverage U.S. taxpayer dollars and still allow qualifying partners to purchase more American-made weaponry.

The Administration's FY 2018 request for ESF-OCO for Tunisia takes into account the fact that the Tunisian American Enterprise Fund will have hit its total capitalization target of $100 million, with the last $20 million contribution provided by the United States in FY 2017. The FY 2018 request also includes $14.6 million in INCLE, NADR, and IMET security-assistance funds to support our continued partnership with Tunisia on shared security and counterterrorism priorities.

We actively coordinate our security assistance, as well as our economic and development assistance, with other foreign donors. For example, Germany recently entered a memorandum of understanding with the United States to transfer €16 million in funding to expand an ongoing U.S.-led project to secure the Tunisian-Libyan border. We will continue leveraging support from other donors in our efforts to support Tunisia's security and stability.

**Question:**

One of the only increases in this budget is economic assistance to Iraq and Syria to help them rebuild their country. As local forces—with US assistance—drive ISIS out of territory, these funds will help secure gains and hold territory. These funds will help stabilize the country, thereby decreasing the drivers for extremism and advancing our national security interests.

1. How do you plan to use these funds to ensure that Iraq becomes a more inclusive country?
a. Are there plans to distribute assistance funds fairly to the various ethnic and religious groups in Iraq?
b. How will these funds be spent in Syria?
c. How will you determine whether local partners are truly representative?

**Answer:**

Stabilizing liberated areas is a top priority for the United States and the U.S. led Coalition. It is not enough to defeat ISIS militarily; we must help set the conditions for the safe and voluntary return of displaced families to their homes and support reconciliation efforts to ensure that any defeat is lasting and sustainable.

Like the military campaign, stabilization efforts in Iraq are Iraq-led, and are supported by the Coalition through UNDP's Funding Facility for Stabilization (FFS). This mechanism allows local leaders to identify and address the most immediate needs such as running water, electricity, and security, which allow internally displaced persons (IDPs) to return home and rebuild their communities. We are greatly encouraged by the results achieved by these efforts so far, which have helped facilitate the return of over two million Iraqi IDPs since the conflict began in 2014.

The United States and other Coalition donors, as well as UNDP, put a premium on Iraqi ownership, which is essential for sustainable results. This is also conducive to Prime Minister Abadi's political reconciliation strategy, which is grounded in the concept of empowering locals in Sunni and minority areas with the resources and authority necessary to manage their own affairs and limiting the role of the central government.

On July 3, the United States announced our intent to provide an additional $150 million for the FFS program. This brings our commitment to stabilization programming in Iraq to more than $265 million over the past two years.

**a. Are there plans to distribute assistance funds fairly to the various ethnic and religious groups in Iraq?**

The United States closely monitors the needs of all vulnerable populations in Iraq, including members of religious and ethnic minorities. We also work with the Government of Iraq, the Kurdistan Regional Government (KRG), the UN, and other partners to help these communities. UNDP stabilization activities are carried out in several areas heavily populated by Christians and Yezidis. So far, this has included $22 million of projects for the Yazidi communities of Sinjar, Sinuni and Rabia, and $34 million of projects for the mainly Christian communities of the Ninewa Plains.

Since FY 2014, the U.S. government has provided more than $1.4 billion to address the humanitarian needs of Iraqis both inside Iraq and in the region resulting from the conflict against ISIS. While our aid is provided based solely on need, regardless of ethnic or religious affiliation, a significant amount of assistance has gone to conflict-affected members of minority communities.

**b. How will these funds be spent in Syria?**

In Syria, we will draw upon these funds to provide critical humanitarian mine action and stabilization assistance to areas liberated from ISIS. Specifically, we will prioritize:

Humanitarian Mine Action: This is a precursor to all humanitarian and stabilization assistance. Working through a commercial firm, the Department of State is surveying, marking and removing explosive hazards in Manbij and Tabqa, while simultaneously training Syrians in order to build a local mine action capacity. Similar plans are in development for Raqqa.

Restoring Essential Services: Stabilization assistance post-liberation will help to provide immediate relief to the local population, help prevent the return of ISIS, and will prioritize rapid restoration of electricity and water systems and minor refurbishment of roads and bridges to allow humanitarian and stabilization assistance to flow and markets to re-open. The U.S. Government has begun supporting local civil society and grassroots organizations to provide immediate stabilization assistance in areas prioritized as the highest needs by the communities. Additionally the U.S. government has begun capacity-building support for the Raqqa Civilian Council (RCC), while continuing to evaluate it against U.S. government criteria for assistance—namely whether it is representative of the local population, civilian-led, and respects human rights and international humanitarian law.

Restarting Education and Local Economies: Working through existing implementation mechanisms and with local governance entities and civil society organizations, the U.S. government plans to provide light refurbishment of schools and basic school supplies to get youth back into the classroom, providing an alternative to extremist ideology and encouraging the return of IDPs who have fled ISIS-controlled areas. Restoration of local markets is key to normalizing communities and facilitating the reinstatement of livelihoods. Assistance in this area will be based on needs assessments post liberation to determine the lowest cost, highest impact interventions and will be driven by community demands.

Reconciliation and Reintegration support: Programs will work through local Syrian organizations to mitigate ongoing tensions and promote reconciliation; provide emergency

medical, psychosocial, livelihoods, legal assistance to former ISIS captives; resolve property/land disputes and direct other forms of compensation; and assist in developing inclusive, representative accountability and reparations frameworks and processes.

**c. How will you determine whether local partners are truly representative?**

The RCC announced itself in April and we have been in frequent contact with its leadership and committee members, including through our U.S. civilian presence on the ground. Our assessments indicate the RCC is reasonably representative and we have begun provision of small-scale equipment and capacity-building assistance in order to support its efforts to restore essential services.

Our assistance to the RCC is conditioned on the body demonstrating effective management of U.S. assistance, ability to credibly represent its community, transparency, and adherence to human rights norms. We continuously assess the RCC through reporting from local contacts and civil society organizations operating in the area. We are encouraged by the RCC's commitment to integrate members of the former Raqqa council in exile, as well as its commitment to hold elections within a year.

However, the RCC is not our only civilian partner in northeastern Syria; we are also working by, with, and through local civil society organizations and technical associations to ensure we have diversity of Raqqawis involved in the hard work of returning normalcy to a region after three years of brutal ISIS rule.

Moreover, complementary programming will ensure that civil society is empowered to hold these newly developed governance systems accountable to the community they are intended to serve and represent. This will include promoting community reintegration, protection of civil rights, and assistance in developing inclusive, representative accountability and reparations frameworks and processes.

**Question:**
Can you speak briefly to the Department's plans, if any, to modify our diplomatic standing in Iraq for the benefit of our troops, diplomats, and contractors?

**Answer:**

There are no plans to modify our diplomatic posture in Iraq. Our posture and the protections provided by the Government of Iraq are sufficient for the mission our personnel are performing.

Iraq has established status protections for DoD uniformed and civilian personnel equivalent to those provided to personnel who were in country before the crisis. The Government of Iraq provides military personnel privileges and immunities equivalent to those enjoyed by Embassy administrative and technical staff.

**Question:**
What's the status of repairs to the Mosul Dam? How much has the United States spent on repairs to the Mosul Dam? How much more are we expected to spend? What is the level of financial commitments from other countries?

**Answer:**

The Government of Iraq has committed the largest portion of the costs since 2016 for repairs to the Mosul Dam, with the U.S. and Italy contributing approximately a quarter of the costs each.

The Government of Iraq signed a contract with the Italian firm Trevi for maintenance grouting and rehabilitation of the dam's bottom outlet in March 2016. Trevi started repairs to the bottom outlet in October, and quickly restored operability to a damaged outlet gate. Additional repairs and rehabilitation are in progress, and bottom outlet work is estimated to be 76 percent complete. Trevi initiated drilling and grouting activities on the Mosul Dam in October 2016 and expects to drill and grout 1,950 holes by January 2018. At the end of June, Trevi expanded drilling and grouting operations throughout the dam and is halfway through its intended targets. Analysis of the grouting program is underway to evaluate the condition of the dam's foundation and the effects of the grouting program. Training of Iraqi Ministry of Water Resources personnel is an important component of the work, and is estimated to be 25 percent complete.

The Government of Iraq spent about $200 million to fund approximately two thirds of the Trevi contract. This funding came from a World Bank loan. The Government of Italy offered to the Government of Iraq a soft loan worth about $114 million to fund the remainder of the Trevi contract. Additionally, the Government of Italy provides 500 Italian Army troops to provide security and force protection at the dam. The United States budgeted $118 million to support efforts on the Mosul Dam. The vast majority (about $107 million) is for the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers presence at the Mosul Dam, where they serve as the project's Engineer and oversee the contractor's work on behalf of the Government of Iraq. Approximately two thirds of the $118 million has been spent.

The Trevi contract will end in January of 2018. It is possible that Iraq may extend the contract with Trevi. The Departments of State and Defense will need to make a determination on funding to extend USACE if the Government of Iraq decides to extend the Trevi contract.

**Question:**

This budget requests $75 million in economic assistance to Egypt, which includes money for democracy and development programs. Egyptian President el-Sisi recently ratified a draconian new NGO law which would make it virtually impossible for independent civil society to operate in Egypt through restrictive registration and funding processes. According to the Project on Middle East Democracy, Egypt's new NGO law will also require international NGOs to obtain "prior approval from the National Authority to operate in Egypt. They have to purchase a $20,000 permit; this fee would increase by 20 percent every five years." A longstanding provision of U.S. law known as the "Brownback Amendment" asserts that "with respect to the provision of democracy, human rights, and governance activities, the organizations implementing such assistance, the specific nature of that assistance, and the participants in such programs shall not be subject to the prior approval by the government of any foreign country."

Does Egypt's new NGO law violate the Brownback Amendment by giving the Egyptian government veto power over U.S.-funded democracy programs?

a. More broadly, with this new law in place, what kind of economic, development, or democracy programming is even possible for U.S. assistance to support in Egypt?

b. Do you believe that repeal of this NGO law should be a pre-requirement to the United States providing continued economic aid to Egypt?

**Answer:**

The Egyptian government is an important partner on a number of key U.S. foreign policy priorities. We have seen some progress over the last few months: the release of Aya Hijazy, increased military cooperation, and important wins for U.S. businesses. However, we have expressed extreme disappointment in response to President Sisi's signature of the NGO law. From the time parliament proposed this legislation until President Sisi approved it, we clearly and repeatedly communicated our concerns about the law and urged the Government of Egypt to revise it. We have stressed that a strategic relationship is a two-way street that requires trust and credibility.

The Department of State and USAID implement programs consistent with the Brownback Amendment. Many of the practical implications of Egypt's new NGO law remain unclear, and we are trying better to understand the law and how it might impact our programs and implementing partners. We continue to make clear to the Egyptian government our commitment to supporting Egypt's stability, which requires respect for civil society. We will continue to monitor closely Egypt's implementation of its new NGO law.

**Question:**

What is United States policy toward Qatar? Is the United States considering a withdrawal of U.S. presence from the al-Oudeid Air Force Base? What is the United States doing to help de-escalate the crisis between the Gulf Cooperation Council countries?

**Answer:**

Qatar provides crucial support for the Defeat-ISIS campaign by hosting Air Force Central Command – Forward at al-Udeid Airbase. We have no plans to withdraw our presence.

I am in regular contact with all parties, to discuss proposals on how to move forward with all the countries involved. Our engagement is ongoing, and there are real opportunities to move towards a resolution.

**Question:**

Will the PA or PLO continue to provide these stipends to families of convicted terrorists or terrorists who have been killed?

**Answer:**

The United States opposes any program which incentivizes acts of violence and terrorism, and the Palestinian Authority's (PA) welfare program for families of prisoners and deceased Palestinians is no exception. Senior U.S. government officials continue to demand that the PA stop payments related to perpetrators of political violence, and have facilitated meetings with members of Congress who have made similar requests. In June, the PA announced it was stopping payments to 277 Hamas-affiliated prisoners. While this is a positive first step, the PA

must do more. Fully addressing our concerns will take time, but we are committed to ensuring there is no program in place which could incentivize or reward acts of terrorism.

**Question:**
What steps is the United States taking to weaken Hezbollah? What more could be done? Is there a role for UNIFIL in this regard? Does the U.S. Government need any new authorities to weaken Hezbollah?

**Answer:**
The United States has a variety of tools at its disposal to push back on Hizballah, including economic sanctions and law enforcement actions. Our sanctions against Hizballah are aimed at weakening its capabilities, dismantling its financial network, and blocking its access to the international financial system. We will exercise these authorities to isolate Hizballah from the global financial system while preserving the strength of the Lebanese banking sector, which is a key U.S. partner in the fight against terrorist financing and anti-money laundering. The United States also supports strengthening the Lebanese Armed Forces (LAF) and other state institutions that undermine Hizballah's legitimacy and influence within Lebanon.

The United States is a stalwart partner to Lebanon and is deeply engaged in ensuring Lebanese stability and security. The United Nations Interim Force in Lebanon (UNIFIL) continues to play an important role in maintaining the security and stability in southern Lebanon. The mission has helped to reduce tensions between Lebanon and Israel.
Congress has provided the Executive Branch with sufficient authorities to weaken Hizballah, and we will use those to the fullest. The Departments of State and Treasury have sanctioned over 100 Hizballah individuals and entities, including the recent designation of senior Hizballah leader, Hashem Safieddine. Finally, State is coordinating with the Department of Defense to optimize our security cooperation, particularly with respect to DoD's new Section 333 authorities, to help strengthen partnerships against Hizballah and other threats.

**Question:**
Please describe the thinking behind the fact that the president's FY18 budget proposal includes no FMF funding for Lebanon?

a. Do you envision continued U.S. support for the Lebanese Armed Forces?

**Answer:**
The Administration's request gives the United States a range of tools to build the capacity of foreign militaries, including foreign military financing (FMF) grants, FMF loans, and Department of Defense assistance programs. The Department's budget request includes $200.7 million in global FMF resources, which could support targeted FMF grants or loans to partners such as Lebanon. Shifting some FMF from grants to loans will better leverage U.S. taxpayer dollars and still allow qualifying partners to purchase more American-made weaponry. The Administration maintains the flexibility to respond with any combination of these programs and is committed to combatting the threats posed by terrorist organizations, such as ISIS, in Lebanon.

We view the Lebanese Armed Forces as a critical partner in combating terrorism and providing regional stability. We will continue to work closely with the Department of Defense to ensure we are able to address the Lebanese Armed Forces' most urgent needs. Lebanon will

also likely continue to receive international military education and training (IMET) funding in FY 2018 to train and educate military leaders.
We will continue to engage diplomatically with allies and partners to advance U.S. national interests and shared policy priorities. As we work to streamline efforts to ensure efficient and effective use of U.S. taxpayer dollars, we acknowledge that we have to prioritize and make some tough choices. Focusing our efforts will allow us to advance our most important policy goals.

**Question:**
What steps is the State Department taking to ensure that Iraq provides compensation to the MEK for the value of these assets?

**Answer:**

The members of the Mujahedin-e Khalq (MEK), who have now resettled in Albania and other countries, claim to retain hundreds of millions of dollars of property and other assets in Iraq, and have demanded that the United States and UNHCR press the Iraqi government to compensate them for this property.

The United States government has consistently refused to serve as the guarantor of financial dealings between the MEK and the Government of Iraq. We did, however, urge the Iraqi government to establish a judicial process for reaching a property settlement with the MEK, and we urged the MEK to follow that process. The MEK chose not to cooperate. They refused to participate with the Iraqis in conducting a joint inventory of their property at Camp Ashraf and refused to name an Iraqi lawyer to represent them in the compensation process. As a result, when the MEK departed from Camp Ashraf in 2013 there was no agreed-upon list of the property they left behind. In 2014, when ISIS surged across Iraq and threatened Baghdad, Iranian-supported militias occupied Camp Ashraf and looted it thoroughly. MEK property in Iraq is probably beyond recovery, but we would continue to urge the MEK to address the problem of restitution directly with the Iraqi government.

**Question:**
As Turkish authorities have raided U.S.-backed NGOs and seized the property of recipients of U.S. assistance—including seizing items given to them by the United States—what is the U.S. strategy to restore a working relationship with Turkey, at least vis-a-vis Syrian assistance?

**Answer:**

We are engaged at all levels with the Government of Turkey to maintain operational space for our NGO partners to provide both our cross border assistance to Syria and support for refugees in Turkey. Cross-border assistance into Northern Syria has depended on the Turkey platform since 2013, and coordination with the Turkish government has been critical to our robust humanitarian, non-lethal and stabilization assistance into northern Syria.
Over the last year Turkey has restricted the operational space for NGOs providing humanitarian assistance and in some cases, shut down and restricted effective staffing and operations. In response, we have persistently engaged Turkey pressing for the unfettered delivery of critical assistance. However, progress remains sector-specific and largely relationship-driven. We have engaged with Turkish diplomats as well as directly with the Turkish Ministries of Interior, Family and Social Policy, Health, National Education, Labor, and others as needed to facilitate

the work of humanitarian assistance NGOs in Turkey and cross-border. We work through Turkey's Presidential Disaster Management Agency (AFAD) on coordination of efforts as they serve as the lead agency for refugee response coordination and the authorizing agency for cross-border assistance. The United States also co-founded a multi-donor forum to coordinate donor advocacy with our Turkish counterparts.

**Question:**
With so many positions filled at the State Department and the Treasury filled by officials operating in an "acting" capacity, how is the U.S. carrying out a concerted and sustained whole-of-government pressure strategy against North Korea? Is there a regular and sustained interagency process focused on keeping the U.S. government focused on the economic, diplomatic and intelligence aspects of the "pressure strategy" against North Korea?
a.While the United States and China agree in principle on the importance of denuclearization, that is where our strategic alignment largely ends. What specific evidence can you point to that shows Beijing is serious this time? What specifically have you asked China to deliver and what evidence you to have that they are delivering it?

**Answer:**
North Korea's pursuit of nuclear weapons and improved ballistic missile technology is an urgent national security threat and top foreign policy priority for this Administration. Upon assuming office, President Trump ordered a thorough review of U.S. policy pertaining to the Democratic People's Republic of Korea (DPRK). The Department of State, along with the White House, the Treasury Department, the Department of Defense, the U.S. Mission to the United Nations, and relevant intelligence agencies regularly coordinate at all levels of the interagency on implementation of our DPRK policy. Our whole-of-government approach allows us to leverage a wide range of diplomatic, security, and economic tools to isolate Pyongyang and deprive it of the funds it needs for its unlawful nuclear, ballistic missile, and proliferation programs.

We have made it clear to China that it has a responsibility to exert much greater economic and diplomatic pressure on the Kim Jong Un regime if it wants to prevent further escalation in the region. China pledged to work with the United States on North Korea during the President's April meeting with President Xi Jinping. China has endorsed three UN Security Council resolutions, each with increasingly robust sanctions, and announced a ban on coal imports from the DPRK, depriving the regime of its largest coal export market and diminishing its single largest source of revenue. However, we would like to see China do more. The UN panel has designated hundreds of DPRK entities, many of which do business through China, and we're working with China to enforce these UN Security Council resolutions. We will continue to cooperate with China, but we will not hesitate to act alone, including by sanctioning Chinese or other third-country individuals and entities that provide support to North Korea's unlawful activities.

b. Do you support secondary sanctions against entities, including in China and Russia that are known to providing hard currency to the North Korean regime?

The United States is committed to using targeted financial sanctions to impede North Korea's nuclear and ballistic missile programs and to counter the grave threat those programs

pose to the United States, our allies and international peace and security. This Administration has been clear that each country's actions or inaction with respect to North Korea will impact our larger bilateral relationships. The Administration will go wherever the evidence leads to impose legally available sanctions on entities or individuals that support North Korea's proscribed programs.

Sanctions are specifically designed to increase economic pressure on the DPRK with a goal towards negotiation of denuclearization. Our aim is for countries to cooperate and take action using their own authorities to end any revenue generation for the DPRK regime that may be occurring in their jurisdiction. We have told the Chinese and Russians in no uncertain terms that we will utilize all tools at our disposal to choke off resources that fund the DPRK's proscribed nuclear and missile programs. It is unacceptable for individuals and companies in other countries to enable the DPRK to generate income used to develop its UN-proscribed nuclear and ballistic missile programs and to increasingly threaten international peace and security -- and we will utilize all tools at our disposal to stop such activities.

As Secretary Tillerson also made clear in his April address to the United Nations Security Council, we will not hesitate to sanction entities and individuals supporting the DPRK's illicit activities, wherever this activity takes place.

Chinese officials have long used specific phrases in an attempt to define the U.S.-China relationship in co-equal terms favorable to their interests. You chose to adopt similar language, specifically: "non-conflict, non-confrontation, mutual respect and win-win cooperation," even though your predecessors judiciously avoided such terms. Your statements set off alarm bells around the region because they were interpreted to mean that the United States will respect China's "core interests" and shy away from politically sensitive issues.

**Question:**
a.Do you endorse China's stance on issues involving Taiwan, Tibet, Hong Kong, and human rights? If not, how does the State Department intend to address these issues in the context of U.S.-China policy?

**Answer:**
Our policy towards China and in the Asia-Pacific focuses on creating a results-oriented partnership that seeks cooperation where possible but does not shy away from confronting challenges forthrightly. We will continue to uphold our alliance commitments; defend human rights and religious freedom; push for the peaceful resolution of territorial and maritime disputes on the basis of international law; pursue our unofficial relations with Taiwan on the basis of our longstanding One China Policy, as defined in the Three Joint Communiqués and the Taiwan Relations Act; and support the aspirations of the Tibetan people to safeguard their distinct identity, as defined in the Tibetan Policy Act. At the same time, we seek a cooperative approach to make tangible progress on the most pressing global issues, such as the threat posed by the DPRK's nuclear and missile programs.

**Question:**
b. What support, if any, does the State Department expect to provide to Tibet and Tibetan refugees in the context of the President's budget which appears to zero-out a number of successful programs aimed at supporting this oppressed population?

**Answer:**
While we do not have a specific funding request for Tibetan-related programs, the Administration's FY 2018 budget request includes humanitarian assistance resources that may be used by partners to continue to meet the basic needs of Tibetan communities in Nepal and India, including protection and reception services for those transiting across Nepal to India. It includes funding for exchange programs that can be used to increase engagement and mutual understanding between Tibetans and the people of the United States. Final funding allocations will be determined during the year of appropriation and will depend on factors such as humanitarian appeals received and needs identified at that time.

**Question:**
Will the U.S. continue to support ASEAN and ASEAN member states in their decision to speak out against China's excessive claims? Would the State Department support other ASEAN states in their effort to take cases to the Arbitral tribunal, as the Philippines did?
a. Do you think, as the U.S. Navy has asserted repeatedly, that the United States position on the law of the sea would be bolstered by the U.S. Senate ratifying the UNCLOS treaty?

**Answer:**
As the primary multilateral institution in Southeast Asia, ASEAN has political weight greater than the sum of its parts, especially on contentious issues like the South China Sea. We will continue to do what we can to support a unified ASEAN that affirms the international rules and standards that underpin East Asian stability and prosperity. We support efforts to resolve territorial and maritime disputes in the South China Sea peacefully, including through arbitration.

The United States has significant national security interests in ensuring legal certainty and public order in the world's oceans. We have an exclusive economic zone and continental shelf that are among the largest in the world, and the world's most powerful armed forces operating in, on, and above the oceans.

China routinely uses the United States' status as a non-party to the Law of the Sea Convention as a talking point in arguing that U.S. views on China's maritime activities and claims (including its excessive claims in the South China Sea) should be discounted.

I am aware that successive prior Administrations have supported U.S. accession to the Law of the Sea Convention. As I noted during my confirmation process, we are examining the Law of the Sea Convention to determine whether it is in the continued best interests of the United States to become a party.

**Question:**

Could you clarify the Administration's policy toward Taiwan?

a. Will the State Department continue to advocate for Taiwan's participation in international organizations?
b. When can this committee expect to see the next proposal for an arms sale to Taiwan?
c. Do you support regularizing arms sales to Taiwan?

**Answer:**

The Administration has reaffirmed the U.S. commitment to our One China Policy, based on the Three Joint U.S.-China Communiques and the Taiwan Relations Act. Under the umbrella of our unofficial relationship, the United States and Taiwan conduct, through the American Institute in Taiwan (AIT) and the Taipei Economic and Cultural Representative Office in the United States (TECRO), the full range of normal interactions, including arms sales, visits, trade negotiations, and education and cultural exchanges. In addition, we share strong economic ties: Taiwan is our 10th-largest trading partner and 7th-largest agricultural export market, and Taiwan's robust participation in events such as the SelectUSA Summit, wherein the delegation announced its intention to invest nearly $34 billion in the United States, demonstrates the importance of our economic relationship. We continue to pursue avenues of deepening our unofficial relationship with Taiwan, including working towards implementing a Global Entry program for Taiwan and coordinating Global Cooperation and Training Framework (GCTF) events to address global problems. Taiwan is a beacon of democracy in Asia, a reliable partner of the United States, and a force for good in the world, and we value advancing the U.S.-Taiwan relationship.

We remain fully committed to carrying out the Taiwan Relations Act. In June 2017, the Administration notified Congress of a $1.42 billion arms sale package to Taiwan, which was warmly received by Taiwan authorities. These notifications are consistent with the Taiwan Relations Act and our support for Taiwan's ability to maintain a sufficient self-defense capability.

It is in the strategic interest of the United States to provide the capabilities we believe make sense for Taiwan in the context of its asymmetric and innovative security approach. While we cannot comment on potential arms sales, we maintain our commitment to uphold the Taiwan Relations Act.

**Question:**

Do you believe your exclusion of U.S. press on foreign travel—a break from longstanding practice—inevitably gave foreign media undue power to spin the narrative in your first trip to Asia?

a. Do you see the media as an important amplifier for U.S. diplomatic leadership in the world and a means to amplify our message, particularly in key relationships such as the U.S.-China relationship which many countries around the world watch closely?
b. Will you commit to take press with you on future trips?

**Answer:**

The U.S. Department of State and I engage global media on a daily basis. I travel with a pool of reporters drawn from the State Department Correspondent Association, and Department officials give regular briefings on timely issues to the members of the media. The Department will continue to dedicate people and resources to assisting members of the media in better understanding America's role in the world and the foreign policy it is pursuing.

**Question:**

What is the State Department's position on Duterte's drug war? What actions is the Department taking to assert our position on human rights while also ensuring that we don't rupture the U.S.-Philippines alliance relationship?

**Answer:**

The United States and the Philippines have a longstanding alliance and relationship built on shared sacrifices, common values, and people-to-people ties. The United States works with the Philippines to address the shared objective of combatting drug trafficking, and supports programs that target the transnational shipment of narcotics, strengthen the rule of law, and encourage holistic drug demand reduction efforts.

We have serious concerns when those involved in the drug war operate outside the rule of law. We have discussed our human rights concerns at the highest levels with the Philippine government and raised the issue at the May 8 Universal Periodic Review at the United Nations Human Rights Council. We vet all security assistance to the Philippines to ensure the U.S. Government does not provide funding to individuals or units who have committed a gross violation of human rights. We encourage our Philippine partners to conduct thorough and transparent investigations into reports of arbitrary and unlawful killings. We will continue to work with the Philippines on this and other issues as we advance shared objectives in our multidimensional relationship.

**Question:**

Given the dramatic cuts to the State Department and USAID in your budget proposal, what will the State Department and USAID be doing to assist the Philippines in addressing the root causes of conflict in Mindanao if/when the military intervention concludes?

**Answer:**

The United States partners with the Philippines, a treaty ally, to promote regional security and economic prosperity. The State Department and USAID work closely with the Philippine people in Mindanao across a broad spectrum of activities designed to foster conditions for sustainable and inclusive economic growth, counter violent extremism, and promote peace and security. These continuing programs aim to address drivers of radicalization to violence, disrupt terrorism recruitment, and erode support for ISIS and its affiliates. Other continuing State Department programs increase the capacity of Philippine law enforcement to investigate, respond to, and prosecute terrorist threats in Mindanao and beyond. We will continue to seek ways to support the Government of the Philippines as it addresses the root causes of conflict throughout the country.

**Question:**

Given the concerning trends on a number of human rights issues in Thailand, including but not limited to the repression of free speech, abuses of lese Majeste laws, civilians being tried in military courts, continued delay of elections and the shortcomings of the current constitution, please describe if/how U.S. policy is urging progress on human rights issues in Thailand.

**Answer:**

The United States and Thailand have been treaty partners for 184 years and treaty allies for over 60 years; it is one of our most important relationships in the Asia-Pacific. The United States is committed to making progress on shared goals, such as advancing regional security, enhancing respect for human rights and labor rights, addressing public health challenges,

countering transnational crime, combating trafficking in persons, and assisting refugees and displaced persons.
We have repeatedly urged the government of Thailand to hold free and fair elections in 2018. We continue to be concerned about limitations on human rights and fundamental freedoms in Thailand, including freedom of expression, both online and offline, and freedom of association. As the government of Thailand continues to work on new laws and regulations, we are encouraging authorities to solicit and incorporate feedback from civil society, industry representatives, and other governments, to ensure these changes do not place undue restrictions on civil liberties.

**Question:**
What is your State Department's strategy on Afghanistan and Pakistan? What should the primary US goal be in Afghanistan and Pakistan?

a. How do you believe maintaining the office of the Special Representative for Afghanistan and Pakistan affects the broader policymaking apparatus for issues related to South Asia?
b. What are some of the tools you believe the Administration believes it can use to pressure Pakistan to change its behavior as it relates to relationships with terrorist groups?
c. Will you be including travel restrictions, harsher conditionality as it relates to security assistance or sanctioning of individuals in Pakistan that maintain relationships with designated terrorist groups?
d. How does your administration intend to demonstrate to Pakistan that having relationships with designated terrorist groups, or that the use of terrorists as instruments of state policy will no longer be tolerated?

**Answer:**
As you know, the State Department is engaged in a rigorous interagency policy review on South Asia that will provide us with an integrated approach to advance our interests in the region, including combatting terrorism and promoting regional security, stability and prosperity. Afghanistan and Pakistan are an integral part of this broader, regional context given the dynamics and interdependencies among the South Asian nations and the region.

Our primary goal is to keep the United States safe and prevent Afghanistan and the Afghanistan-Pakistan border region from ever again becoming a safe haven for terrorists to attack the homeland or U.S. interests abroad.

Encouraging regional actors to play a greater role in combating the threat posed by terrorist groups and promoting political dialogue to end the Taliban insurgency can help achieve this goal. A peaceful resolution to the conflict is essential to keeping America safe.

Acting Assistant Secretary for the Bureau of South and Central Asia, Alice Wells, is covering the functions and responsibilities of the Special Representative for Afghanistan and Pakistan (SRAP). As acting SRAP, she will continue to play a central role in the development and implementation of U.S. policy in the region, and to lead international community efforts to promote an end to the conflict in Afghanistan and to enhance regional cooperation and stability.

Regarding your other questions (b, c, and d), I do not want to prejudge the outcome of the South Asia policy review. I can assure you that along with our counterparts at the Department of Defense (DOD), the NSC, and other agencies, we are carefully considering all options.

U.S. assistance is designed to advance our national interests. As part of the policy review, we are assessing our assistance approach to Pakistan to ensure it continues to effectively support our policy objectives in the region.

Our relationship with Pakistan involves a number of vital national strategic interests, directed at safeguarding the U.S. homeland from threats and maintaining regional stability and security. Our counterterrorism cooperation with Pakistan is important in our efforts against groups such as al-Qa'ida and ISIS.

There are, however, elements of our relationship that have proved challenging, where we are seeking ways to convince Pakistan to change its actions. These include lack of action against Pakistan-based militant groups. The Afghan Taliban, including the Haqqani Network, and other externally-focused militant groups retain the ability to plan, support and conduct terrorist operations from Pakistani soil, including attacks that target U.S. interests in Afghanistan.

We continue to stress to the highest levels of Pakistan's leadership the need to take specific and deliberate action to curb the activity of all militant and terrorist groups in Pakistan -- without differentiating among them -- as Pakistan has publicly pledged to do. Our policy review will include as the outcome steps we can take to continue reinforcing this message. I can assure you we will insist that Pakistan deliver on its commitment to combat all militant and terrorist groups, without discrimination.

**Question:**
When will you fold in the Special Representative's office to the Bureau of South and Central Asian Affairs?

**Answer:**
The Department is in the process of integrating the Office of the Special Representative for Afghanistan and Pakistan Affairs into the Bureau of South and Central Asian Affairs (SCA). We anticipate an Assistant Secretary will oversee the entire bureau and will cover the functions and responsibilities of the Special Representative for Afghanistan and Pakistan, and use that title when appropriate.

**Question:**
When will the Administration make a decision on the sale of Guardian drones to India?

**Answer:**
Commensurate with India's status as a Major Defense Partner, the Department of State supports deepening security cooperation with India to include exercises, engagements, and sales of military platforms. The Department recognizes the importance of the potential sale of SeaGuardian Unmanned Aerial System (UAS) to India, and this has been a topic of discussion at high levels between the two governments. The SeaGuardian UAS decision has been reviewed in accordance with the Conventional Arms Transfer policy, Unmanned Aerial Systems Export policy, and our international commitments, including those under the Missile Technology Control Regime. Accordingly, the Department of Defense will respond to the Indian Navy's request for Price and Availability data, and the decision to further pursue this purchase will then rest with the Government of India.

As a part of the statutory arms sale review process, we are required to notify Congress of sales above a certain threshold prior to proceeding. This will occur as part of the process once we have received a Letter of Request from India to purchase the SeaGuardian UAS.

**Question:**
What impact do you believe the zeroing out of assistance to Sri Lanka will have on the country's efforts at reconciliation? What impact do you think it will have as China is increasing its stake in the country?

**Answer:**
The United States supports Sri Lanka in its domestic efforts to achieve justice and reconciliation. Ongoing Department of State programming supports development of transitional justice mechanisms and peace and reconciliation processes at local and national levels, as well as civil society capacity to engage with formal transitional justice initiatives. The United States will continue to work with the Sri Lankan government, military, civil society, and our partners in the international community, including within the UN system, to encourage progress on transitional justice and reconciliation, which we believe is vital to the stability of both Sri Lanka and the region.

The FY2018 budget request includes bilateral security assistance for Sri Lanka provided through Nonproliferation, Anti-Terrorism, Demining and Related Programs (NADR) and International Military Education and Training (IMET) funding. These resources support activities that protect U.S. national security, secure our borders from external threats, and maintain U.S. influence with Sri Lanka and its armed forces. For the sake of efficiency and greater accountability to U.S. taxpayers, the budget request also reflects hard choices that reduce funding, but this should not be taken to mean that the United States is less committed to Sri Lanka or our other friends and partners. To the contrary, we will leverage existing and prior-year resources and work with governments and private sector actors to encourage investment that empowers developing countries such as Sri Lanka. We believe that this approach will compare favorably to other development assistance models, particularly those that invite dependency on loans and initiate a cycle of rising indebtedness and vulnerability.

**Question:**
What, if anything, are you doing to mitigate the damage done by President Trump to our relationship with Mexico? Can you assure us that the Merida Initiative, which is responsible for important improvements in U.S. – Mexico relations, will continue into the future?

**Answer:**
Our bilateral relationship with Mexico is one of the most important, complex, and economically significant in the world. We are committed to our partnership with Mexico and to advancing common goals. Our priorities include expanding economic ties to increase U.S. prosperity and create jobs and enhancing security and modernizing our shared border. To advance our dialogue on security issues, Secretary Kelly and I hosted high-level Government of Mexico officials for the May 18 "U.S. – Mexico Strategic Dialogue on Disrupting Transnational Criminal Organizations" which identified strategic approaches to disrupt the business model of the transnational criminal organizations.

We remain committed to supporting the Government of Mexico in combatting organized crime and the flow of illicit goods throughout the hemisphere. Through the Merida Initiative, the United States and Mexico have forged a multi-faceted partnership to combat transnational organized crime and drug trafficking and to support Mexico's efforts to strengthen its security and justice institutions, enhance rule of law, improve border security, disrupt illicit financial networks, and promote respect for human rights. Merida funding is directed to key priorities identified jointly by our governments and complements Mexico's investment in its own security.

**Question:**
According to the President's budget request, assistance to Mexico would drop by 45 percent in FY 2018 as compared to FY 2016. Given this dramatic drop, how can we sustain our important level of collaboration with Mexican authorities to combat organized crime and strengthen Mexico's criminal justice institutions?

**Answer:**
We remain committed to supporting the Government of Mexico in combatting organized crime and the movement of drugs and other illicit goods throughout the hemisphere. The FY 2018 budget request reflects the Administration's focused approach to foreign assistance. The request for Mexico prioritizes issues that directly impact the safety and security of the United States, by strengthening border security and undermining the transnational criminal organizations that traffic drugs, including heroin and fentanyl, which are exacerbating the U.S. opioid epidemic.

The U.S. Department of State continues to build the capacity of Mexican civilian security and justice sector institutions to strengthen borders and ports; disrupt the activities of transnational criminal organizations; interdict illegal drugs, including heroin, fentanyl, and methamphetamines; and disrupt illicit financial networks. Assistance will improve Mexico's ability to bring offenders to justice by increasing the effectiveness and professionalism of judicial institutions under Mexico's new accusatory justice system. In support of the May 2017 U.S.-Mexico Strategic Dialogue on Disrupting Transnational Criminal Organizations, the Department is working with the Government of Mexico to identify new opportunities to combat transnational criminal organizations, including disrupting their business models. We are exploring new ways to strengthen criminal investigations of money laundering, build Mexico's capacity to criminally prosecute and sanction financial crimes, and work jointly on detecting and interdicting bulk cash shipments from the United States to Mexico. The funding requested in FY 2018 is in addition to the $2.6 billion allocated to Mexico under the Merida Initiative from FY 2008-2016.

In addition, USAID will promote human rights by building the capacity of federal and state authorities to abide by and implement Mexico's National Human Rights Program and the government's obligations under international human rights treaties. Assistance at a local level will improve access to community-level justice and victims' services. This is complemented by assistance to civil society organizations to help promote crime and violence prevention, rule of law, and human rights.

**Question:**
In light of the important role U.S. support has played in enhancing police professionalization, strengthening the rule of law, and advancing judicial reform in Mexico, what areas of assistance will you prioritize for the State Department's future engagement with Mexico?

**Answer:**

We continue to prioritize support for Mexico's transition to an accusatorial criminal justice system as an integral component of our strategy to combat transnational organized crime. A transparent, efficient, and effective criminal justice system is essential to our goal of dismantling transnational criminal organizations to combat the production and trafficking of heroin and fentanyl fueling the opioid epidemic in the United States. Disrupting criminal organizations that traffic heroin and other illicit items requires strong law enforcement and justice institutions that can investigate, arrest, prosecute, convict, and imprison criminals. The Department and USAID's support also strengthens the rule of law by protecting due process, promoting assistance to crime victims, and strengthening human rights.

U.S. funding supports the Government of Mexico's own priorities to promote accountability, professionalism, integrity, and adherence to due process among Mexico's 350,000 federal, state, and municipal law enforcement officials. As Mexico has embarked on an essential set of reforms to its justice sector, the United States, through our security partnership with Mexico, has provided essential support by targeting every facet of the criminal justice system. This continues to include training for judges, prosecutors, and curriculum support for law schools, as well as supporting accreditation of federal and state forensic laboratories and certification of their personnel. The United States also continues to provide training, technical assistance, and equipment in support of Mexico's efforts to reform federal and state penitentiary systems.

The United States and Mexico have forged a multi-faceted partnership to combat organized crime and drug trafficking and to support Mexico's efforts to strengthen its security institutions, enhance rule of law, build public confidence in the justice sector, improve border security, and promote respect for human rights. Through the Merida initiative, we will continue funding to key priorities identified jointly by our governments to complement Mexico's investment in its own security.

**Question:**

Colombia is in the first months following a peace accord with the FARC, the hemisphere's largest guerrilla group. The early post-conflict phase is fragile, and there is much to do to consolidate territorial control, reduce coca cultivation, and ensure that violence doesn't worsen.

2. Why, then, does the FY 2018 request include a 44 percent drop in assistance to Colombia from FY 2017 levels? How much does State plan to spend in FY 2017 and FY 2018 to support Colombia's efforts to reduce coca cultivation, whether through forced eradication or through voluntary eradication/crop substitution?
    a. Colombian social leaders and human rights defenders are being assassinated at an alarming rate. According to the office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights of the UN, 60 defenders were killed in 2016, a significant increase from the 41 it had documented in 2015. Killings have continued in 2017 with Bernardo Cuero of AFRODES, an organization that is integral to USAID's work in Colombia, murdered last week.
    b. What steps is the State Department taking to guarantee that the perpetrators of such violence are put in jail? How is the U.S. working with the Colombian government to guarantee the dismantling of the illegal armed groups committing these killings? What more can be done to stop these phenomena?

**Answer:**

To counter the increase in coca cultivation, the United States is working with the Colombian government to implement an integrated, whole-of-government approach to counternarcotics and rural development in strategic areas of concern. Our counternarcotics cooperation with Colombia is a critical element of our broader support for Colombia's efforts to implement its peace agreement with the FARC.

Congress directed $391 million for U.S. assistance to Colombia in FY 2017, with particular focus on counternarcotics, security sector assistance, and economic and governance programming. Our FY 2018 budget request reflects the Administration's focused approach to foreign assistance. Program priorities include addressing the coca cultivation increase. Although there was a 35.7 percent overall reduction in U.S. assistance requested for Colombia, the request for International Narcotics Control and Law Enforcement (INCLE) funding has decreased by just 13 percent.

We remain deeply concerned by reports of killings and threats against human rights defenders and social activists and support Colombia's efforts to quickly and thoroughly investigate and prosecute those responsible. The May 2017 conviction for a case involving threats against human rights defenders was a positive step forward. We welcome the Attorney General's prioritization of investigations of killings of human rights defenders under the "Plan Esperanza" initiative. We continue to engage the Colombian government on this issue at the highest levels and urge concrete results, including convictions.

Dismantling the illegal armed groups responsible for these crimes is essential to prevent future violence. We believe an integrated civilian-military government peace accord implementation plan that prioritizes expanding the state's presence to conflict-affected areas is critical to success. We have underlined the importance of this issue with the Colombian government. We continue to provide bilateral assistance to support Colombia's efforts to dismantle illegal armed groups. The Colombian government requested specific international "accompaniment" of the peace accord, including U.S. support for a provision in Section 3.4.4 of the accord providing for the creation of a special unit within the Attorney General's Office to focus on dismantling organized criminal groups. We are coordinating with the Colombian government to see how our support would be most helpful.

**Question:**

If your proposed cuts to these violence-prevention, workforce development, community policing, and criminal justice reform efforts are put in place, what is the risk that violence and insecurity will worsen and drive another wave of migrants toward the United States?

**Answer:**

Through U.S. assistance and engagement in Central America, our aim is to secure U.S. borders and protect American citizens by addressing the economic, security, and governance drivers of illegal migration and illicit trafficking. The President's FY 2018 Request of $460 million for Central America emphasizes continued U.S. commitment to reducing insecurity and violence, enhancing the business climate, and promoting improved governance in the region. This is in addition to the almost $2 billion provided by Congress during FY 2015 - FY 2017.

FY 2018 funding will enable the Department and U.S. Agency for International Development to continue implementing an integrated approach to crime and violence prevention

through programs that reduce gang violence and the influence of organized crime across borders; promote good governance, anti-corruption efforts, and fiscal management; and foster prosperity through economic development, food security, regional integration and the creation of sustainable jobs for Central Americans in their countries of origin.

U.S. assistance alone will not resolve the underlying causes of illegal migration and illicit trafficking. U.S. funding complements the efforts of the Northern Triangle countries of Honduras, El Salvador, and Guatemala to tackle these problems through their own Alliance for Prosperity plan, for which they have committed approximately $5.4 billion in 2016-2017. To ensure long-term sustainability and success, the United States will partner with the private sector, international partners and organizations, and civil society to provide the necessary financial and diplomatic support for Central America. For example, the United States and Mexico co-hosted the Conference on Prosperity and Security in Central America June 15-16, 2017, in Miami. Senior-level representatives from Central America, Canada, Chile, Colombia, the European Union, Spain, the Inter-American Development Bank, and the International Monetary Fund, and nearly 60 companies from the region participated in support of our shared goal of promoting a more secure and prosperous region. The conference provided an opportunity to directly engage the public and private sectors of the Northern Triangle to explore the policy solutions needed to improve investment in the Northern Triangle by improving tax efficiency, strengthening the business climate, and expanding market and investment opportunities for businesses. We are confident such partnerships, coupled with continued U.S. assistance and engagement, will assist in reducing violence and citizen insecurity over the long-term to contribute to a more prosperous and stable Central America.

**Question:**

If TPS is not renewed, what would the effect on economic and security conditions in these countries—whose combined population is 14.5 million—of a sudden influx of 300,000 unemployed people (increasing the population by 2 percent)? Might the inability to absorb former TPS recipients destabilize these countries in a way that drives even more of their citizens to migrate?

**Answer:**

The Salvadoran and Honduran governments have been cooperative partners in receiving their deported citizens. Each country receives roughly 50,000 deportees a year from the United States and Mexico.

The United States Agency for International Development (USAID) partners with the International Organization for Migration (IOM) to improve the capacity of the Northern Triangle governments of El Salvador, Guatemala, and Honduras to receive and assist deported migrants. Since 2014, USAID has provided three program contribution grants totaling $26.8 million to IOM to help the Northern Triangle governments improve their capacity to receive and reintegrate unaccompanied children, families, and adults returned from the United States and Mexico and to rebuild and renovate four repatriation centers.

**Question:**
The Inspectors General for the Departments of State and Justice released a report recently that says State Department and Drug Enforcement Administration (DEA) employees were involved in a cover up of a 2012 incident where a drug raid in Honduras went wrong and four civilians were killed. The report had several recommendations regarding DEA. With regard to State, it found that Department employees "failed to comply with, and undermined, the Ambassador's Chief of Mission authority" and "provided inaccurate and incomplete information to Congress and the public."

How is the State Department holding accountable the employees cited in the IG report? What changes to policies and procedures is State implementing to ensure that this level of non-cooperation with investigators is not repeated, especially in cases involving loss of life? Are adequate reparations or other compensation contemplated for the Honduran victims of the Ahuas incident detailed in the report?

**Answer:**
The Department of State (DOS) has very serious concerns with the joint report produced by the Inspectors General of the Departments of State and Justice (OIGs), "A Special Joint Review of Post-Incident Responses by the Department of State and Drug Enforcement Administration to Three Deadly Force Incidents in Honduras." These concerns were raised by the Bureau of International Narcotics and Law Enforcement Affairs (INL) in their January 17, 2017 official comments on the draft joint report. Additionally, during the course of the joint investigation, DOS officials asked the OIGs to address concerns over the root cause of the interagency conflict concerning appropriate protocols for disclosing law enforcement investigative information, including internal agency reviews. None of these concerns were addressed during the joint OIG investigation, nor are they reflected in the final joint report. As a result, the lengthy and complex report remains incomplete and factually misleading. In our view, this has resulted in the adoption of conclusions regarding INL and Bureau of Western Hemisphere Affairs (WHA) personnel that are erroneous and not supported by the evidence.

Because the Department concluded that DOS employees did not engage in misconduct, they were not referred for formal disciplinary action. DOS concluded the employees did not willfully provide incomplete or inaccurate information to Members of Congress or the public. Coordination before and after the incidents discussed in the joint report suffered from limited legal provisions regarding the presence of U.S. law enforcement in foreign police operations. The Foreign Assistance Act contemplates defensive use of force by U.S. law enforcement personnel and the need to secure Chief of Mission approval for their presence at foreign police operations and for carrying firearms in country but does not address responsibilities for post-incident responses. Conflicting agency policies related to the disclosure of information contributed to misunderstandings between the participating law enforcement entities pertaining to their obligations. This prevented the Chief of Mission from receiving information that she had every right to receive and can be avoided in the future by clearly delineating responsibilities in advance, particularly among law enforcement entities. Additionally, transparency in accountability reporting and protocols for overseas incident reporting and investigations should be agreed upon. Unfortunately, this context was not addressed in the joint investigation or the resulting report. The Department earnestly believes that State employees acted in good faith in a chaotic environment and accurately reported information as it was made available to them at the time.

INL appreciates the report's identification of weaknesses and has taken measures to address them. The State Department has not provided air support to Honduran law enforcement operations since July 2012 and all assets have been reallocated to another country program. The State Department has provided regular and systematic reporting to Congress on Honduras programs since 2012. There has been excellent coordination between Federal law enforcement and the U.S. Chief of Mission since 2014.

Regarding compensation for the Honduran victims of the Ahuas incident, the Government of Honduras provided a $200,000 grant to INGWAIA, an indigenous NGO, to assist the families affected by the 2012 incident. INGWAIA confirms that it has disbursed all funds in support of the following:

- Medical support for eight members of beneficiary families;
- Assessment of the current condition of all beneficiary families' homes and purchase of materials needed for renovations;
- Delivery of food assistance and school supplies to five of the beneficiary families;
- Support to the establishment of a bakery run by 30 women, including beneficiary families;
- Distribution of rice seeds to 25 male heads of household in the village, including one beneficiary household that has a rice farm and benefited from assistance in producing and selling rice; and
- Assistance to two beneficiary families on establishing legal title to their properties.

**Question:**

After many years in which Latin American and Caribbean governments were reluctant to speak out on democracy and human rights in Venezuela, they are now finding their voices. Organization of American States Secretary General Luis Almagro has done an impressive job in leading the OAS and its member states in holding Venezuelan President Nicolás Maduro accountable. So, I was shocked to see that no funding was specified for the OAS in the President's FY 2018 budget.

How can the Trump Administration and the State Department exercise moral leadership in the hemisphere when we are rejecting the one institution intended to promote democracy and hold rogue leaders and human rights abusers accountable?

**Answer:**

The United States continues to be engaged in the situation in Venezuela and to work closely with others, including the Organization of American States (OAS), to support peaceful solutions to the political and economic crisis in the country. Historically, the State Department has provided assessed contributions to the OAS through the Contributions to International Organizations (CIO) account and voluntary contributions through the International Organizations and Programs (IO&P) account.

The Department is in the process of finalizing how the FY 2018 CIO request of $996.4 million will be allocated among various international organizations to support assessed costs, including for the OAS.

With regard to voluntary contributions to the OAS, the Department prioritized resources to focus on our most pressing national security interests. As part of the Department's streamlining efforts, the FY 2018 budget does not request funding for the IO&P account, which has traditionally funded a voluntary contribution to the OAS. Regardless, the United States will

continue to engage diplomatically to advance prosperity, security, democracy, and the protection of human rights in Venezuela and throughout the region.

**Question:**
"What are U.S. diplomats currently doing to revive the peace process for the troubled country? Do you believe that, considering the regional equities at play, that a Special Envoy should be appointed to help diplomatically resolve this conflict in cooperation with other countries' special envoys?"

**Answer:**
In recent months, we have, along with Troika partners (Norway and the United Kingdom), encouraged the AU, the UN, and IGAD to play a more active role in convincing all parties in South Sudan to implement a cessation of hostilities in conjunction with the resumption of an inclusive political process. Following diplomatic pressure from the Troika, IGAD held an Extraordinary Summit on June 12 where it called for holding a "High-level Revitalization Forum" of the 2015 peace agreement that would be open to all "estranged parties." This marked the first regionally-sanctioned call for renewed political talks between the core warring parties since the resumption of hostilities in July 2016. In order to maintain pressure on the region and spur greater progress towards resolution of the conflict, we are encouraging regional capitals to quickly convene the forum, while noting that we will not be able to continue U.S. funding for the IGAD-established implementation mechanisms of the 2015 peace agreement indefinitely if the parties are not complying with its terms.

The Office of the Special Envoy for Sudan and South Sudan, led by a Senior Foreign Service officer, continues to be deeply engaged on these issues and in shaping and supporting U.S. policy, in close coordination with leadership of the Bureau of African Affairs. With the ongoing Department-wide organizational redesign, we are evaluating various roles, such as Special Envoys.

**Question:**
Bilateral Agreement with Kyrgyzstan
In 2015, the Government of Kyrgyzstan canceled its bilateral agreement with the United States regarding the provision of assistance after the State Department awarded Azimjon Askarov the Human Rights Defender award.
How has the cancellation of this agreement affected U.S. assistance to Kyrgyzstan? Please provide an update on efforts to negotiate a new agreement with Kyrgyzstan.
What are the primary points of disagreement in this negotiation? Are you optimistic that a new agreement will be reached?
Do you have an assessment of when the negotiations are likely to conclude?

**Answer:**
As a result of the cancellation of our 1993 bilateral assistance agreement, some of our initiatives are stalled due to tax implications. While we are able to continue many ongoing assistance activities, we have directed implementers not to engage in activities that incur taxes that exceed minimal amounts required for basic operations. A $6 million parliamentary strengthening program for Kyrgyzstan has also been cancelled because of the lack of a bilateral assistance agreement.

The Department of State and the U.S. Agency for International Development (USAID) have been in negotiations with the Government of the Kyrgyz Republic over the terms of a new bilateral agreement for economic and technical cooperation and humanitarian assistance since December, 2015. Since then, the negotiating teams on both sides have engaged in detailed discussions both in person and by video conference on a number of issues related to the provision of U.S. government assistance to Kyrgyzstan. The main points of disagreement relate to defining tax-exempt activity, and to the role of the Government of the Kyrgyz Republic in reviewing and approving proposed assistance programs. While the State Department and USAID negotiating teams remain hopeful that we will eventually conclude a new agreement, we are unable to predict at this point when negotiations are likely to conclude.

**Question:**
Given the Trump Administration's proposed 31% cut to the State Department and USAID, how do you see these cuts affecting our efforts to counter violent extremism in the long-run?

**Answer:**
Countering the terrorist narrative, messaging, recruitment, and inspiration to violence is a critical part of defeating ISIS and other terrorist groups and networks. In FY 2018, the Administration is requesting $228 million for countering violent extremism programs, which is an increase over previous years. This funding would support ongoing efforts to engage communities and reduce support for violent extremism in countries ranging from Bangladesh to Kosovo to Nigeria. In addition, the Department of State has requested $31.9 million in funding to support the staff and operations of the Global Engagement Center (GEC) to counter violent extremist messaging.

We encourage other donor countries, host-country governments and local partners to also take responsibility for these efforts. In fact, we have leveraged hundreds of millions of dollars over the last several years from Western European and other donors to fund many countering violent extremism initiatives and programming around the world.

**Question:**
Do you understand why national security leaders have urged us not to recharacterize our fight in terms of a fight against Islam?

**Answer:**
It is important to understand the role of religion and ideology in the context of violent extremism. Research shows that religion can play a role, but is rarely either the only or primary driver for violent radicalization.

CVE efforts must be guided by research and analysis of the specific context, where the drivers of violent extremism might be related to institutional and societal failures, such as systematic and gross human rights violations, ungoverned or poorly governed spaces, political, economic or social marginalization, or corruption and impunity. There are examples of violence in which religious ideology has played an important role (e.g. sectarian hate crimes); examples where non-religious ideology appears to have been a driver (e.g., racial hate crimes); and examples where an ideological component seems almost entirely absent.

**Question:**
What are you doing to make sure our rhetoric does not reinforce ISIS recruitment propaganda or undermine America's constitutional respect for religious freedom?

**Answer:**
The Department of State advances the mission of promoting respect for religious freedom, as enshrined in our Constitution, while pushing back against ISIS's violent extremist ideology. The Department supports several interfaith programs around the world, focusing on promoting dialogue between religious groups and raising awareness of the unique foundation for religious tolerance in the United States. The Department has over 900 Foreign Service public diplomacy officers in the field globally and has led several multi-media and local campaigns that foster cross cultural education, including, for example, an IIP project titled "Islam in America" that provides perspectives from Muslim Americans and shows the thousands of mosques and community centers that are a critical part of American civic society. Through our programming and exchange programs, the Department of State highlights the diversity of religious traditions in America, which serves as powerful antidote to ISIS's poisonous and violent propaganda.

**Question:**
What lessons have we learned from the last 15 years of CVE programming?
What are you doing to ensure that these lessons inform the programing we will undertake in the future?

**Answer:**
We've learned several lessons over the last 15 years, which we are actively working to implement through the Department of State's and USAID's CVE programming. First, we have learned that a comprehensive approach to address the drivers of violent extremism is critical to advancing the United States' national security and overall foreign policy goals. Second, violent extremism is not necessarily tied to a particular religion, ideology, or set of political beliefs, although there is consistency in the extremist ideology propagated and exploited by various terrorist organizations, particularly ISIS, to justify their violence.

Third, to be effective, CVE efforts must be guided by ongoing research and analysis of the context, drivers, and most effective responses. The nature and range of possible drivers of violent extremism can vary significantly from individual psychological factors to community and sectarian divisions and conflicts. Actions by states can serve as drivers of violent extremism, including state-sanctioned violence and heavy-handed tactics by security actors, corruption, systematic denial of fair trial guarantees, discriminatory governance practices, state propagation of religious and/or ethnic intolerance.

Fourth, programming must be community driven. We need to work in neighborhoods with the flexibility to address the local issues that make some open to recruitment. From program design to implementation, CVE practitioners should work with youth, local government, and others to ensure projects that will resonate in their communities.

**Question:**
What lessons have we learned from the last 15 years of CVE programming?
Under your leadership, how will our CVE efforts seek to address the underlying drivers of violent extremism, including security sector abuse, exclusion, and inequality?

**Answer:**

We have identified local, regional and global drivers that correlate with a higher risk of radicalization to violence, but we recognize that in any community a combination of factors can come together to create a higher risk. There is no one single pathway to violence, though there are certain commonalities.

State-sponsored violence and abuse correlates highly with the emergence of violent extremist organizations. Countries with above-average levels of state-sponsored violence and abuse double their risk of a violent extremist organization emerging.

Research has shown that individuals who have been forced to pay bribes for basic services may be more likely to support violent extremism. This research indicates that it is the personal experience of corruption, rather than general perceptions of corruption, which contributes to the spread of violent extremism.

There is a complicated relationship between economics and violent extremism. Terrorists are no more likely to be poor or unemployed or come from poorer countries. Those who are extremely poor are significantly less likely to support violent extremism than those who are not extremely poor. In some cases, however, a negative outlook regarding personal economic conditions is associated with violent extremist behavior.

Data has shown that perceptions of government discrimination against members of ethnic or religious groups may be associated with violent extremist behavior. This finding is supported by studies that indicate that perceptions of injustice and the belief that one's religion or identity is under threat, can drive violent extremism.

Our CVE efforts will continue to address these drivers by being designed and deployed in a coordinated fashion, and focused on those geographic areas and populations that are most at-risk of being radicalized and/or recruited by terrorist groups.

**Question:**

What lessons have we learned from the last 15 years of CVE programming?
What are you doing to develop outcome assessment metrics that can measure whether our CVE efforts are making an impact in reducing levels of support for violent extremism?

**Answer:**

Although it can be difficult to quantitatively measure the impact of CVE efforts (e.g., number of people not radicalized to violence), we are committed to monitoring and evaluating our efforts against specific benchmarks and goals. State and USAID are working on increasingly measuring progress towards joint strategic objectives.

Through State and USAID studies and research conducted by think-tanks and the intelligence community, we have a good sense of the kinds of people that are radicalized to violence and the locations where violent extremists recruit, even down to key localities. We also have a good sense of the drivers of radicalization to violence, and we know what kinds of programs are more effective against given drivers. We look at polls and surveys that measure perceptions and opinions of local populations toward terrorist groups, which can provide insight into the norms and beliefs that are evolving in at-risk communities. This information is critical for the design of our CVE programming – including specifying their particular metrics.

Our metrics knowledge continues to be further developed and disseminated across State and USAID. USAID, for example, through its Office of Transition Initiatives, is developing a

regional evaluation framework for programming in the Lake Chad Basin area. State's Bureau of Conflict and Stabilization Operations has developed a Monitoring & Evaluation Guide for the Department's CVE programming.

**Question:**
Have you consulted with the Office of the Legal Advisor to determine whether such payments violate the emoluments clause? If not, why not? If so, what was the determination?
Is the State Department doing anything to communicate to other countries that payments to President Trump could violate the U.S. Constitution?
Are you doing anything to ensure that these payments do not influence U.S. policy?

**Answer:**
Questions regarding foreign government payments to businesses in which the President has an interest are more appropriately addressed to the White House. The Department has not communicated to other countries regarding any such payments.

**Question:**
Have you personally reviewed the President's complete financial records so that you know of any foreign conflicts of interest?
If so, are they now State Department records? If not, how can you be certain the policies you're tasked to carry out advance the country's interests and not just the President's?
Given that the President, in a break with longstanding practice, has not made his tax returns public or put his assets in a blind trust, how can you assure us that the State Department will continue to put U.S. interests above the personal business interests of President Trump and his senior advisors?

**Answer:**
The Department has not reviewed the President's financial disclosure report and other financial records, nor would it be standard practice to do so. We would refer any questions regarding such records to the White House.

**Question**:
Protect and Preserve International Cultural Property Act (P.L. 114-151)
Section 3(a) of the Protect and Preserve International Cultural Property Act (P.L. 114-151) establishes a mechanism for restricting the importation of looted archaeological and ethnological material from Syria. Pursuant to this section, the Department of State and the Department of Homeland Security prepared a Designated List of objects from Syria restricted from import into the United States, which was published in the Federal Register on August 15, 2016 (81 FR 53916). Pursuant to Section 3(b), the President must make an annual determination regarding import restrictions and determine if: (1) "The Government of Syria is incapable ... of fulfilling the requirements to request an agreement under section 303 of the Convention on Cultural Property Implementation Act (19 U.S.C. 2602), including the requirements under subsection (a)(3) of that section"; or (2) "[i]t would be against the United States national interest to enter into such an agreement."
What steps are currently underway in the Department to make this determination for the coming year?

**Answer:**
On August 15, 2016, the Department of Homeland Security/Customs and Border Protection (CBP) and the Department of the Treasury published in the Federal Register a final rule, effective immediately, amending CBP regulations to reflect the imposition of emergency import restrictions on certain archaeological and ethnological material of Syria pursuant to Section 3(a) of the PPICPA (81 FR 53916).

The Department is now in the process of assessing the Government of Syria's (in)ability to request an agreement under section 303 of the Convention on Cultural Property Implementation Act (19 U.S.C. 2602) and/or whether it would be against the U.S. national interest to enter into such an agreement, which are the conditions set forth in Section 3(b)(1)(B) of the PPICPA. This assessment, in turn, will inform the Department's annual determination required by Section 3(b)(1)(A).

The Department will inform the Committee on Foreign Relations and the Committee on Finance of the Senate, and the Committee on Foreign Affairs and the Committee on Ways and Means of the House of Representatives, once a determination has been made.

**Question:**
Section 2 of the Protect and Preserve International Cultural Property Act (P.L. 114-151) states that it is the sense of Congress that the President establish an interagency coordinating committee "to coordinate the efforts of the executive branch to protect and preserve international cultural property at risk from political instability, armed conflict, or natural or other disasters" and that such a committee should "be chaired by a Department of State employee of Assistant Secretary rank or higher[.]" This interagency committee is to include "representatives of the Smithsonian Institution and Federal agencies with responsibility for the preservation and protection of international cultural property." A May 2017 document titled "Report to Congress on the Status of P.L. 114-151, Efforts of the Executive Branch to Protect and Preserve International Cultural Property," states that the Department of State established an interagency committee called the Cultural Heritage Coordinating Committee (CHCC) consistent with the sense of Congress in Section 2.

Who is the current chair of the Cultural Heritage Coordinating Committee?

Please identify the agencies and their representatives participating on the CHCC, and identify any and all agencies and individuals that have been invited to its meetings.

Is the Department of Defense representative with responsibility over the implementation of the 1954 Convention for the Protection of Cultural Property in the Event of Armed Conflict participating on the committee? If so, please identify that representative.

Is the Department of the Interior representative with responsibility over 16 U.S.C. section 470a-1 participating on the committee? If so, please identify that representative.

**Answer:**
The current chair, pursuant to presidential and internal DOS delegations, is Acting Assistant Secretary of State Mark Taplin. For information about representatives of other agencies I would direct you to those agencies.

**Question:**
Section 2 of Protect and Preserve International Cultural Property Act (P.L. 114-151) calls on an interagency coordinating committee to "consult with governmental and nongovernmental organizations, including [...] museums, educational institutions, and research institutions, and participants in the international art and cultural property market on efforts to protect and preserve international cultural property[.]"

To date, what efforts have been undertaken by the Cultural Heritage Coordinating Committee (CHCC) to consult with these stakeholders?
What efforts were made to include the participation of these stakeholders at the CHCC meetings held in November 2016 and March 2017 and in the planning for those meetings?

**Answer:**
The staff of the Cultural Heritage Center in the Bureau of Educational and Cultural Affairs at DOS, which coordinates the CHCC, consult with stakeholders in the course of fulfilling their regular ongoing duties to implement the 1983 Convention on Cultural Property Implementation Act, administer the Cultural Antiquities Task Force, and manage the Ambassadors Fund for Cultural Preservation. However, since the CHCC is, per the Sense of Congress in section 2 of the PPICPA, a governmental interagency coordinating committee, nongovernmental stakeholders have not directly participated in CHCC's meetings to date. That said, non-governmental stakeholders in cultural heritage issues are well-known to ECA and other CHCC members, and some have been recipients of funding to engage in cultural heritage protection and preservation activities around the world. ECA and its CHCC partners are exploring ways to amplify engagement of nongovernmental stakeholders with CHCC.

Toward this end, in early June 2017, just prior to the June CHCC meeting, the Department of State in conjunction with the Smithsonian Institution held an open public forum in Washington, D.C. focusing on cultural preservation in northern Iraq in the wake of the liberation of this area from ISIS. Mark Taplin, Acting Assistant Secretary of State and Richard Kurin, Acting Smithsonian Provost, made opening remarks. Panelists included moderator Nancy Wilkie, president of the U.S. Committee of the Blue Shield and member of the Cultural Property Advisory Committee (CPAC); Knox Thames, Special Advisor for Religious Minorities in the Near East and South/Central Asia at DOS; Jessica Johnson, Head of Conservation at the Smithsonian Museum Conservation Institute, and Susan Ackerman, President of American Schools of Oriental Research.

**Question:**
Section 2 of the Protect and Preserve International Cultural Property Act (P.L. 114-151) calls on an interagency coordinating committee to "consult with governmental and nongovernmental organizations, including the United States Committee of the Blue Shield, [...] on efforts to protect and preserve international cultural property[.]"

To date, what efforts have been undertaken by the Cultural Heritage Coordinating Committee (CHCC) to consult with the United States Committee of the Blue Shield?
What efforts were made to include the United States Committee of the Blue Shield at the CHCC meetings held in November 2016 and March 2017 and in the planning for those meetings?

**Answer:**
As the CHCC is, per the Sense of Congress in the Protect and Preserve International Cultural Property Act, a governmental interagency coordinating committee, nongovernmental stakeholders have not directly participated in CHCC's meetings to date. The Open Public Forum at the Smithsonian in June 2017 was an initial effort to engage nongovernmental stakeholders. Nancy Wilkie, president of the U.S. Committee of the Blue Shield and member of the presidentially-appointed Cultural Property Advisory Committee (CPAC), moderated this forum. As a member of CPAC, Dr. Wilkie has offered regular guidance on issues relating to cultural property protection to the State Department's Bureau of Educational and Cultural Affairs (ECA). ECA and the other CHCC members will explore other ways to engage non-governmental stakeholders.

**Question:**
The protection, preservation, or restoration of international cultural heritage at risk from political instability, armed conflict, and natural disasters has long been an important part of U.S. international engagement.
Can you provide any examples of the protection, preservation, or restoration of international cultural heritage at risk in which the philanthropic community has contributed to the funding of such activities jointly with the U.S. Department of State?
How much funding did the U.S. Department of State provide?

**Answer:**
The State Department, through the U.S. Ambassadors Fund for Cultural Preservation (AFCP) and other mechanisms, has jointly funded a limited number of projects with other governments and private philanthropic organizations to protect, preserve, and restore international cultural heritage at risk. In some countries, such as Libya and Nepal, projects have involved preventive conservation and mitigation of risk of damage or destruction from conflict or natural disasters. In other countries, such as Bosnia and Herzegovina, Thailand, the Philippines, and (again) Nepal, projects have focused on post-conflict or post-disaster cultural heritage recovery. In these and other cases, State Department support has enabled State Department grantees to leverage additional funding from other sources, including foreign governments and philanthropic institutions.

a) In Libya, for instance, the Department has invested more than $1.4 million since 2005 in cultural heritage risk reduction training and capacity building for Libyan archaeologists, museum professionals, and civil society. In 2015, AFCP grantee Oberlin College successfully leveraged funding from the Richard Lounsbery Foundation (Washington, D.C.) to extend an AFCP-supported month-long U.S.-based training program for Libyan archaeologists. Through a separate initiative funded by the Bureau of Near Eastern Affairs (NEA), and with the support of non-federal organizations and donors including the Getty Conservation Institute, the Whiting Foundation, and the Kaplan Fund, the

American Schools of Oriental Research (ASOR) is carrying out projects to document, protect, and preserve the cultural heritage of war-torn Syria, northern Iraq, and Libya.

In Nepal between 2009 and 2014, the Department invested $1.24 million in the restoration and seismic strengthening of the Patan Royal Palace Museum, a 17th-century landmark, World Heritage site, and important driver of cultural tourism in the Kathmandu Valley. With AFCP support in hand, the grantee, the Kathmandu Valley Preservation Trust (KVPT), successfully leveraged supplementary support from other foreign governments, private philanthropic foundations, and a Nepali commercial bank to expand the conservation work. That investment in seismic strengthening paid off in late April 2015, when the museum survived the 7.8 magnitude Nepal Earthquake and was the first major tourist attraction to re-open. Since the earthquake, State has invested an additional $1.5 million in seismic strengthening and post-earthquake restoration of other major landmarks in the Valley. With U.S. funding secured, grantees KVPT and California-based Miyamoto Global Disaster Relief have contributed their own resources and have successfully leveraged additional funds from the governments of Germany and Austria, the Prince Claus Fund (Netherlands), the World Monuments Fund (USA), the Gerda Henkel Foundation (Germany), and private donors.
In Thailand, where the State Department is supporting a major post-disaster cultural heritage recovery project at the World Heritage site of Ayutthaya, grantee World Monuments Fund (WMF) has taken the lead in raising funds from private, corporate, and other donors to supplement the $700,000 awarded in 2013 through AFCP.

That said, the jointly supported cultural heritage preservation activities in the Middle East and North Africa, Nepal, and Thailand described above are the exception, not the rule. In most countries and communities where the risks to cultural heritage are less well known to international donors, State Department funding through AFCP is the main or only source of support. A project site's location and notoriety, combined with donor priorities and interests, including commercial interests, are, by and large, the main drivers of private sector investment in international cultural heritage preservation.

**Question:**

How much funding did the philanthropic community provide? What steps is the Department of State undertaking to encourage public-private partnerships with U.S. non-profit organizations and other universities to encourage the protection, preservation, or restoration of international cultural property that is at risk?

**Answer:**

The total funding provided by the philanthropic community for the protection, preservation, or restoration of international cultural heritage at risk is not known because no reporting mechanism for such support exists currently. In June 2017, the Whiting Foundation convened a two-day meeting of international cultural heritage preservation donors, which attracted American and European donors, both public and private. The purpose of that meeting, attended by the AFCP Program Director, was to begin to explore opportunities for collaboration

in international cultural heritage preservation among public and private sector donors with an eye towards avoiding double-funding and duplication of effort. Post-meeting conversations among the attendees are on-going.

The State Department welcomes cost participation on AFCP and other State-supported cultural heritage preservation projects and is open to the possibility of public-private partnerships in the sector.

**Question:**
The Department of State is charged with implementing the Convention on Cultural Property Implementation Act, 19 U.S.C. sections 2601-13, which established the Cultural Property Advisory Committee (CPAC) to advise the President or his designee as to whether to enter into and renew bilateral agreements with foreign States to restrict the import of undocumented archaeological and ethnological materials. This committee serves an important role in gathering feedback from stakeholder groups, reviewing submissions from foreign States, and providing advice to the Department. Pursuant to 19 U.S.C. section 2605(e)(1), the Department is required to provide to the Committee "such administrative and technical support services and assistance as it may reasonably require to carry out its activities."

Is the Department considering any changes to the way CPAC meetings are conducted, the opportunity for public comment and participation in meetings, the Department staff charged with supporting the Committee, or the amount of funding or other resources made available to support the Committee?

Additionally, please provide to our committee copies of all reports submitted by the Department to Congress, as required by 19 U.S.C. section 2602(g), related to all bilateral agreements entered into or renewed from the past 5 years.
Please also provide the report submitted by the Department to Congress, as required by 19 U.S.C. section 2602(g), in regard to the bilateral agreement with Canada, which was not renewed in 2002.

**Answer:**
CPAC meetings typically have been held in Washington, D.C. The number of meetings per year has ranged from two to four within a 12 month span. In the interest of efficiency and cost-saving, the Department is considering convening some meetings via video-conference. Public participation can also be facilitated via video-conferencing. The CPAC meeting scheduled for July 19-20, 2017, is piloting this format.

In addition to publishing notification in the Federal Register of the receipt of a foreign government cultural property request, the Department proactively publishes public summaries of such requests on its website. The Department also proactively, through the Federal Register, invites comment from outside interested parties, as well as their participation in the open sessions of a Committee meeting. Written comments are submitted via regulations.gov. Although this is not a statutory requirement, inviting such comment via written and oral statement has been a practice for more than twenty years. It enriches the Committee's capacity for broader understanding of the particular matter under consideration. In addition,

cultural property analysts whose research supports the work of the CPAC also reach out to stakeholders such as museums, experts in the international sale of cultural property, and other experts who may have relevant information concerning the required determinations of a particular foreign government request under consideration.

The Department, which is charged by statute to administer and support the CPAC, provides the funds necessary for the CPAC to carry out its statutory responsibilities.

We will forward separately to the Committee all reports submitted by the Department to Congress, as required by 19 U.S.C. section 2602(g), related to bilateral agreements entered into or renewed within the past 5 years.

We will also separately forward to the Committee the report submitted by the Department to Congress, as required by 19 U.S.C. section 2602(g), in regard to the bilateral agreement with Canada, which was not renewed in 2002.

Questions for the Record Submitted to
Secretary of State Rex W. Tillerson by
Representative Dana Rohrabacher
House Foreign Affairs Committee
June 14, 2017

**Question:**

Please describe in detail any DOS resources or personnel that have been or might be directed toward activities in support of the National Ocean Policy. In doing so, please provide specific references to FY 2018 budget request line items, if any, that you would intend to use to support DOS's continued participation in National Ocean Policy activities, and describe in detail DOS's completed and planned National Ocean Policy-related activities.

**Answer:**

As the National Ocean Policy is focused almost entirely on domestic United States issues, the Department of State's participation has largely been limited to involvement in interagency discussions and meetings. The Department has not requested any new funding for implementing the National Ocean Policy.

**Question:**

Given that this unnecessary and overreaching Executive Order conflicts with the new administration's priorities for job creation, economic growth, and reducing red tape and regulatory hurdles, what if any steps is DOS taking to review its participation in this unauthorized and unfunded initiative?

**Answer:**

The Department is reviewing a broad set of issues, including with respect to the National Ocean Policy, to ensure alignment with administration policy and priorities to advance America's national security and economic interests.

**Question:**

What if any commitment can you make that DOS will not take part in any further actions to implement the National Ocean Policy until the new administration has had a chance to review its position on it?

**Answer:**

The Department is reviewing a broad set of issues, including with respect to the National Ocean Policy, to ensure alignment with Administration policy. Any Department action further to the National Ocean Policy would be consistent with administration policy guidance on the matter.

Question for the Record Submitted to
Secretary of State Rex Tillerson by
Representative Brad Sherman
House Foreign Affairs Committee
June 14, 2017

**Question:**

Please submit for the record, how the Department of State would spend a 10%, 20%, or 30% increment to its budget? What would your recommendation be if those funds were available?

**Answer:**

The Department of State and U.S. Agency for International Development (USAID) support the President's FY 2018 budget request which will protect our national security, foster economic prosperity, assert leadership, and ensure effectiveness and accountability for U.S. taxpayer dollars. The Department looks forward to working with Congress as we obligate and expend funds consistent with applicable laws.

**Question:**

Can you submit a list of those acting Department of State Assistant Secretaries, Under Secretaries, Directors, and other would-be nominated positions that you would recommend hold their positions?

**Answer:**

The Department is working closely with the White House on the identification of qualified candidates for senior leadership positions. Following White House announcements and nominations, the Department looks forward to working closely with Congress during the confirmation process.

**Question:**

Is the Trump Administration committed to implementation of last year's extension of the U.S.-Israel MOU on security assistance?

**Answer:**

The United States has a deep and abiding commitment to Israel's security, an important component of which is the preservation of Israel's Qualitative Military Edge (QME) over potential regional threats. With the support of sustained U.S. security assistance, Israel has developed one of the most advanced, formidable militaries in the world. The Department will continue close consultation with Congress in support of our unwavering security commitment towards Israel.

Under our new ten-year MOU, the administration is committed to request $3.3 billion per year in Foreign Military Financing for Israel from Fiscal Year 2019 to 2028. It also commits to $500 million per year from the Department of Defense to support cooperative missile defense programs. This will help ensure that Israel has the resources it needs to maintain state-of-the-art defense platforms and deter any external threat it faces.

**Question:**
How do you view America's role in international affairs and the global world order? On May 3, 2017, you spoke to the dedicated men and women of the Department of State. In those remarks, you made the assertion that our values are different and separate from our policies. I could not disagree more. Rather, excluding our values from our work severely diminishes our decades of credibility as a leader among other nations, and negatively impacts our ability to support global stability based on principles of democratic governance, commitment to international conventions and agreements, and respect for human rights. How do you believe that our values are relevant to our diplomatic and development efforts overseas? How will you ensure these values drive our diplomacy and development work? What are some specific examples of ways in which basing our policy on our values benefits our national security?

**Answer:**
Over the course of the past 70 years, America's leadership role in global world order and international affairs institutionalized through a posture of strength from strategic focus on security and prosperity, both of which we continue to share extraordinarily with Allies & Partners. This posture of strength is the foundation for our ability to build foreign policy upon our values of freedom, human dignity, and treatment of people globally.

"America First" for national security and economic prosperity comes by way of deep engagement with Allies & Partners critical to our success. We build foreign policy by balance of values and interests. Alliances are bonds of trust created to protect or complement shared values, while Partnerships are interest-concentrated collaborations operationally conditional to values. The diplomatic and development work we pursue always reflects and advances American values as best possible in light of the rapidly shifting global trends that shape realities of our leadership. The prosperity policy we promote globally premises in fact that as we develop bilateral investments, global entrepreneurship, innovative markets, and other major prosperity initiatives with Allies & Partners, the value to human rights and of national security directly correlates.

**Question:**
Our assistance program for Nagorno Karabakh has, since FY98, supported life-saving maternal health care, provided clean drinking water for families, and cleared mines and unexploded ordnance from farms and villages. HALO Trust, which is leading the demining effort, reports that it has completed much of its mission, but needs continued U.S. support to finish its life-saving work. Additional humanitarian needs exist in Nagorno Karabakh - which, aside from U.S. aid and help from Armenia, does not receive any international or multi-national assistance or development support. Among these unmet needs are rehabilitation services, such as those that the Lady Cox Rehabilitation Center seeks - within its limited means - to provide for children, adults, and the elderly with disabilities. Are you supportive of continued U.S. assistance to Nagorno Karabakh, with a special focus on completing demining efforts and expanding our support to include health care and rehabilitation services?

**Answer:**
Since 1998, the United States has provided over $45 million in humanitarian assistance to victims of the Nagorno-Karabakh conflict, including food, shelter, emergency and medical supplies, access to quality healthcare and water, and demining projects.

The FY 2018 budget request supports the President's commitment to make the U.S. government leaner and more accountable to the American taxpayer, while maximizing our diplomatic and engagement efforts, including with our international partners.

With respect to Nagorno Karabakh, current U.S.-funded assistance programs have prioritized humanitarian demining. USAID's program with HALO Trust is scheduled for completion in September 2017. HALO Trust estimates that by this time, they will have cleared 97.6 percent of the areas that require demining. The State Department and USAID support the demining program and are currently reviewing information from HALO Trust requesting additional funds, while taking into account available resources and competing priorities. We remain focused on completing demining as quickly and as thoroughly as possible.

**Question:**

Has the Department of State formally requested that the Republic Turkey waive all claims of diplomatic immunity for those foreign diplomats or security personnel involved, either directly or indirectly in the May 16th assault at Sheridan Circle against peaceful protesters?

**Answer:**

No, the Department has not asked for a waiver of immunity from the Republic of Turkey. The Department of State is working with the Department of Justice to examine the findings of the investigation and is weighing what additional steps might be appropriate in this context. Each case will be considered individually and we will take into consideration the specific individual charges in any additional response.

**Question:**

To your knowledge, Has President Erdogan apologized or expressed any regret for the conduct of his bodyguards?

**Answer:**

The Department of State has no knowledge of President Erdogan apologizing or expressing regret for the May 16 assault.

**Question:**

Armenia has welcomed over 20,000 refugees from Syria and, more broadly, has expressed willingness to serve as a regional safe haven for religious and other minorities fleeing violence and intolerance in the Middle East. Are you willing to work with Congress to help provide Armenia - a landlocked, blockaded nation of limited means - with the resources needed to support transitional programs for at-risk refugees, including short-term housing/rental assistance and social and economic integration initiatives?

**Answer:**

The United States commends Armenia's welcoming of over 20,000 Syrians. The United States has provided sustained support for Syrians in Armenia, and worldwide, via contributions to international humanitarian organizations, including: the UN High Commissioner for Refugees, the International Committee of the Red Cross, as well as NGOs such as World Vision, the

American Bar Association, Mission Armenia, the Armenian Red Cross Society, and the Aleppo Compatriotic Charitable Organization. The United States is UNHCR's largest donor, providing about a quarter of their budget worldwide. UNHCR continues to provide needs-based assistance to persons of concern in Armenia, regardless of citizenship status.

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**Question:**
Chairman Royce and Ranking Member Engel are leading a bipartisan initiative - known as the Royce-Engel Peace Proposals - to keep the peace in and around Nagorno-Karabakh. The proposals call for 1) the placement of OSCE-monitored, advanced gunfire locator systems and sound-ranging equipment along the line of contact to determine the source of attacks, 2) the addition of OSCE observers along the line of contact, and 3) an agreement on the non-deployment of snipers, heavy arms, and any new military hardware along the line of contact. The State Department has endorsed these cease-fire strengthening proposals, as has the OSCE, Armenia, and Nagorno-Karabakh. Only Azerbaijan opposes the Royce-Engel proposals, effectively obstructing their implementation. Will the Department of State support U.S. funding for the Royce-Engel peace proposals?

**Answer:**
As a Co-Chair of the Minsk Group, the United States has played an active role in mediating a comprehensive settlement of this longstanding conflict, the resolution of which would usher in a new era of peace and prosperity for the people of the South Caucasus.

The State Department supports proposals to withdraw snipers, launch an OSCE investigation mechanism, and deploy sensors along the Line of Contact and the Armenia-Azerbaijan international border. We have been a strong advocate in the Minsk Group process for these confidence-building measures, which we believe would reduce violence in areas affected by the conflict. In light of recent ceasefire violations, which have resulted in multiple civilian casualties, the urgency of implementing such measures has never been greater. U.S. Co-Chair Ambassador Richard Hoagland, together with his Russian and French counterparts, is discussing

these proposals with the sides at the highest levels. We also continue to call upon the sides to cease military action and return to the negotiation table as soon as possible.

**Question**:
Would you agree to a suspension of U.S. military aid to Azerbaijan until its government ceases its attacks against Armenia and Nagorno-Karabakh, ends its threat of renewed war, and agrees to the peaceful resolution of regional conflicts?

**Answer**:
U.S. assistance to Azerbaijan promotes U.S. national security interests, which is why every Administration has waived Section 907 of the FREEDOM Support Act every year since 2002. The most recent waiver was signed on March 27, 2017. However, as a matter of policy, the United States does not approve any security assistance or sales that could undermine efforts to find a peaceful settlement of the conflict between Azerbaijan and Armenia. The United States remains actively engaged as one of the Minsk Group Co-Chairs to help the sides move towards a negotiated settlement.

**Question:**
In the wake of the 2015 signing of a U.S.-Armenia Trade and Investment Framework Agreement, we witnessed a surge in U.S. commercial engagement in Armenia - including, as reported by our Ambassador, Richard Mills, upwards of $500,000,000 in new American investments in Armenia's energy and mining sectors. Similarly, a new U.S.-Armenia Double Tax Treaty, by establishing a clear legal framework for investors and individuals who have business activities in both jurisdictions, will facilitate the further expansion of U.S.-Armenia economic relations, by eliminating the threat of double taxation. Will you engage the Secretary of the Treasury regarding the mutual benefits of negotiating a U.S.-Armenia Double Tax Treaty?

**Answer:**
The expansion of trade and commercial ties is an important element of the United States' bilateral relationship with Armenia. We continue to advocate for reforms that will help improve the business climate for U.S. firms in Armenia, including eliminating corruption, increasing judicial independence, and strengthening intellectual property protections. While we are confident the Trade and Investment Framework Agreement (TIFA) and resulting TIFA Council will prove to be useful tools for tackling existing trade issues and boosting levels of trade, the recent investments in Armenia's energy and mining sectors were underway before the TIFA was signed. The Department of State has discussed the Government of Armenia's interest in concluding a new double taxation treaty with the Treasury Department and understands that at this time, U.S. firms operating in Armenia are able to obtain relief from double taxation under existing U.S. law.

Questions for the Record Submitted to
Secretary Rex Tillerson by
Representative Steve Chabot
House Foreign Affairs Committee
June 14, 2017

**Question:**

General Coordinator for the High Negotiations Committee Dr. Riad Hijab recently met with French President Emmanuel Macron in the Elysee Palace to discuss the opposition's stance on a political solution in Syria. In the meeting, Hijab made clear the opposition's commitment to the political process and their willingness to contribute to the implementation of any U.N. resolutions. He also noted the need to improve the humanitarian situation for the Syrian people. Do you have plans to meet with Dr. Hijab to discuss these matters?

**Answer:**

Members of my team at the Department of State meet regularly with Dr. Hijab to discuss the Syrian civil war and the High Negotiations Committee's efforts to reach a political agreement to end the conflict via the UN-sponsored Geneva intra-Syria talks. Department of State personnel spoke with Dr. Hijab as recently as August 2, and also discussed the political process with him during the latest round of the Geneva talks in July. Dr. Hijab met with Acting Assistant Secretary Stuart Jones on April 6.

Dr. Hijab is an important contact and the Department of State has relayed the United States' appreciation and gratitude to Dr. Hijab for his enduring efforts and dedication to the cause of a better future for the Syrian people.

The United States continues to pursue a reduction in the level of violence in Syria, ensure the unhindered access to humanitarian assistance, defeat ISIS and other terrorist organizations, and create the conditions for a credible political resolution. To this end, Department of State officials will continue to work with Dr. Hijab, whose expertise and leadership are invaluable.

**Question:**

Secretary Tillerson, you stated in the hearing that "we are completely committed to the Taiwan Relations Act, and fulfilling all our commitments to them under the act" and you indicated that the Administration is currently discussing with China, the future of the U.S.-China relationship over the next 50 years. You also raised questions regarding the sustainability of the One China Policy. It is important to note that any changes to our "One China Policy" may affect not only our relationship with China, but also the relationship with our ally, Taiwan. I have several questions:

- Is the Administration currently reviewing the "One China Policy"?
- If the Administration conducts a review of the "One China Policy", will the State Department maintain close consultation with the government of Taiwan during the process?

- What is the status of our discussion with China as it relates to the U.S.-Taiwan relationship?

**Answer:**

We remain committed to our One China Policy, which is based on the three joint communiques and the Taiwan Relations Act.

The United States has a deep and abiding interest in cross-Strait peace and stability. Stable cross-Strait ties have been important and beneficial to both sides of the Taiwan Strait, the United States, and the region.

Questions for the Record Submitted to
Secretary of State Tillerson by
Representative Gregory Meeks
House Foreign Affairs Committee
June 14, 2017

**Question:**

Will you address congressional intent that Rangel and Pickering Fellows join the Foreign Service by lifting the freeze on A100 classes for Pickering and Rangel fellows?

**Answer:**

The Pickering and Rangel Fellowship diversity recruitment programs were created to increase diversity in the Foreign Service. Fellows are trained to and expect to join the Foreign Service upon the completion of the programs. Historically, the Fellows have entered the Foreign Service as career conditional entry level officers.

As of June 14, the Department was unable to offer this year's cadre of Fellows a spot in an A-100 class at that time, as had been customary. We value these talented individuals and are determined to bring their skills into the Department. Although the Department was not able to offer the Fellows a spot in an A-100 class as of June 14, the Department offered them the opportunity to join the Consular Fellows Program as an alternative to waiting until the next A-100 class. Fellows were given the option to choose to enter the Foreign Service as a Consular Fellow now, or wait until the next A-100 class, depending on their personal and individual circumstances. Fellows who would have chosen to begin their service as Consular Fellows would have been placed in the next available A-100 class upon completion of their one or two two-year Consular Fellows tour(s).

As of June 29, we are pleased to share that the Department will hold A-100 entry-level Foreign Service Officer classes in July and September. All eligible Pickering and Rangel Fellows have been offered spots in these classes. The Department looks forward to welcoming these talented individuals and the entire future membership of these upcoming A-100 classes to our workforce.

**Question:**

Has the state department decided to reduce the number of incoming Pickering and Rangel programs from 30 to 20?

**Answer:**

No, the Department is not reducing the number of Pickering and Rangel Fellows. The number per program remains at 30. The recruitment for the 2018 cohort of Rangel Fellows began earlier this month and recruitment for the 2018 cohort of Pickering Fellows will begin in October.

The Department appreciates that Congress authorized an increase in the Rangel and Pickering programs each by 10 Fellows in Section 706 of the 2017 Department of State Authorization Act. This increase did not occur in FY2017 as this directive did not come with additional funding.

**Question:**

Do you plan to issue a waiver to exempt these fellows from the hiring freeze? If not, why?

**Answer:**

A waiver is not necessary. The Department is unable to offer this year's cadre of Fellows a spot in an A-100 class at this time, as has been customary. However, the Department offered Fellows the opportunity to join the Consular Fellows Program as an alternative to waiting until the next A-100 class. Fellows who chose to begin their service as Consular Fellows would be placed in the next available A-100 class upon completion of their one or two two-year Consular Fellows tour(s).

**Question:**

Do you or someone senior on your team have plans to meet with the fellows immediately to explain this change to them in-person and allow them to ask questions directly?

**Answer:**

During earlier discussions subsequent to offering positions in the Consular Fellows Program as an alternative to the uncertainty of waiting for the next Generalist Orientation Class (A-100), the Student and Fellowship Program team was in daily contact with fellows. In the interests of fairness, since it was impossible to reach in person all fellows at the same time, the Department created a master list of questions and answers which was circulated daily to all affected fellows. The Program officers also met with representatives of the Pickering and Rangel Fellows Alumni Association as well as with members of the Association of Black American Ambassadors.

**Question:**

How much of the diversity currently represented in the Foreign Service is a result of the Rangel and Pickering programs?

**Answer:**

The Department is committed to the Pickering and Rangel programs as our premier diversity recruitment programs, which together are responsible for 21% of the diversity currently in the Foreign Service.

**Question:**

With the recent resignation of Arnold Chacon as Director General and absent a Deputy Secretary for Management and Resources, what leadership do you have in place to address and act on these issues?

**Answer:**

We have a deep bench of experienced career professionals serving in key positions that are highly capable and able to help the Secretary lead the Department & advance U.S. interests worldwide. The Department is organized into bureaus with regional or functional responsibilities headed by an Assistant Secretary or equivalent and each Assistant Secretary has a Deputy who is prepared to assume his/her responsibilities on short notice for any length of time necessary. Daily decisions are being made. There is an Acting Director General, former Ambassador William Todd.

**Question:**

The State Department led U.S.-Brazil Joint Action Plan to Eliminate Racial and Ethnic Discrimination and Promote Equality (JAPER), and the U.S.-Colombia Action Plan on Racial and Ethnic Equality have been important ways to collaborate and coordinate efforts to address systemic racial discrimination. What resources within the State Department are dedicated to continued support of these important mechanisms for the advancement of marginalized and underserved communities?

**Answer:**

The Bureau of Western Hemisphere Affairs (WHA) remains committed to promoting racial and ethnic equality and social inclusion, and created the Race, Ethnicity, and Social Inclusion Unit (RESIU) in 2010 to coordinate and implement bilateral and regional work focused on African descendant and indigenous economic opportunities, access to justice, education, health, and environmental justice.

Under CAPREE, signed in January 2010, the United States and Colombia work together to share best practices, implement programs to address social and economic barriers affecting African descendant and indigenous communities, and promote solutions to the challenges of racial and ethnic discrimination in both countries. The Department's ongoing bilateral engagement advances these CAPREE goals, including through support for a range of programs seeking to expand opportunities for economic empowerment, facilitate access to education, and promote youth leadership.

Public diplomacy resources also complement CAPREE through academic, citizen, cultural, and youth exchanges that engage African descendant and indigenous communities in both countries, in partnership with key education and civil society stakeholders. Visitor and speakers programs, language training opportunities, peace- focused collaborations, as well as youth and scholar leadership programs, are key bilateral examples. The Department advances CAPREE priorities through regular meetings with civil society and high-level engagement with the Colombian government.

USAID programming, such as the Afro-Colombian and Indigenous Program (ACIP), also supports CAPREE. USAID provided $15 million in FY 2015 and $15 million in FY 2016 in Afro-Colombian and indigenous programming. USAID's follow-on *Inclusion for Peace Activity* is a four-year initiative that aims to build on progress realized under ACIP and continue to foster social and economic inclusion of Afro-Colombian and indigenous communities as a means of advancing peace and reconciliation in Colombia. Interagency partners and the private sector also implement programs supporting CAPREE.

As an upper middle-income country, Brazil does not receive significant foreign assistance. Public diplomacy-funded programming complements JAPER through efforts that highlight the importance of racial and ethnic equality in education, economic, cultural, and other sectors. For example, English-language micro-scholarships have provided two-year opportunities for Afro-Brazilian youth to learn English at Binational Centers. The non-traditional nature of JAPER and CAPREE also go beyond bilateral government coordination and leverage private sector and civil society's energy to carry out exchanges, entrepreneurial activities, and other thematic best practice collaboration, to mutually benefit the United States, Brazil, and Colombia.

**Question:**

The Indigenous and Afro-Colombian Communities in Colombia have been some of the hardest hit by decades of conflict in that nation. The Peace Agreement has the potential to lead to advancements, but the post-conflict period is a time of increased vulnerability and violence in the remote areas that is home to many in these communities. How do you envision the FY 2018 budget request 44 percent drop in assistance affecting Afro-Colombian and Indigenous populations in Colombia? To what extent is the State Department prepared to assist these communities in this post-conflict phase?

**Answer:**

As the President reaffirmed in his May 18 meeting with Colombian President Juan Manuel Santos, the United States remains committed to helping the Colombian government secure a just and lasting peace. In the context of the Administration's focused approach to foreign assistance, the United States will continue to help Colombia implement the peace accord. The inclusion of historically marginalized groups in accord implementation is essential. We were strong proponents for the accord's Ethnic Chapter and continue to encourage the Colombian government to implement all aspects of the accord, including measures to guarantee the rights of those most affected by conflict.

We employ a holistic approach to promote peace, human rights, and social inclusion of indigenous and Afro-Colombian populations and other historically marginalized communities in Colombia, and will continue to advance these efforts through programming, the U.S.-Colombia Action Plan on Racial and Ethnic Equality, and our annual high-level dialogue with the Colombian government.

Building on prior year programs, our FY 2018 assistance will help the Colombian government implement the peace agreement and focus on special U.S. capabilities and technical expertise to catalyze and enhance Colombia's own peace accord implementation efforts. Our programming focuses U.S. assistance on: (1) security, including the government's counternarcotics efforts and reintegration of ex-combatants; (2) the expansion of state institutions and presence in former rebel areas, including rural economic development and humanitarian demining; and (3) justice services and other support for victims. USAID's support for these three lines of effort is concentrated in the regions hardest hit by the conflict and assists the most marginalized and vulnerable populations affected by the conflict. Across USAID's portfolio in Colombia, programs engage Afro-Colombian and indigenous communities to build licit economies; strengthen citizens' democratic engagement with local, regional, and national governments on key issues, particularly those related to peace implementation; and expand

access to justice and other services to victims and vulnerable populations. In addition to this cross-cutting effort to engage these communities, USAID's Inclusion for Peace Activity (IPA), a program which began in 2016 and will continue until 2020, focuses on increasing the economic and social inclusion of Afro-Colombians and indigenous communities in targeted regions of the country as a means to advance peace and reconciliation.

**Question:**

The countries in the Western Balkans are facing internal turmoil and are under external pressure to abandon their work towards Euro-Atlantic integration. What is the Administration's plan for securing peace and encouraging reform given the important role the U.S. has played in the Yugoslav wars of the past decades?

**Answer:**

A stable, prosperous Western Balkans that is integrated into Europe and a strong partner on counter-terrorism will help make America safer, open up new opportunities for American business, and ensure peace in the region. To accomplish this goal, the countries of the region need to commit themselves to the deep reforms needed to make their societies a success. We are committed to seeing the region integrated into the European family of democratic, prosperous nations and partnered with the United States in advancing our common interest in a continent whole, free, and at peace.

The United States has been active in helping the countries of the Western Balkans to confront the various challenges that they face and encourage reforms that will allow the people of the region to enjoy stability and prosperity. Perhaps most importantly, we are taking steps to shore up the rule of law and stamp out corruption in the region by pressing regional leaders to accelerate needed institutional reforms. For example, with our assistance, Albania is implementing wide-ranging judicial reforms that will dramatically strengthen the rule of law and reduce wide-spread corruption. Montenegro's new Office of the Special Prosecutor has cracked down on corruption within the government, bringing charges against nine senior officials and opening investigations against several dozen more. In Serbia, a USAID program has helped streamline business inspections and automate the building permit process, a reform that was partially responsible for Serbia moving up 44 spots in the World Bank's Ease of Doing Business survey over the past two years, to number 47 in the world. We are urging political leaders and criminal justice institutions to show the will and courage to aggressively investigate, prosecute, and punish corrupt actors and the organized crime groups they protect.

Across the Balkans, we are also working to spur economic growth by improving the business climate. We are fostering communication between governments and business leaders, which has encouraged improved regulatory systems, decreased red tape, and a more level playing field for foreign investors. We are also helping the countries of the Western Balkans to develop more competitive economies through our regional and bilateral programming, which is aimed at integrating and harmonizing regional markets, with a special focus on bolstering ties with the EU. This will increase private sector competitiveness in key sectors, including IT, tourism, and agribusiness, as well as improve financial sector stability and growth by accelerating market integration and expanding access to capital for small- and medium-sized enterprises.

We are also pushing the region to make the needed reforms that will transform their countries into stable, prosperous societies. In Montenegro, we worked with the government to help it make the reforms needed to join NATO. Though Bosnia's political institutions are still deeply dysfunctional, we are working with leaders there and with our European partners to encourage much-needed political reforms before the 2018 election. And we have been a strong backer of the EU-led Serbia-Kosovo Dialogue, with the goal of normalizing that relationship and advancing each country's progress on their respective European paths.

**Question:**

The Minsk Accord has proven to be inadequate in stopping the fighting in Ukraine between Russia-backed forces and those defending Ukraine. With the war simmering in the East, how does the 2018 budget help the democratizing and anti-corruption forces in Ukraine continue their work?

**Answer:**

The reduced FY 2018 budget reflects our goal to become more efficient in accomplishing our key policy objectives in Ukraine. Funds will continue to be used to fight corruption and promote the rule of law by supporting non-governmental anti-corruption organizations, preventing trafficking in persons, facilitating access to justice, and advancing judicial reform. Anti-corruption measures, such as strengthening ethics codes and conflict of interest policies and training, will promote good governance, transparency, and accountability.

Questions for the Record Submitted to
Secretary of State Rex Tillerson by
Representative Ted Poe
House Foreign Affairs Committee Hearing
June 14, 2017

**Question:**

In 2008, Russia illegally occupied a third of Georgia. Six years later, Putin's troops seized the Crimean Peninsula from Ukraine and occupied eastern portions of the country. What will the State Department's policy be regarding these heinous acts of Russian aggression? Will it be U.S. policy to allow Russia to remain in control of these territories?

**Answer:**

The United States strongly supports Georgia's territorial integrity, independence, and sovereignty within its internationally recognized borders. We participate in the Geneva International Discussions, the forum that addresses the ongoing security and humanitarian consequences of the 2008 conflict. In response to Russia's actions in 2008, the United States provided $1 billion in assistance to support Georgia's sovereignty and continued efforts to reform and integrate into Euro-Atlantic institutions. Our political and assistance support to Georgia continues. Our view is that every country has a right to chart its own future.

The United States also strongly supports Ukraine's territorial integrity, independence and sovereignty within its internationally recognized borders. We do not, nor will we ever, recognize the occupation and attempted annexation of Crimea and call on Russia to cease its aggression in eastern Ukraine. In response to these actions, the United States, together with European and other like-minded partners, imposed sanctions on Russia. As we, the EU, and our likeminded partners have repeatedly stated, our Ukraine-related sanctions on Russia will remain in place until Moscow fully honors its commitments under the Minsk agreements and reverses the actions that triggered our sanctions, while our separate, Crimea-related sanctions will remain in place until Russia returns full control of the peninsula to Ukraine.

In addition to our support for Ukraine's territorial integrity, the United States is implementing a robust assistance program to build democratic institutions, promote economic development, combat corruption, and strengthen Euro-Atlantic integration—which is critical in confronting Russian aggression.

In Georgia and Ukraine, our assistance is focused on building resilience, strengthening democratic institutions, and improving the economies away from dependence on Russia. \

**Question:**

We have been giving Pakistan around $500 million every year in foreign assistance, not even counting the funds we send to Islamabad on the defense side. It is my belief that due to Islamabad's continued support for terrorist groups with American blood on their hands, we need to cut all aid to Pakistan, revoke Islamabad's status as a Major Non-NATO Ally, and designate the country as a State Sponsor of Terrorism. What will the State Department do under your leadership to ensure that Pakistan feels the pressure to stop supporting terrorists? Are any of the three policy ideas I support in this regard on the table?

**Answer:**

As you know, the State Department is engaged in a rigorous interagency policy review on South Asia that will provide us with an integrated approach to advance our interests in the region, including combatting terrorism and promoting regional security, stability and prosperity. Our primary goal is to keep the United States safe and prevent Afghanistan and the Afghanistan-Pakistan border region from ever again becoming a safe haven for terrorists to attack the homeland or U.S. interests abroad.

I do not want to prejudge the outcome of the South Asia policy review. I assure you that – along with our counterparts at the Department of Defense, the National Security Council, and other agencies – we are carefully considering all options.

U.S. assistance is designed to advance our national interests. As part of the policy review, we are assessing our assistance approach to Pakistan to ensure it continues to effectively support our policy objectives in the region.

Our relationship with Pakistan involves a number of vital national strategic interests, including safeguarding the U.S. homeland from threats and maintaining regional stability and security. Our counterterrorism cooperation with Pakistan is important in our efforts against groups such as al-Qa'ida and ISIS.

I agree, however, there are elements of our relationship that have proved challenging, where we are seeking ways to convince Pakistan to change its actions. These include lack of action against Pakistan-based militant groups. The Afghan Taliban, including the Haqqani Network, and other externally-focused militant groups retain the ability to plan, support and conduct terrorist operations from Pakistani soil, including attacks that target U.S. interests in Afghanistan.

We continue to stress to the highest levels of Pakistan's leadership the need to take specific and deliberate action to curb the activity of all militant and terrorist groups in Pakistan -- without differentiating among them -- as Pakistan has publicly pledged to do. Our policy review will include as an outcome steps we can take to continue reinforcing this message. I can assure you we will insist that Pakistan deliver on its commitment to combat all militant and terrorist groups, without discrimination.

**Question:**

In the administration's budget proposal aid to Ukraine is to be cut by over $460 million and aid to Georgia is to be cut by over $46 million. Given that both of these countries are still facing foreign occupation by Russia, how do these cuts serve to protect U.S. national security interests?

**Answer:**

The assistance levels requested for Ukraine and Georgia are the first- and second-largest country-specific requests, respectively, for the European and Eurasian Affairs Bureau, and this fact reflects the high priority we place on these countries and the importance of assistance to achieving our goals. This request also supports the President's commitment to make the U.S. government leaner and more accountable to the American taxpayer, while maximizing our diplomatic and engagement efforts, including with our international partners.

The Administration's FY 2018 Request for Ukraine is $203.8 million, which is a significant investment and demonstrates that Ukraine remains a top priority to the United States.

Since 2014, the United States has provided over $1.3 billion in security and non-security assistance in addition to three $1 billion loan guarantees. This assistance has helped Ukraine make remarkable progress in advancing macroeconomic, anti-corruption, judicial, and security sector reforms. U.S. assistance continues to be a key tool to achieve policy goals essential to meeting U.S. national security objectives in Ukraine. This includes programming activities that support U.S. allies and partners to defend our shared national security interests, most notably by promoting a Europe that is whole, free and at peace. Funding will continue to help Ukraine become a more capable, reliable security and trading partner to the United States.

The FY 2018 Request for Georgia is $34.1 million, which represents significant U.S. support to counter Russian aggression, as well as to Georgia's future as a strong, democratic, strategic, and prosperous partner in the South Caucasus. Since 1992, our assistance has helped to build resilience to Russian aggression, strengthen the rule of law, promote good governance, and boost economic security, as well as support Georgia's territorial defense and interoperability with NATO. Our relationship is stronger than ever, and FY 2018 assistance will continue to be a key tool to achieve policy goals essential to meeting our mutual objectives. This includes support for reforms that will further advance Georgia's democratic institutions, foster economic development, support Euro-Atlantic integration, and build resistance to Russian pressure.

**Question:**

Afghanistan also stands to receive substantial cuts in U.S. foreign assistance to the tune of almost $100 million. How does this affect U.S. security concerns given the growing unrest in the country thanks to the increased presence and capabilities of groups like the Taliban and ISIS?

**Answer:**

The President's FY 2018 budget request reflects the U.S. government's ongoing commitment to help Afghanistan become a stable and secure country. The FY 2018 budget requests nearly $17 million more for Afghanistan's Economic Support and Development Fund (formerly the Economic Support Fund) account compared to the FY 2016 actual level, for a total of $650 million. This level enables USAID to maintain critical rule of law, good governance, economic growth, and civil society programs that address the drivers of insecurity in Afghanistan, and to protect gains made in health, education, and advancing the rights of women and girls. It will also allow Embassy Kabul's Public Affairs Section to continue media, education, and youth and community outreach programs aimed at countering violent extremism.

The request also maintains Nonproliferation, Anti-terrorism, Demining, and Related Programs (NADR) and International Military Education and Training (IMET) funding very near FY 2016 levels at $37 million and $800,000, respectively. NADR funding will support Anti-Terrorism Assistance programs that provide specialized training and mentorship in counterterrorism skills to the Afghan Ministry of the Interior's primary counterterrorism response units, and a Conventional Weapons Destruction program that includes humanitarian demining, munitions destruction, mine-risk education, and national capacity development. The IMET program helps to build the professionalism of the Afghan National Defense and Security Forces and its capacity to protect Afghan territory through professional military education and leadership development.

The FY 2018 request reduces the International Narcotics Control and Law Enforcement (INCLE) account by $90 million from FY 2016. With FY 2018 funds, the Bureau of

International Narcotics and Law Enforcement Affairs (INL) will continue to support its most critical counternarcotics activities, notably the operational and intelligence aspects of its successful interdiction programming. INL plans to augment its legacy Department of Justice program with a new program to help Afghan investigators and prosecutors use financial intelligence and evidence to dismantle narco-trafficking, terrorist, and corrupt official networks. In keeping with its long-term transition plan for the Afghan corrections system, INL will continue to reduce the level of effort but maintain corrections activities in the same number of provinces. Finally, INL will provide limited support to complete the transition of organizational capacity building initiatives to the Ministry of Justice, Attorney General's Office, Ministry of Women's Affairs, and Supreme Court. These programs will bolster Afghanistan's security by depriving the Taliban and other illicit actors of narcotics revenue in the short term, and developing a more capable and transparent justice system for Afghanistan over the long term.

**Question:**

I would like to thank you for your efforts in bringing my fellow Texan Sandy Gillis, who was unlawfully detained in China for over two years, back home to the U.S. However, it's estimated that there are still over a hundred Americans detained in China. How will State be pressuring Beijing to release these prisoners or at least ensure they are given transparent, fair, and free trials?

**Answer:**

One of the highest priorities of the U.S. Department of State is to protect the lives and serve the interests of U.S. citizens overseas. This includes providing all appropriate assistance when a U.S. citizen is detained abroad. While a U.S. embassy or consulate has no authority to intervene in a foreign country's legal process, U.S. consular officers may visit, communicate with, and provide support to U.S. citizens detained. When a U.S. citizen travels to a foreign country they are subject to local laws and regulations, and if they violate those laws, even unknowingly, they may be expelled, arrested, or imprisoned. In a few exceptional cases the U.S. government may call for a prisoner's release on humanitarian or human rights grounds, based on case-specific facts.

The case of Ms. Sandy Phan-Gillis was not characteristic of the consular access that the Chinese routinely permit. The U.S. Mission in China works closely with local officials to ensure that consular officers have regular access to detained U.S. citizens, and that those citizens are being treated fairly, humanely, and in accordance with Chinese law, to include access to a lawyer and a fair trial. In addition to the Mission's daily engagement with Chinese officials on behalf of U.S. citizens, the Department's Bureau of Consular Affairs participates annually with the Chinese government in a bilateral Consular Dialogue, during which both parties disucss consular issues and cases of concern. The Department routinely presses the Chinese government on the treatment of detained U.S. citizens, as appropriate.

**Question:**

Mr. Secretary you have gone on record saying that the State Department will review the status of North Korea as being a State Sponsor of Terrorism. My bill which asks the administration to do

just that passed the House in April. Have you started this review process and if so when can we expect a decision to be made?

**Answer:**

- As a matter of law, in order for any country to be designated as a state sponsor of terrorism, a determination must be made that the government of that country has repeatedly provided support for acts of international terrorism.

- These designations are made after careful review of all available evidence to determine if a country meets the statutory criteria for designation.

- The Department reviews all of the available information and intelligence, from a variety of sources, on the Democratic People's Republic of Korea (DPRK); it is an ongoing process and all information is evaluated in its entirety and must be credible, verified, and corroborated.

**Question:**

The budget request for the Counterterrorism and CVE Bureau has a $1.4 million decrease. Where are we going to see these cuts? How is this going to affect our ability to use soft power to fight against radical extremism?

**Answer:**

Secretary Tillerson has made clear that countering the terrorist narrative, messaging, recruitment, and inspiration to violence is a critical part of defeating ISIS and other transnational terrorist networks. Protecting U.S. national security and countering terrorism is the Administration's top priority and the Bureau of Counterterrorism's budget request reflects this. In FY 2018, the Administration is requesting $20.8 million in Diplomatic & Consular Program funding for the Bureau of Counterterrorism and Countering Violent Extremism (CT). The projected cuts to CT's operating funds will force the Bureau to streamline support to programming management, budget administration, research and development with key interagency partners, and strategic monitoring activities.

In addition to D&CP, the Administration is requesting $228.05 million for foreign assistance programs managed by CT. This funding, which includes a request for the Counterterrorism Partnerships Fund, is critical to sustaining gains from the surge of assistance in FY 2016 and FY 2017 and will allow the Department to continue to address the rapidly evolving terrorist threat.

**Question:**

USAID plays a critical role in supporting health and immunization systems in many countries, which in turn keeps deadly infectious disease killers at bay. The Ebola outbreak showed that cracks in a health systems in any one country can affect the whole world negatively. With each new super-bug, it is clear we are under funding research and development of new treatments and diagnostic tools to stay ahead of these germs. While supporting global health programs is the right thing to do from a moral stance to save lives, it also in turns protects our U.S. citizens by

being more prepared for health threats. With these extreme proposed cuts to global health programs, how will the U.S. keep infectious diseases like airborne, drug-resistant tuberculosis, mosquito-spread Zika, or the next Avian Flu under control?

**Answer:**

The FY 2018 request continues to support Global Health Security by requesting to use $72.5 million in remaining FY 2015 Ebola emergency funds, which would maintain a straight-line of support for global health security in development programs at the FY 2016 levels. The remaining balances from the Ebola response are an appropriate source of funding for programs whose objective is to prevent and contain future outbreaks of existing or new diseases, including Zika. Programming these funds will enable the U.S. government, in partnership with other nations, international organizations, and public and private stakeholders, to prevent avoidable epidemics that could spread to the United States, detect threats early, and respond rapidly and effectively to disease outbreaks in an effort to prevent them from becoming global pandemics.

While the United States will continue significant funding for global health programs, as well as infectious diseases including tuberculosis, other stakeholders and the partner countries must do more to contribute their fair share to global health initiatives.

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**Question**

The goal of U.S. aid should be to foster long-term self-sufficiency in partner countries, ultimately supporting their transition from foreign aid. However, these transitions should not be driven by arbitrary budgets or timelines, but by measurable and realistic benchmarks, such as social and economic progress across social groups, public sector capacity, and the enabling environment for civil society and the private sector. What do you believe is the appropriate way for the U.S. Government to help countries move along a continuum of partnership with the United States?

a. How will you leverage alternative finance mechanisms like domestic resource mobilization and co-financing that assist countries build self-reliance?

**Answer:**

USAID aims to build country partners' sustainable capacity and to strengthen local institutions, while using U.S. assistance catalytically to mobilize more diverse and sustainable resources for development, including host country tax revenue and private sector finance. The development finance landscape has changed considerably over the last several years, and USAID is taking significant action to adapt to it.

USAID develops country partnership approaches – with governments and other actors, such as businesses and civil-society organizations – that are appropriate to the country context and in line with pertinent U.S. policy priorities. In addition to a country's overall level of development, other factors that inform USAID's partnership approach include relevant national security objectives, such as countering violent extremism, as well as support for priority global issues, such as combating HIV/AIDS and promoting democratic governance. USAID also recognizes that many developing countries across a range of income levels, are fragile. Roughly two-thirds of countries with USAID missions exhibit significant fragility, by most standard measures. Conflict, recurrent humanitarian crisis, and other challenges rooted in social and political dysfunction may circumscribe partnership options and imperil sustained progress. While supporting sustainable local capacity and self-sufficiency, USAID addresses all of these challenges, within its manageable interest, in its country strategies and programs and in close collaboration with USG interagency partners.

A number of former USAID partner countries have grown economically, with strengthened domestic institutions and increased revenue, and moved on from USAID assistance, including Argentina, Costa Rica, the Czech Republic, Estonia, and South Korea, among others. Many have entered other partnership regimes, like the European Union, and become donors in their own right. As countries develop and USAID's partnerships evolve, the Agency seeks to ensure its programs remain strategic and effective. To this end, USAID prioritizes continual consultation with host governments, donors, implementing partners, and other local stakeholders, as well as careful attention to U.S. and local legal requirements, Congressional consultation and notification, staffing needs, public messaging, program sustainability, and other operational considerations. As recently confirmed USAID Administrator Mark Green noted in his statement before the Senate Foreign Relations Committee, "every program should look forward to the day when it can end." In this context, USAID works to evaluate how each program dollar moves a country closer to that day.

USAID is committed to using its assistance whenever possible to help developing countries better mobilize their own domestic resources to finance their development, build self-reliance, and reduce dependence on foreign aid. In particular, USAID is using grant assistance to help more than 15 countries strengthen their capabilities in domestic resource mobilization so that their systems of public financial management including their tax systems are more efficient, transparent, and accountable, and raise more revenue while lowering barriers to economic growth. These increases in public revenue provide resources to meet citizens' needs, such as for basic education, clean drinking water, and health care.

In this same vein, USAID also uses grant assistance to support mobilization of large and growing pools of home-grown institutional capital, particularly local pension funds. USAID is also working through parallel financing and guarantees with more private capital providers to spur new lending in sectors critical to development. For example, through its loan guarantee program, USAID has mobilized $4.8 billion in private sector financing from 382 partners across 77 countries to support development programming in agriculture, education, health, environment, small business and microenterprise expansion, and municipal finance.

**Question:**

Good quality, transparent information on how and where the U.S. is investing its foreign assistance has garnered significant bipartisan support and is a powerful asset. It's a key management tool that allows USAID to make better planned, targeted, and evidenced-based decision making. The State Department and USAID have put significant efforts into improving the quality and timeliness its aid information, but your leadership is required to finish the job. What is your assessment of the need for and benefit to the State Department and USAID to publish transparent, quality aid information? What are the steps that you will take to ensure that the United States meets its existing commitments?

**Answer:**

Publishing transparent, high quality information on foreign aid increases the efficacy of USAID's development efforts and promotes international accountability. In addition to serving domestic purposes, aid transparency is essential for helping recipient governments manage their aid flows, for empowering citizens to hold governments accountable for the use of assistance, and for supporting evidence-based, data-driven approaches to foreign aid.

Prior to the enactment of the Foreign Aid Transparency and Accountability Act (FATAA), the Department of State and USAID continually sought to improve transparency and accountability and have been publishing detailed information about our foreign assistance programs to ForeignAssistance.gov for several years.

The Department of State and USAID have taken steps to implement FATAA. Our Agencies remain committed to full implementation of FATAA.

State and USAID are continually working to improve the quality, comprehensiveness and timeliness of information published on ForeignAssistance.gov and are working with other agencies to assist them in their reporting. Finally, the Department of State and USAID have both published data improvement plans and expect these efforts to increase the robustness of data reported as well as provide more context to the user.

**Question:**
Many important accountability and learning functions that were mandated by my Foreign Aid Transparency and Accountability Act are performed by USAID's Bureau for Policy, Planning and Learning. Can you also explain why the administration has proposed eliminating nearly half (40 percent) of this Bureau and what specifically the Bureau would have to give up under this budget?

**Answer:**
USAID is committed to advancing the Agency's aid transparency and accountability commitments including implementation of the Foreign Aid Transparency and Accountability Act (FATAA). Aid transparency and accountability is an Agency-wide effort and USAID's Bureau for Policy, Planning and Learning works in concert with the Bureau for Management to spearhead this effort. Given the importance of the aid transparency and accountability agenda and the various international and congressional reporting requirements for which USAID is responsible, the Agency will work within the constraints of its budget environment to continue to meet its commitments.

**Question:**

The Administration proposes to merge the Economic Support Fund (ESF) and the Development Assistance Account (DA). These accounts are distinctly different, because ESF generally provides funds for middle-income and politically significant countries like Jordan and Afghanistan. Whereas, DA provides funds for poorer, developing countries like Cambodia and Ethiopia. Understanding the significant difference between the two accounts and the difference between State and USAID's role in implementing the funds from those accounts, how could State meet US foreign policy objectives around poverty reduction and development if the development experts at USAID don't control the funds? How can you ensure that funds are allocated to developing countries most in need of assistance?

**Answer:**
The FY 2018 budget request reflects a commitment to ensure every tax dollar spent is aligned with the State Department's and USAID's mission-critical objectives. The Economic Support and Development Fund (ESDF) requested in the FY 2018 budget is an effort to streamline accounts and ensure the most effective use of foreign assistance funding. The ESDF account will continue to support select programs and activities previously requested under the Economic Support Fund and Development Assistance accounts, allowing the Department and USAID to better assess, prioritize, and target development -related activities in the context of broader U.S. foreign policy objectives and partnerships around the world. Even with the reductions in funding, we will continue to be the leader in international development, global health, democracy and good governance initiatives, and humanitarian efforts.

**Question:**

If the accounts are merged into what the Administration proposes with the Economic Support and Development Fund (ESDF), how can you ensure that funds for water and sanitation will be

equitably disbursed to developing countries that meet the metrics of greatest need in accordance with the Water for the World Act?

**Answer:**

The priority country designation processes put in place under the Water for the World Act of 2014 for FY 2015, FY 2016 and FY 2017 will continue, per Section 5(h) of the Act. The Act requires that the designation of a high-priority country to be based a set of criteria laid out in the Act (Section 5 f (1)). These fall into four areas: (1) the level of need; (2) the opportunity to leverage U.S. Government's efforts; (3) the level of country commitment; and (4) the likelihood of making significant improvements on a per capita basis on the health and educational opportunities available to women and girls. Need is assessed using global datasets on the number and proportion of people with access to safe drinking water and sanitation, and rates of under-five child mortality due to diarrheal disease. The merging of Development Assistance (DA) and Economic Support Fund (ESF) accounts into the Economic Support and Development Fund (ESDF) will not affect the allocation of funds for water, sanitation and hygiene (WASH).

Questions for the Record Submitted to
Secretary of State Rex Tillerson by
Representative Albio Sires
House Foreign Affairs Committee
June 14, 2017

**Question**:

Do you accept the conclusion of the intelligence community that Russia criminally interfered in last year's election?

**Answer:**

Yes. As the U.S. intelligence community first reported in October 2016, the U.S. government is confident that the Russian government directed the compromise and the subsequent release of emails in advance of the November 8 general election. On January 7, the DNI released a report detailing Russian actions related to the election.

The intelligence community assessed that Russia's activities were intended to influence the election, erode faith in U.S. democratic institutions, sow doubt about the integrity of our electoral process, and undermine confidence in the institutions of the U.S. government.

The Department remains concerned by Russian efforts to interfere in elections in Europe and elsewhere. Russian tactics include disinformation campaigns, financial influence of political parties, and use of cyber operations.

**Question**:

It is consensus in the intelligence community that Russia has meddled in the U.S. election. As Secretary of State, how do you plan to provide consequences against Russia for meddling in the presidential election?

**Answer:**

While I do not want to get into specifics of my diplomatic conversations, I assure you that the Russian government is well aware of our concerns over its cyber activities directed against the United States, including during the 2016 election. As Secretary of State, I have raised American concerns with the Russian government. The U.S. government will take action to protect our interests and to harden our defenses against malicious cyber activity. The Department also maintains communication with Moscow to ensure that the United States and Russia do not misunderstand one another.

**Question:**

100 different cities in Russia had organized protests to speak out against the level of corruption from Putin and his cronies. As a result, Russian authorities beat and jailed hundreds of people who were peacefully walking the streets. Have you raised these violations of basic human rights with your Russian counterparts?

**Answer:**

We have strongly condemned the detention of hundreds of peaceful protesters throughout Russia and believe detaining these protesters and human rights observers is an affront to the exercise of free speech. We believe the Russian people, like people everywhere, deserve a government that supports an open marketplace of ideas, transparent and accountable governance, equal treatment under the law, and the ability to exercise their rights without fear of retribution. We regularly criticize Russia for turning a blind eye to human rights abuses, limiting religious freedom, stifling independent voices, and thwarting the rule of law. Although the space for civil society in Russia has become increasingly restricted, Embassy staff regularly reaches out to civil society groups and seeks to promote our longstanding American values of freedom, democracy, individual liberty, and human dignity.

**Question:**

This Administration has a policy to reduce migration from South and Central America to the U.S. but the budget has drastically cut funding that's directed towards tackling the root causes of migration. We have already identified the causes for migration and developed a program to combat the issue – how does stripping the Department of these funds achieve this goal?

**Answer:**

The FY 2018 request for assistance to South and Central America will advance American security and prosperity, including by continuing to address the economic, security, and governance drivers of illegal immigration and illicit trafficking. For example, the $460 million request for Central America emphasizes U.S. commitment to reducing insecurity and violence, enhancing the business climate, and promoting improved governance in the region, all of which are essential to addressing the underlying causes of illegal immigration and supporting the safety, security, and prosperity of Americans. The United States is providing a total of $1.3 billion in FY 2015 and FY 2016 assistance to Central America. Congress directed an additional $655 million for Central America in the FY 2017 appropriation.

FY 2018 funding will focus efforts in areas with the greatest potential for transformative impact on U.S. national security and will continue to address the key drivers of illegal migration and illicit trafficking. U.S. programs take an integrated approach to crime and violence prevention through efforts that reduce gang violence and the influence of organized crime across borders; promote good governance, anti-corruption, and fiscal management; and foster prosperity through regional integration and the creation of sustainable jobs for citizens, which in turn will create opportunities for U.S. companies.

U.S. funding also complements the efforts of the Northern Triangle countries of Honduras, El Salvador, and Guatemala to tackle these problems through the Alliance for Prosperity plan, for which the governments have committed approximately $5.4 billion in 2016-2017.

To complement U.S. assistance efforts and ensure long-term sustainability, we are also encouraging increased private sector investment in the Northern Triangle countries of El Salvador, Guatemala, and Honduras and seeking to mobilize additional support from other partner nations and global financial institutions. For example, the United States and Mexico co-hosted the June 15-16, 2017, Conference on Prosperity and Security in Central America to

reiterate the high-level support for addressing these issues within the Northern Triangle. Senior-level representatives from the countries of Central America, Canada, Chile, Colombia, the European Union, Spain, the Inter-American Development Bank, and the International Monetary Fund, as well as nearly 60 companies from the region, participated in support of our shared goal of promoting a more secure and prosperous region.

**Question:**

WHA: The OAS Secretary General has been one of the leaders bringing the Western Hemisphere together to help the Venezuelan people and hold Maduro accountable. Understanding the need to make International Organizations more effective. What is the specific rationale for eliminating funding for one of the only international bodies that is working hard to bring democracy to Venezuela?

**Answer:**

The United States continues to be engaged in the situation in Venezuela and to work closely with others, including the Organization of American States (OAS), to support peaceful solutions to the political and economic crisis in the country. Historically, the State Department has provided assessed contributions to the OAS through the Contributions to International Organizations (CIO) account and voluntary contributions through the International Organizations and Programs (IO&P) account.

The Department is in the process of finalizing how the FY 2018 CIO request of $996.4 million will be allocated among various international organizations to support assessed costs, including for the OAS.

With regard to voluntary contributions to the OAS, the Department prioritized resources to focus on our most pressing national security interests. As part of the Department's streamlining efforts, the FY 2018 budget does not request funding for the IO&P account, which has traditionally funded a voluntary contribution to the OAS. Regardless, the United States will continue to engage diplomatically to advance prosperity, security, democracy, and the protection of human rights in Venezuela and throughout the region.

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**Question:**

President Trump claims that human rights in Cuba are a priority for him but slashes all funding to the Cuban people who are fighting for freedom – how can the Administration say he's behind them but abandon them as they risk their lives on the island every day?

**Answer:**

The Department of State continues to support and engage with human rights and democracy activists in Cuba and to work with regional partners to support respect for human rights and fundamental freedoms for the Cuban people, including freedom of speech, assembly, and association. On June 16, in announcing a new Cuba policy, President Trump made clear that his intention is to demonstrate solidarity with the Cuban people and promote human rights and democracy, while maintaining engagement that serves the national security and foreign policy interests of the United States.

As the Department of State and USAID work within a reduced topline funding level to ensure efficiency and effectiveness of U.S. taxpayer dollars, we have had to make some tough choices about the programming for which we requested funding in FY 2018. The requested foreign assistance funding levels were reduced globally; Cuba was not singled out. We continue to support the above-described democracy and human rights promotion efforts with the many other tools we have, including through our embassy, engagement in multilateral fora and with international partners, and through bilateral talks, such as the Human Rights Dialogue.

Questions for the Record Submitted to
Secretary of State Rex Tillerson by
Representative Jeff Duncan (#1a)
House Foreign Affairs Committee
June 14, 2017

**Question:**

Can you explain how the shift away from governance and economic growth programs will address the migration issues to the U.S.?

**Answer:**

U.S. assistance and diplomatic engagement in Central America focuses on securing U.S. borders and protecting U.S. citizens by continuing to address the economic, security, and governance drivers of illegal immigration and illicit trafficking. The Department and USAID plan on continued investments in governance and economic growth programs. The United States is providing a total of $1.3 billion in FY 2015 and FY 2016 assistance to Central America. Congress directed an additional $655 million for Central America in the FY 2017 appropriation. The President's FY 2018 request of $460 million for Central America emphasizes continued U.S. commitment to reducing insecurity and violence, enhancing the business climate, and promoting improved governance in the region, all of which are essential to supporting the safety, security, and prosperity of Americans.

FY 2018 funding will enable us to focus efforts in areas that will have the greatest potential for transformative impact on U.S. national security and will continue to address the key drivers of illegal immigration and illicit trafficking. U.S. programs support an integrated approach to crime and violence prevention through efforts that reduce gang violence and the influence of organized crime across borders; promote good governance, anti-corruption, and fiscal management; and foster prosperity through regional integration and the creation of sustainable jobs for citizens, which in turn will create opportunities for U.S. companies.

To complement U.S. assistance efforts and ensure long-term sustainability, we are also encouraging increased private sector investment in the Northern Triangle countries of El Salvador, Guatemala, and Honduras and seeking to mobilize additional support from other partner nations and global financial institutions. For example, the United States and Mexico co-hosted the June 15-16, 2017 Conference on Prosperity and Security in Central America to reiterate the high-level support for addressing these issues within the Northern Triangle. Senior-level representatives from the countries of Central America, Canada, Chile, Colombia, the European Union, Spain, the Inter-American Development Bank, and the International Monetary Fund, and nearly 60 companies from the region participated in support of our shared goal of promoting a more secure and prosperous region.

**Question:**

Is there any evidence that shows that increasing security efforts alone is a long-term solution to the migration issue?

**Answer:**

Through U.S. assistance and engagement in Central America, our aim is to secure U.S. borders and protect American citizens by addressing the economic, security, and governance drivers of illegal migration and illicit trafficking. U.S. programs and assistance in Central America support all three pillars of our strategy: security, prosperity, and governance. The cost of investing in a secure and prosperous Central America is modest compared with the cost to U.S. federal, state, and local governments of managing large illegal immigration flows once migrants reach the United States. Similarly, disrupting transnational criminal networks in Central America protects American citizens more effectively.

**Question:**

How does the State Department view the corruption in Nicaragua in comparison to the endemic corruption plaguing El Salvador, Guatemala, and Honduras?

**Answer:**

Corruption remains a major challenge in Nicaragua, with bribery of public officials, unlawful seizures, and arbitrary assessments by customs and tax authorities common. Corruption is particularly prevalent within the judicial system. Weak governmental institutions, deficiencies in the rule of law, and extensive executive control create significant challenges for those doing business in Nicaragua. Nicaragua has received substantial off-budget assistance from Venezuela under a complicated and opaque oil cooperation agreement. These funds are not subject to any meaningful oversight.

Laws in El Salvador, Guatemala, Honduras, and Nicaragua provide criminal penalties for official corruption, but Nicaragua has done little to enforce the law effectively, and officials often engage in corrupt practices with impunity. The Northern Triangle countries of Honduras, El Salvador, and Guatemala have shown some effort to investigate and prosecute official corruption, through institutions such as their attorneys general office, and through bodies such as CICIG and MACCIH in Guatemala and Honduras, respectively.

**Question:**

How does the Administration plan to prioritize engagement with Central American governments to urge greater focus on reducing corruption and preventing the infiltration by organized crime on key justice sector institutions?

**Answer:**

U.S. engagement in Central America aims to dismantle transnational criminal organizations, combat drug trafficking, halt illegal immigration, and promote sustainable economic growth. It specifically addresses insecurity, impunity, and lack of economic opportunities, the underlying causes of these problems afflicting the region. Reducing corruption and preventing the infiltration of organized crime within justice sector institutions is essential to the success of these efforts, and the Department is working to provide assistance to strengthen the rule of law, promote strong institutions and government accountability, reduce impunity, improve budget management, and increase fiscal transparency.

Strengthening governance in Central America is key to the sustainability of promoting economic and security reforms in the region. As Vice President Pence stated June 15 at the Conference on Prosperity and Security in Central America, the United States stands with the nations of Central America in their "commitment to root out crime and corruption ... to stop the scourge of drug trafficking once and for all ... [and to] build a more secure and prosperous future for the benefit of [its] people and the benefit of the Western Hemisphere."

U.S. programs and engagement focus on capacity building, information sharing, professionalizing police and military institutions, supporting the regional's attorneys general, and strengthening anti-corruption mechanisms such as the United Nations-backed International Commission Against Impunity in Guatemala (CICIG) and the Organization for American States Mission to Support the Fight Against Corruption and Impunity in Honduras (MACCIH).

**Question:**

The FY2018 budget for Colombia cuts funding for targeting the cultivation, production, and trafficking of cocaine. Illicit coca production is at significantly high levels. Colombia and the U.S. have one of the closest partnerships in the Western Hemisphere. As the country struggles to implement its peace deal with the FARC, coca production continues to rise rapidly, and social activists have been targets of assassination.

- What are the key areas in the U.S.-Colombian relationship that the U.S. should continue supporting?
- What accounts for the reductions to Colombia in the FY2018 budget request given coca numbers in Colombia are soaring?

**Answer:**

Our programming for Colombia focuses U.S. assistance on: (1) security, including the government's counternarcotics efforts and reintegration of ex-combatants; (2) the expansion of state institutions and presence in former rebel areas, including rural economic development, the military's civil engineering units, and humanitarian demining; and (3) justice services and other support for victims.

To counter the increase in coca cultivation, the United States is working with the Colombian government to implement an integrated, whole-of-government approach to counternarcotics and rural development in strategic areas of concern. Our counternarcotics cooperation with Colombia is a critical element of our broader support for Colombia's efforts to implement its peace agreement with the FARC.

The Congress directed $391 million for U.S. assistance to Colombia in FY 2017, with particular focus on counternarcotics, security sector assistance, and economic and governance programming.

Our FY 2018 budget request reflects the Administration's focused approach to foreign assistance. We prioritized programs that address the coca cultivation increase. Although there was a 35.7 percent overall reduction in U.S. assistance requested for Colombia, the request for International Narcotics Control and Law Enforcement (INCLE) funding has decreased by just 13 percent.

**Question:**

To what extent do you expect cuts in State Department and USAID assistance to Colombia would be offset by increased Department of Defense support?

**Answer:**

The Department of State and USAID have indispensable roles to play in a whole-of-government effort to counter transnational organized crime and illicit drug trafficking in the Western Hemisphere. This is a top priority for us, and I believe our FY 2018 request provides us with the necessary resources to continue this important work. Through diplomatic engagement and more selective and targeted foreign assistance, we can both have a greater impact and increase cost-effectiveness for the American taxpayer. We must also encourage national governments and local partners to take on more responsibility for addressing the problems in their communities; they have primary responsibility and are best positioned to ensure sustained success.

Secretary Mattis and I have committed our departments to work more closely together on security sector assistance (SSA) efforts and foreign assistance more broadly. We have established a new State-DoD SSA Steering Committee that is working to ensure a coordinated approach to our respective assistance programs. Our goal is to promote a joint approach that determines how best to leverage our unique resources and authorities to advance national security priorities and partnerships in key countries such as Colombia in the most cost-effective fashion. Together, we are reviewing how we can best target our FY 2018 to advance our top policy priorities, such as countering transnational organized crime and illicit drug trafficking.

**Question:**

The FY2018 budget request does not include any funding for democracy and human rights in Cuba. Yet, human rights abuses on the island and detention of activists and dissidents have only increased over the past few years, following the U.S.-Cuba policy shift under the Obama Administration. As of May 8th, the Cuban Commission for Human Rights and National Reconciliation (CCDHRN) reported that there were at least 1,867 short-term detentions for political reasons in the first four months of 2017. Today, Cuba has at least 140 political prisoners. Last month, Berta Soler, head of the Ladies in White, was not allowed to leave Cuba to attend a reception to honor her in the U.S.

a) Does the Administration support democracy programs in Cuba?
b) What evidence do you see of an improvement in the Cuban government's approach to democracy and human rights that has led you to not request any funding for supporting democracy assistance in Cuba?

**Answer:**

The Department of State continues to support and engage with human rights and democracy activists in Cuba and to work with regional partners to support respect for human rights and fundamental freedoms for the Cuban people, including freedom of speech, assembly, and association. On June 16, in announcing a new Cuba policy, President Trump made clear that his intention is to demonstrate solidarity with the Cuban people and promote human rights and

democracy, while maintaining engagement that serves the national security and foreign policy interests of the United States.

As the Department of State and USAID work within a reduced topline funding level to ensure efficiency and effectiveness of U.S. taxpayer dollars, we have had to make some tough choices about the programming for which we requested funding in FY 2018. The requested foreign assistance funding levels were reduced globally; Cuba was not singled out. We continue to support the above-described democracy and human rights promotion efforts with the many other tools we have, including through our embassy, engagement in multilateral fora and with international partners, and through bilateral talks, such as the Human Rights Dialogue.

**Question:**

Can you explain the current funding levels for democracy and governance in Ecuador?

**Answer:**

USAID continues to provide assistance to Ecuadorian civil society to preserve democratic freedoms, increasing broad-based citizen engagement with national and local government as provided for under Ecuador's 2008 Constitution. USAID's current democracy and governance programs in Ecuador total approximately $1.7 million.

The U.S. Department of State's Bureau of Democracy, Human Rights, and Labor (DRL) also programs foreign assistance resources in support of democracy and governance in Ecuador. DRL programs support civil society organizations to effectively and collaboratively promote and defend human rights and freedom of expression, and help support transparency and accountability within government. DRL allocated approximately $1.3 million in funding in the last year.

**Question:**

Specifically, how is (funding for democracy and governance in Ecuador) being used to address the needs of civil society?

**Answer:**

USAID and the U.S. Department of State's Bureau of Democracy, Human Rights, and Labor (DRL) support civil society to preserve democratic freedoms while increasing broad-based citizen engagement with national and local government as provided for under Ecuador's 2008 constitution. USAID and U.S. Department of State assistance enhances the ability of diverse civil society actors to work effectively and collaboratively to protect citizen rights and fundamental freedoms, inform domestic policy, and promote a positive operating space for civil society. Programs support civil society in advancing freedom of expression, association, and information; promoting government transparency and accountability at all levels; and fostering diverse participation and engagement in the creation and discussion of public policy.

**Question:**

Has the Administration evaluated the impact of the freezing/suspension of any current funding on organizations ability to continue operating and implementing their programs?

**Answer:**

To our knowledge, the Administration has not frozen or suspended any current funding to organizations implementing governance and democracy programs in Ecuador.

**Question:**

Energy Resources: As a former top energy company CEO, you no doubt appreciate the interplay between geopolitics and energy prices for consumers. Supply disruptions in Libya or political instability in Venezuela can have an impact on what a family pays to fill up their gas tank. Your Department has primary authority for the conduct of foreign policy relating to energy. The President's budget request makes a modest reduction to the Bureau of Energy Resources (ENR).

a. Based on your previous experience and from the position you sit today, can you please share your perspective on the role of the State Department relating to energy?

**Answer:**

The link between energy security and national security has never been clearer. Access to reliable, affordable, and sustainable energy affects every country's economic growth and political stability, making energy a fundamental foreign policy issue that demands a well-crafted diplomatic strategy.

The Department of Energy Organization Act of 1977 expressly gives the Secretary of State primary authority and the central role in conducting international energy policy,[1] and I am committed to ensuring that the Department, through our Bureau of Energy Resources, continues to advance policies that promote the export of U.S. energy resources, increase access to competitive and transparent energy markets, ensure fewer barriers to energy trade and development, and strengthen the energy security of the United States and our allies.

Countries look to the United States for leadership on energy and the Department of State has a long history of energy diplomacy around the world. U.S. energy abundance promotes economic prosperity both here and abroad and strengthens not only our security, but that of our friends, allies, and trading partners as well.

**Question:**

The Subcommittee that I chair has taken a particular interest in energy opportunities in Latin America. Will energy engagement with the Western Hemisphere be a priority under this Administration?

**Answer:**

Energy security and diplomacy is an essential priority for U.S. engagement in the Western Hemisphere. The Administration is working closely with partners throughout the region, including governments, multilateral institutions, and the private sector, to promote greater energy security while continuing to advance the United States' strategic energy interests.

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[1] "...the Secretary of State shall continue to exercise primary authority for the conduct of foreign policy relating to energy and nuclear nonproliferation, pursuant to policy guidelines established by the President."

The Western Hemisphere's energy picture has changed dramatically in the last decade as North American energy production has increased substantially, providing greater security to the region. Canada and Mexico are also our largest energy trading partners. Nevertheless, cost-effective, reliable energy is still a pressing issue for many countries, particularly those in Central America and the Caribbean. We remain actively engaged with each of these partners as we support their efforts to diversify energy supplies, expand electrical grid interconnections, and strengthen regional electricity markets, which help governments attract private sector investment.

**Question:**

As this Administration reevaluates existing trade agreements, how will you be coordinating with Commerce and USTR to ensure that our energy security objectives are being met?

**Answer:**

The Administration recognizes the vital role of energy in ensuring our national security as well as our current and future prosperity. The Department of State will work with the Department of Commerce, USTR and other relevant Government agencies through the interagency process to ensure that our current and future trade agreements incorporate relevant national security, trade, economic, and other policy considerations as a part of the policy review process. Also, we will evaluate these with respect to our existing commitments to maintain the security of energy supply.

**Question:**

In 2013, the State Department submitted a report to Congress in response to legislation that I authored in which it characterized Iran's influence in the Western Hemisphere as "waning" but provided little support to justify its conclusions. Does the State Department still characterize Iran's influence in the region as "waning"? How does the State Department characterize Hizballah's activities in the region?

**Answer:**

Iran's influence in Latin America has generally moderated over the past decade. However, following the implementation the JCPOA, Iran sought to capitalize on potential trade opportunities in Latin America. Most notably, Foreign Minister Zarif led an Iranian trade delegation to a number of central and South American countries in 2016 in an effort to strengthen economic and political ties. The Lebanese terrorist group Hizballah has historically maintained a presence in the region including the 1992 and 1994 Buenos Aires bombings. Hizballah also raises funds within the Lebanese diaspora communities in Latin America. Additional information on Hizballah or the IRGC-QF's capabilities and intentions in the regions should be discussed in a classified setting.

**Question:**

How does the State Department plan to respond to the growing activities of Russia and China in the Western Hemisphere?

**Answer:**

The United States is the political, economic, and security partner of choice for the vast majority of the 34 other countries in our hemisphere. We remain vigilant about the activities of Russia and China in the Western Hemisphere, particularly efforts to provide economic lifelines to the increasingly undemocratic regime in Venezuela.

Russia's two main foreign policy goals are to reassert its influence as part of its efforts to challenge the U.S.-led international system and to regain recognition as a global power on par with the United States. Russian engagement in Latin America is largely economic, centered on arms sales and the resulting spare parts and training relationship, as well as opportunistic lending in the energy sector. We remain vigilant, however, about Russia's increased engagement in Nicaragua. Although media have reported on Russian government interest in new basing agreements in Cuba, Nicaragua, Venezuela, and Argentina, there are no Russian bases in Latin America. It would also be difficult to surpass the United States as the security partner of choice in Latin America. Russia Today, a Russian government sponsored information outlet, is present throughout the region and may be gaining influence in countries like Venezuela.

Chinese engagement with Latin America and the Caribbean increased sharply over the past decade. China's primary interest in the Western Hemisphere is economic, but it has begun to increase its political involvement in some countries to protect its investments, companies, and loans. China seeks access to natural resources, stronger trade relations, tourism opportunities, and infrastructure investments. China vigorously promotes its "one China principle" in the hemisphere, which is home to 11 of Taiwan's 20 diplomatic allies.

We want to see that China's economic engagement with countries in the region is conducted on the basis of internationally-accepted standards, sustainable debt levels, and time-tested safeguards for infrastructure investment.

**Question:**

How does the State Department plan to counter the illicit networks that criminal groups and terrorists may use to profit or ship goods and people to U.S. borders?

**Answer:**

The Department is actively engaged with our regional partners to increase their capacity and political will to disrupt illicit networks, dismantle transnational criminal organizations, and protect all of our citizens. Together, our diplomatic engagement and capacity building directly support U.S. national security by addressing illicit pathways and create an environment for increased U.S. trade and investment by disrupting transnational criminal organizations, strengthening border security, combating corruption and impunity, and reducing the flow of illegal migrants, drugs, and illicit goods across our southern border.

The goal of U.S. engagement with partner governments in the region – which also extends to Washington and multilateral fora – is to strengthen political will to work together with the United States and regional partners to share information and expand law enforcement cooperation to combat these transnational criminal networks.

Our programs focus on the areas where these criminal groups and networks operate, most notably Colombia, Mexico, Central America, and the Caribbean. Our capacity building programs take a comprehensive approach to addressing criminal organizations and networks by

expanding and strengthening the rule of law to increase the capacity of our partner governments to deny criminal organizations the permissive environment they need to operate. Key capacity building programs related to the movement of contraband and people include enhancements to interdiction forces, investigative capabilities, border controls, and migration management.

**Question:**

What role will U.S. public diplomacy play in countering the information campaign these external foreign actors are using in the Western Hemisphere?

**Answer:**

The Bureau of Western Hemisphere Affairs and our Embassy Public Affairs Sections ensure accurate information is delivered to media and regional publics about the United States and its policies – by us and by others. We monitor information campaigns by external state foreign actors, such as China and Russia, as well as state-sponsored propaganda. Across public diplomacy – from communications campaign, to exchange programs to English-teaching centers and more – we deliver facts and accurate policy information to the general public and decision makers.

We also work to combat information campaigns mounted by non-state actors. The recruitment and radicalization to violence of foreign terrorist fighters is an emerging threat in pockets of the Western Hemisphere.

**Question:**

The United States has vitally important priorities for the Western Hemisphere in the areas of Security, Energy, and Democracy. These issues are all interdependent on one another, and in order to see progress in one of these areas, we need to also see clear progress in the other areas as well. How do you view each of these priorities and the need to focus on all three throughout the region given their interconnectedness?

**Answer:**

Working with our partners in the Western Hemisphere to advance security, develop sustainable energy, and build resilient democracies is critical to U.S. foreign policy objectives. This work contributes directly to the security and prosperity of the United States as our nation cannot maintain its own security and prosperity unless our Latin American and Caribbean partners make progress on these interconnected issues.

High levels of insecurity undermine efforts to make progress in nearly all areas of governance, weakening economic growth, social cohesion, democratic institutions, and energy production. By the same token, our experience in working with the governments of Colombia and Mexico shows that once adequate security is established in target areas, the state must follow up with the social and economic programs citizens need and deserve or the initial security gains will be undermined and short-lived. It is not enough that the hemisphere is overwhelmingly democratic; democracy must deliver tangible opportunities and justice to citizens. Strengthening democratic institutions, primarily through improvements in transparency, efficiency, and governance, are key elements of each of our citizen security initiatives in Mexico, Colombia, Central America, and the Caribbean.

Improving energy security through supply diversification (including natural gas and renewable energy) and better regional interconnection of electricity grids are also key elements for continued economic and social development in the region. Energy security continues to be a central issue for most countries in the Western Hemisphere, particularly in Central America and the Caribbean, where expensive and unreliable electricity hampers economic growth and competitiveness. The United States works closely with governments across the Western Hemisphere, as well as other bilateral partners, multilateral institutions, and the private sector to ensure greater access to affordable and reliable energy.

**Question:**

Given that Mexican heroin production has increased significantly in recent years, why is the Administration proposing such large cuts to the Mérida Initiative? How likely is Mexico to continue seizing illicit narcotics and deterring Central American migrants bound for the United States if U.S. financial support for those efforts declines? To what extent do you expect cuts in State Department assistance to Mexico would be offset by increased Department of Defense support?

**Answer:**

We remain committed to supporting the Government of Mexico in combatting organized crime and the movement of drugs and other illicit goods throughout the hemisphere. The FY 2018 budget request reflects the Administration's focused approach to foreign assistance. The State Department request for Mexico prioritizes issues that directly impact the safety and security of the United States, by strengthening border security and undermining the transnational criminal organizations that traffic drugs, including heroin and fentanyl, which are exacerbating the U.S. opioid epidemic.

The Bureau of International Narcotics and Law Enforcement Affairs (INL) continues to build the capacity of Mexican civilian security and justice sector institutions to strengthen borders and ports; disrupt the activities of transnational criminal organizations; interdict illegal drugs, including heroin, fentanyl, and methamphetamines; and disrupt illicit financial networks. Assistance will improve Mexico's ability to bring offenders to justice by increasing the effectiveness and professionalism of judicial institutions under Mexico's new accusatory justice system. In support of the May 2017 U.S.-Mexico Strategic Dialogue on Disrupting Transnational Criminal Organizations that Secretary Kelly and I led, INL is working with the Government of Mexico to identify new opportunities to combat transnational criminal organizations, including disrupting their business models. We are exploring new ways to strengthen criminal investigations of money laundering, build Mexico's capacity to criminally prosecute and sanction financial crimes, and work jointly on detecting and interdicting bulk cash shipments from the United States to Mexico. The funding requested in FY 2018 is in addition to the $1.9 billion in International Narcotics Control and Law Enforcement funds allocated since FY 2008.

Secretary Mattis and I have committed our departments to work more closely together on security sector assistance (SSA) efforts and foreign assistance more broadly. We have established a new State-DoD SSA Steering Committee that is working to ensure a coordinated approach to our respective assistance programs. Our goal is to promote a joint approach that determines how best to leverage our unique resources and authorities to advance national

security priorities and partnerships in key countries such as Mexico in the most cost-effective fashion. Together, we are reviewing how we can best target our FY 2018 request to advance our top policy priorities, such as countering transnational organized crime and illicit drug trafficking.

**Question:**

Nicaragua / Democracy: Russian influence in Nicaragua, especially as it relates to military and intelligence support, has increased over the last few years. Daniel Ortega's government has continued to violate human rights, weaken and manipulate democratic institutions, and thrive off of corruption.

a. How has the increase of Russian support affected U.S. support for security to Nicaragua?

**Answer:**

We are watching closely Russian efforts to assert its influence in Latin America and its increasing relationship with Nicaragua. For example, Russia has stated that its goal is to train law enforcement representatives from Central America on counternarcotics at their newly built training center in Managua.

Despite Russian government efforts to maintain its Soviet-era ties, the United States continues to coordinate with the Government of Nicaragua on such security concerns as reducing the flow of narcotics and migrants to the United States. The United States will continue to strengthen our partnership with the Nicaraguan people and work on their behalf to achieve a more prosperous, secure, and democratic Nicaragua.

**Question:**

What is the outlook for U.S. foreign aid to Nicaragua and how can it be used to best support and develop democratic actors who can begin to influence the current political system?

**Answer:**

The Department of State has repeatedly expressed concerns about the state of democracy in Nicaragua. The deterioration of Nicaragua's democratic institutions remains an area of significant concern. We will continue to press the Nicaraguan government to uphold democratic practices and rule of law, including press freedom and respect for universal human rights, consistent with its commitments under the Inter-American Democratic Charter. Assistance for civil society and democracy is an important aspect of our foreign assistance programming worldwide, including Nicaragua.

We believe an engaged civil society and transparent democratic governance is vital to the sustainability of our programs, and to the functioning of a healthy democracy. The U.S. government will continue to make necessary adjustments to more effectively support established and emerging Nicaraguan civil society actors through USAID and Department of State small grants and technical assistance, as they participate in various democratic processes. USAID programs help strengthen civil society organizations, independent media, and youth participation and leadership to foster a more transparent, participatory, and democratic society.

**Question:**

The OAS General Assembly will be in Mexico next month. How do you see the OAS role and the U.S. role within the OAS moving forward on Venezuela?

**Answer:**

The OAS has a vital role to play and the United States remains committed to working with OAS member-states in a unified approach to help Venezuela find a peaceful, democratic, and comprehensive solution to its current crisis.

We continue strong diplomatic engagement with Secretary General Almagro and our regional partners to press ahead with additional measures to bring international pressure on the Maduro regime. Our goal is to return to the full respect for the rule of law and the full respect for freedoms of political expression and participation in Venezuela consistent with the terms and spirit of the Inter-American Democratic Charter.

The Democratic Charter remains an essential element of the inter-American system that our nations created together to uphold and defend democracy.

**Question:**

Recent Administration actions sanctioning the Supreme Court justices sent a strong message that the U.S. will no longer support corrupt Venezuelan government officials that undermine democratic institutions in the country. What other actions is the State Department considering to support the Venezuelan people?

**Answer:**

The U.S. government is working with democratic governments throughout the hemisphere to support a regional approach to help Venezuela find a peaceful, democratic, and comprehensive solution to its current problems. Later this month, the General Assembly of the Organization of American States will meet in Cancun to discuss growing regional consensus. The international community will continue to speak up for democratic principles and respect for human rights in Venezuela. The region is deeply concerned about the functioning of democracy in Venezuela and we are working with a growing group of like-minded countries to promote a sustainable Venezuelan-led solution. Such a solution should involve all interested parties, including civil society and Venezuela's democratically elected legislative body, the National Assembly. Such actions reflect the importance of working together to ensure Venezuela is able to adhere to the provisions enumerated in the Inter-American Democratic Charter.

We will explore every option in our diplomatic and legal toolkit, including the use of visa restrictions and targeted economic sanctions to hold accountable those individuals, regardless of their rank or position, who participate in actions that undermine democratic processes or institutions, abuse or violate human rights, and restrict freedom of expression or freedom of peaceful assembly.

**Question:**

To what extent has the State Department done contingency planning for a potential government collapse or conflict in Venezuela? Is the U.S. prepared with a humanitarian response plan in the event that the Venezuelan government decides to accept assistance?

**Answer:**

Based on current assessments, Venezuela's crisis is worsening as evidenced by the rise in deaths related to violent protests, economic mismanagement, and acute medicine and food shortages. The Department of State continues to monitor this developing situation with concern, anticipate potential contingencies, and is prepared to respond, as appropriate. The Department and U.S. Agency for International Development have a long history of responding to changing, destabilizing circumstances in countries around the world and will engage with our partners, including the regional institutions of the Inter-American System to address changes to the situation in Venezuela.

Authorities provided under the Foreign Assistance Act of 1961, as amended, and the annual State Department, Foreign Operations, and Related Programs Appropriations Act provide some flexibility to reprogram, transfer, draw down, or use funds for contingency needs that occur outside the regular budget cycle. With these authorities, we may have the ability to provide initial support, possibly including, but not limited to, humanitarian assistance, stabilization, and democracy and human rights programming, as appropriate.

Questions for the Record Submitted to
Secretary of State Rex Tillerson by
Representative Gerry Connolly
House Foreign Affairs Committee
June 14, 2017

**Question:**

In his written testimony, Secretary Tillerson said "In several other areas where we have chosen to make reductions, we will ask other donors and private sector partners to increase their support." President Trump has proposed a decrease of more than $13 billion in foreign assistance from FY 2017 to FY 2018. Which countries or companies have already committed to fill the gaps created by that reduction in funding for U.S. foreign assistance? How much have they committed to contributing? Have you begun conversations with any other donors or private sector partners to increase their support in light of such a dramatic decrease? Have you identified target countries or partners to reach out to?

**Answer:**

The Fiscal Year 2018 budget request includes substantial funding to address critical needs around the world. We are communicating directly with our international partners at the highest levels via bilateral exchanges and through multilateral fora to seek their increased support and contributions in addressing these global challenges. Even with the proposed reductions in funding we will continue to be the leader in global health, humanitarian, and other international efforts. We are also looking to maximize the effectiveness of our own programs so that we can continue to offer America's helping hand to the world in the most effective and efficient way possible.

**Question:**

By which date does the President intend to nominate someone for the position of Deputy Secretary of State for Management and Resources.

**Answer:**

The Department is working closely with the White House to identify qualified candidates for our vacant senior leadership positions.

**Question:**

By which date does the President intend to nominate someone for the position of Under Secretary for Economic Growth, Energy and Environment.

**Answer:**

The Department is working closely with the White House to identify qualified candidates for our vacant senior leadership positions.

**Question:**

By which date does the President intend to nominate someone for the position of Under Secretary for Arms Control and International Security Affairs.

**Answer:**
The Department is working closely with the White House to identify qualified candidates for our vacant senior leadership positions.

**Question:**

By which date does the President intend to nominate someone for the position of Under Secretary for Public Diplomacy and Public Affairs.

**Answer:**
The Department is working closely with the White House to identify qualified candidates for our vacant senior leadership positions.

**Question:**

By which date does the President intend to nominate someone for the position of Under Secretary for Civilian Security, Democracy and Human Rights.

**Answer:**
The Department is working closely with the White House to identify qualified candidates for our vacant senior leadership positions.

**Question:**

By which date does the President intend to nominate someone for the position of Assistant Secretary for African Affairs.

**Answer:**
The Department is working closely with the White House to identify qualified candidates for our vacant senior leadership positions.

**Question:**

By which date does the President intend to nominate someone for the position of Assistant Secretary for South and Central Asian Affairs.

**Answer:**
The Department is working closely with the White House to identify qualified candidates for our vacant senior leadership positions.

**Question:**

By which date does the President intend to nominate someone for the position of Assistant Secretary for European and Eurasian Affairs.

**Answer:**

The Department is working closely with the White House to identify qualified candidates for our vacant senior leadership positions.

**Question:**

By which date does the President intend to nominate someone for the position of Assistant Secretary for Western Hemisphere Affairs.

**Answer:**

The Department is working closely with the White House to identify qualified candidates for our vacant senior leadership positions.

**Question:**

By which date does the President intend to nominate someone for the position of Assistant Secretary for East Asian and Pacific Affairs.

**Answer:**

The Department is working closely with the White House to identify qualified candidates for our vacant senior leadership positions.

**Question:**

By which date does the President intend to nominate someone for the position of Assistant Secretary for International Organizations.

**Answer:**

The Department is working closely with the White House to identify qualified candidates for our vacant senior leadership positions.

**Question:**

By which date does the President intend to nominate someone for the position of Assistant Secretary for Near Eastern Affairs.

**Answer:**

The Department is working closely with the White House to identify qualified candidates for our vacant senior leadership positions.

**Question:**

By which date does the President intend to nominate someone for the position of Assistant Secretary for Economic and Business Affairs.

**Answer:**

The Department is working closely with the White House to identify qualified candidates for our vacant senior leadership positions.

**Question:**

By which date does the President intend to nominate someone for the position of Assistant Secretary for Energy Resources.

**Answer:**

The Department is working closely with the White House to identify qualified candidates for our vacant senior leadership positions.

**Question:**

By which date does the President intend to nominate someone for the position of Assistant Secretary for Oceans and International Environmental and Scientific Affairs.

**Answer:**

The Department is working closely with the White House to identify qualified candidates for our vacant senior leadership positions.

**Question:**

By which date does the President intend to nominate someone for the position of Assistant Secretary for Arms Control, Verification, and Compliance.

**Answer:**

The Department is working closely with the White House to identify qualified candidates for our vacant senior leadership positions.

**Question:**

By which date does the President intend to nominate someone for the position of Assistant Secretary for International Security and Nonproliferation.

**Answer:**

The Department is working closely with the White House to identify qualified candidates for our vacant senior leadership positions.

**Question:**

By which date does the President intend to nominate someone for the position of Assistant Secretary for Political-Military Affairs.

**Answer:**

The Department is working closely with the White House to identify qualified candidates for our vacant senior leadership positions.

**Question:**

By which date does the President intend to nominate someone for the position of Assistant Secretary for Education and Cultural Affiars.

**Answer:**

The Department is working closely with the White House to identify qualified candidates for our vacant senior leadership positions.

**Question:**

By which date does the President intend to nominate someone for the position of Assistant Secretary for Public Affairs.

**Answer:**

The Department is working closely with the White House to identify qualified candidates for our vacant senior leadership positions, however, per Public Law 112-166 Sec. 2: (j) Department of State; Assistant Secretary for Public Affairs and Assistant Secretary for Administration. – Section 1(c)(1) of the State Department Basic Authorities Act of 1956 (22 U.S.C.. 2651a(c)(1)) is amended – (1) by striking ", each of whom shall be appointed by the President, by and with the advice and consent of the Senate, and"; and (2) by adding at the end the following: "Each Assistant Secretary of State shall be appointed by the President, by and with the advice and consent of the Senate, except that the appointments of the Assistant Secretary for Public Affairs and the Assistant Secretary for Administration shall not be subject to the advice and consent of the Senate.".

**Question:**

By which date does the President intend to nominate someone for the position of Assistant Secretary for Administration.

**Answer:**

The Department is working closely with the White House to identify qualified candidates for our vacant senior leadership positions, however, per Public Law 112-166 Sec. 2: (j) Department of State; Assistant Secretary for Public Affairs and Assistant Secretary for Administration. – Section 1(c)(1) of the State Department Basic Authorities Act of 1956 (22

U.S.C.. 2651a(c)(1)) is amended – (1) by striking ", each of whom shall be appointed by the President, by and with the advice and consent of the Senate, and"; and (2) by adding at the end the following: "Each Assistant Secretary of State shall be appointed by the President, by and with the advice and consent of the Senate, except that the appointments of the Assistant Secretary for Public Affairs and the Assistant Secretary for Administration shall not be subject to the advice and consent of the Senate.".

**Question:**

By which date does the President intend to nominate someone for the position of Assistant Secretary for Consular Affairs.

**Answer:**

The Department is working closely with the White House to identify qualified candidates for our vacant senior leadership positions. On August 3, 2017, Carl C. Risch was confirmed by the Senate in the position of Assistant Secretary for Consular Affairs.

**Question:**

By which date does the President intend to nominate someone for the position of Assistant Secretary for Diplomatic Security.

**Answer:**

The Department is working closely with the White House to identify qualified candidates for our vacant senior leadership positions.

**Question:**

By which date does the President intend to nominate someone for the position of Assistant Secretary for Conflict and Stabilization Operations.

**Answer:**

The Department is working closely with the White House to identify qualified candidates for our vacant senior leadership positions.

**Question:**

By which date does the President intend to nominate someone for the position of Assistant Secretary for Democracy, Human Rights, and Labor.

**Answer:**

The Department is working closely with the White House to identify qualified candidates for our vacant senior leadership positions.

**Question:**

By which date does the President intend to nominate someone for the position of Assistant Secretary for Population, Refugees, and Migration.

**Answer:**

The Department is working closely with the White House to identify qualified candidates for our vacant senior leadership positions.

**Question:**

By which date does the President intend to nominate someone for the position of Assistant Secretary for Legislative Affairs.

**Answer:**

The Department is working closely with the White House to identify qualified candidates for our vacant senior leadership positions.

**Question:**

By which date does the President intend to nominate someone for the position of Director for the Office of Foreign Missions.

**Answer:**

The Department is working closely with the White House to identify qualified candidates for our vacant senior leadership positions.

**Question:**

By which date does the President intend to nominate someone for the position of Director General for Human Resources of the Foreign Service and Director of Human Resources.

**Answer:**

The Department is working closely with the White House to identify qualified candidates for our vacant senior leadership positions.

**Question:**

By which date does the President intend to nominate someone for the position of Director for the Office of Civil Rights.

**Answer:**

The Director for the Office of the Civil Rights is a member of the Career Senior Executive Service headed by Gregory B. Smith.

**Question:**

By which date does the President intend to nominate someone for the position of Ambassador-at-Large for Counterterrorism and Countering Violent Extremism.

**Answer:**
The Department is working closely with the White House to identify qualified candidates for our vacant senior leadership positions.

**Question:**

By which date does the President intend to nominate someone for the position of Ambassador-at-Large for the Office to Monitor and Combat Trafficking in Persons.

**Answer:**
The Department is working closely with the White House to identify qualified candidates for our vacant senior leadership positions.

**Question:**

By which date does the President intend to nominate someone for the position of Ambassador-at-Large for the Office of Global Criminal Justice.

**Answer:**
The Department is working closely with the White House to identify qualified candidates for our vacant senior leadership positions.

**Question:**

By which date does the President intend to nominate someone for the position of Ambassador-at-Large for the Office of Global Women's Issues.

**Answer:**
The Department is working closely with the White House to identify qualified candidates for our vacant senior leadership positions.

**Question:**

By which date does the President intend to nominate someone for the position of Legal Adviser for the Office of the Legal Adviser.

**Answer:**
The Department is working closely with the White House to identify qualified candidates for our vacant senior leadership positions.

**Question:**

By which date does the President intend to nominate someone for the position of Ambassador for the Office of the Chief of Protocol.

**Answer:**

The Department is working closely with the White House to identify qualified candidates for our vacant senior leadership positions.

Questions for the Record Submitted to
Secretary of State Rex Tillerson by
Representative Daniel Donovan
House Foreign Affairs Committee
June 14, 2017

**Question:**

The Administration's budget cuts global health by 25 percent and affects some of the most vulnerable populations in the world, women and children. 5.9 million children die every year, mainly of preventable or treatable conditions, like diarrhea and pneumonia - that's 16,000 children every day. Over 300,000 women die due to complications with pregnancy. The U.S. alongside 174 other countries committed to ending preventable child and maternal deaths by the year 2035 - as our part, the U.S. committed to saving 15 million children's lives and 800,000 women's lives by 2020.

Can you say that with these cuts to maternal and child health, nutrition, and other core, global health programs will keep us on track for reaching those goals? If not, do you have an account of how many lives will not be saved if these cuts are put in place?

**Answer:**

Preventing child and maternal deaths is a priority for USAID and relies on investment in and linkages across health programs including maternal and child health, nutrition, and malaria. USAID is committed to averting the deaths of 15 million children and 600,000 women by 2020, by working with other partners, including most importantly countries themselves, to mobilize additional resources and political will to focus efforts on the most effective and efficient interventions to prevent child and maternal deaths.

This commitment remains. The FY 2018 request includes $1.5 billion to prevent child and maternal deaths. While the composition of USAID funding across the health areas varies year-to-year, this effort has always relied upon partnership from country governments and other donors, and its continued success is linked to their sustained involvement by all. Family planning and reproductive health interventions are important contributors to maternal and child survival and we will work with other donors and host country governments to increase their funding for family planning/reproductive health in FY 2018.

**Question:**

A policy of the United States – led by the Departments of State and Treasury – is to confiscate funds once an individual or a group has been designated as a foreign terrorist organization or a Specially Designated Global Terrorist. It is also the policy of the United States to collect and save the interest on the confiscated funds. These funds (the original amount of money plus the interest) are then given back to the individual or group once they are no longer deemed a sponsor of international terror.

Can you tell me what lesson is learned if the United States confiscates funds, and then at a later date gives back more money than was originally confiscated?

**Answer:**

When the U.S. government designates a group as a Foreign Terrorist Organization (FTO) under Section 219 of the Immigration and Nationality Act or an individual or group as a Specially Designated Global Terrorist (SDGT) under Executive Order 13224 all property and interest in property of the designated person subject to U.S. jurisdiction is blocked (i.e. frozen). By freezing the assets of those designated, the United States denies them access to funds that could be used for terrorism or to support terrorists or acts of terrorism. Sanctions are intended, among other things, to incentivize a change in behavior on the part of the designated FTO or SDGT. Only if the group or individual is delisted – which may occur, for example, if the circumstances which resulted in their designation ceases to exist, would the assets become unfrozen.

**Question:**

Can you commit the Administration to work on an action plan or strategy to strengthen the global frontline health workforce? And can you explain the rationale for eliminating a budgetary allocation for global health security, especially given the broad cuts proposed across global health and growing threats of deadly disease outbreaks?

**Answer:**

The Administration is working to strengthen the frontline global health workforce to detect and prevent the spread of pandemics and promote national-level compliance with the WHO International Health Regulations. The United States promotes best practices in workforce development by encouraging countries to strengthen their frontline health workforce and build other domestic capacities to find and stop disease outbreaks before they spread across borders and threaten U.S. citizens and the international community, as well as global commerce.

The FY 2018 budget request pursues greater efficiencies and leveraging of resources. The FY 2018 requests using $72.5 million in remaining FY 2015 Ebola supplemental funds to support global health security, which would maintain support for global health security in development programs at FY 2016 levels.

The FY 2018 funding request will enable sustained support for global health security and the building of country-level systems to prevent, detect, and respond to emerging disease threats to the American people. These funds will enable the U.S. government, in partnership with other nations, international organizations, and public and private stakeholders, to prevent avoidable epidemics that could spread to the United States, detect threats early, and respond to disease outbreaks in an effort to prevent them from becoming global pandemics

**Question:**

USAID plays a critical and distinct role in global health research and development (R&D), supporting late-stage and implementation research to advance new drugs, vaccines, diagnostics, and other health tools intended for use in remote and low-resource settings. Since 2000, the agency has supported development of 21 new health technologies with demonstrated track records of saving lives and cutting program costs. USAID's research investments are also critical for American health, and allow health technologies to be tested in regions of the world with the

highest disease burdens, which in turn ensures Americans have access to the most effective, high-performing health tools. Despite these returns, the Administration's FY18 budget proposal slashes USAID funding for global health R&D-- and even zeros USAID investments in HIV/AIDS research, including novel and urgently needed prevention tools like microbicides and an HIV vaccine. This work is unique, and not duplicative of research happening at other US Agencies.

Can you detail why global health research is being de-prioritized by the Administration's budget at a time when global infectious disease epidemics are on the rise?

**Answer:**

The FY 2018 budget consolidates all U.S. assistance for global HIV/AIDS efforts within the State Department to simplify the management and coordination of these investments. USAID will continue to remain one of the primary implementing agencies for PEPFAR, and will continue to implement a significant share of U.S. global HIV/AIDS assistance in this capacity.

With regard to global health research, USAID intends to increase its efforts to leverage partners' expertise and resources, strengthen country capacity to conduct their own research and development (R&D), and strategically utilize market shaping and innovative financing tools to incentivize private companies to invest in R&D.

Further, the FY 2018 request continues to support Global Health Security by requesting to use $72.5 million in remaining FY 2015 Ebola emergency funds, which would maintain a straight-line of support for global health security in development programs at the FY 2016 levels. The remaining balances from the Ebola response are an appropriate source of funding for programs whose objective is to prevent and contain future outbreaks of existing or new diseases. Programming these funds will enable the U.S. government, in partnership with other nations, international organizations, and public and private stakeholders, to prevent avoidable epidemics that could spread to the United States, detect threats early, and respond rapidly and effectively to disease outbreaks in an effort to prevent them from becoming global pandemics.

While the United States will continue significant funding for global health programs, as well as infectious diseases, other stakeholders and the partner countries must do more to contribute their fair share to global health initiatives.

Questions for the Record Submitted to
Secretary of State Rex Tillerson by
Representative Keating
House Foreign Affairs Committee
June 14, 2017

**Question 1:**

Overseas Private Investment Corporation (OPIC): OPIC operates annually at a surplus. Yet, the President's budget request proposed to eliminate this agency which supports private sector investment in development projects.

1. Explain the justification for cutting agencies at the State Department, and specifically OPIC, Zthose are so efficient and effective that they save us money.

**Answer:**

The Overseas Private Investment Corporation (OPIC) was set up by Congress "as an agency of the United States under the policy guidance of the Secretary of State", including review and guidance on proposed projects. However, the Department of State is not engaged in the funding process for the Corporation.

With regard to the budget request, the Administration is motivated by a general desire to reduce Federal interventions that distort the free market.

**Question 2:**

At a time when we face complex and challenging threats from terrorism and violent extremism, explain why there will be cuts to programming that research shows is important for curbing these threats?

**Answer:**

Countering the terrorist narrative, messaging, recruitment, and inspiration to violence is a critical part of defeating ISIS and other terrorist groups and networks. In FY 2018, the Administration is requesting $228 million for countering violent extremism programs, which is an increase over previous years. This funding would support ongoing efforts to engage communities and reduce support for violent extremism in countries ranging from Bangladesh to Kosovo to Nigeria. However, projected cuts to the Bureau of Counterterrorism and Countering Violent Extremism's administrative funding will impact its ability to support ongoing programming and budget efforts, research and development with key CT partners, and strategic monitoring and evaluation activities. In addition, the Department of State has requested $31.9 million in funding to support the staff and operations of the Global Engagement Center (GEC) to counter violent extremist messaging; GEC is also allowed to receive substantial additional funding from the Department of Defense for its messaging work, but has not yet secured that funding.

Importantly, we encourage other donor countries, host-country governments and local partners to take responsibility for leading these efforts; they have primary responsibility and are

best positioned to ensure sustained success. In fact, we have leveraged hundreds of millions of dollars over the last several years from Western European governments and other donors to fund many countering violent extremism initiatives and programming around the world.

**Question 3:**

Women and Security: Research has shown how critical women are to our national security and to promoting greater security around the world.

1. Will the Secretary support level funding or expanded funding for the Office of Global Women's Issues?

**Answer:**

The United States continues to prioritize the rights and wellbeing of women and girls around the world as part of our foreign policy. The FY 2018 request maintains support for the Office of Global Women's Issues (S/GWI) and includes $8.25 million, a straight-line of FY 2016, to support foreign assistance programs managed by this office. Within a constrained FY 2018 request that required the Department to make difficult trade-off decisions, maintaining funding for S/GWI within the FY 2018 request reflects the high level at which this administration values the office and the role of women in national security. In addition, S/GWI continues to coordinate with bureaus across the Department to support the implementation of programs that address a wide range of women's and gender issues.

**Question 4:**

In directing the policy and initiatives of the State Department, will the Secretary ensure that women are meaningful participants across all work within the Department itself, and encourage counterparts in other countries to do the same?

**Answer:**

As I have said previously, "I have seen firsthand the impact of empowering women, particularly empowering women's participation in economic activities in the lesser developed part of the world. There is study after study to confirm that when you empower women in these developing parts of the world, you change the future of the country." The State Department remains committed to continuing the important work of advancing the status of women and girls globally to support our foreign policy and national security objectives and increase U.S. economic prosperity. Our diplomatic efforts are more effective when we harness the full capacity of our workforce—and when we engage and support women and girls across the globe through diplomacy.

Women are meaningful participants within the work of the Department. The Bureau of Human Resources (HR) and the Chief Diversity Officer continuously assess and evaluate the Department's effectiveness. HR appointed a Senior Advisor on Diversity, Inclusion, and Outreach in the Director General's Office to provide strategic direction to the Department's diversity outreach activities and to help recruit and retain a workforce that reflects the diversity of the United States.

Women now make up 41 percent of our Foreign Service Generalist and 28 percent of our Foreign Service Specialist workforce and more than 50 percent of the Civil Service workforce.

Women account for approximately 36 percent of the Generalist Senior Foreign Service – a 200 percent increase from 16 percent 20 years ago. The representation of women in the Senior Executive Service has more than doubled, going from 18 percent to 38 percent over the same period. While we have made gains in gender diversity, we know we have more work to do.

More broadly, the incorporation of gender considerations into larger foreign policy planning and execution is strategic and imperative. In line with the Department's Gender Policy Guidance, the Secretary's Office of Global Women's Issues plays a central role in ensuring the Department has the know-how and the appropriate processes to strategically incorporate gender into policies and programs. We understand that it is a fundamental tenet of foreign policy that when women are able to participate politically and economically to the same degree as men, societies are more prosperous, stable and secure. When we invest in women and girls around the world, we are investing in families, prosperity, and peace, which benefits overall U.S. national security and prosperity. The Department harnesses bilateral and regional diplomacy, multilateral diplomacy, public diplomacy, and programming to encourage counterparts in other countries to support progress toward gender equality and the advancement of the status of women and girls.

**Question 5:**

Climate: With droughts and food crises in Syria or Bangladesh, it is impossible not to think about the connection between climate change and the threat environments across the world.

Is the Secretary promoting the importance of addressing climate change as a national security issue within the U.S. government and to the Administration? If so, what actions have been taken to date to promote a greater understanding within the U.S. government of the nexus between climate change and national security?

**Answer:**

Following the President's June 1 announcement that he intends to withdraw the United States from the Paris Agreement, we are re-evaluating many aspects of our international climate change policy. The Administration supports a balanced approach to climate change that protects the environment and lowers emissions, promotes American economic growth, and addresses energy security needs.

**Exchanges**

Educational and cultural exchange programs have long been important for my district and home state of Massachusetts. The proposed cuts to these programs are therefore deeply concerning because they are not only important for the country economically, but are at the heart of any successful foreign policy promoting people-to-people exchanges to increase cooperation and decrease the likelihood of conflict. Federal funding for these programs and support for private sector exchange programs remains crucial for ensuring that individuals of diverse backgrounds are able to participate in exchanges.

**Question 6:**

Provide and explain the evidence and metrics the Department is relying on to justify a 55% cut to exchange programs.

**Answer:**

With reduced funding, the Bureau of Educational and Cultural Affairs (ECA) will focus its resources on programs such as the Fulbright and the International Visitor Leadership Programs that provide global reach and allow for broad flexibility in addressing foreign policy themes. These and other foundational programs are highly rated by our embassies around the world and are models of demonstrated effectiveness. ECA monitors and evaluates its exchange programs, beginning with setting goals that advance U.S. foreign policy, monitoring throughout program implementation to ensure the highest quality performance. ECA also does long-term impact evaluations of its programs, and tracks and engages alumni to ensure return on investment.

In determining which programs and activities require adjustments in resources, ECA's leadership turns to multiple sources of data and program feedback, as well as strategic guidance from the Undersecretary for Public Diplomacy and Public Affairs, Regional Bureaus, the National Security Council, the inter-agency, Ambassadors and other field officers. ECA analyzes impact data required by its grant agreements with implementing partners, performance measurement and independent evaluations of individual ECA programs, and results data collected through the Functional Bureau Strategy process. ECA's Digital Outreach team also contributes to evaluation in the Bureau, using an array of social media analytics to collect data on the effectiveness of ECA's on-line outreach, courses and programs.

**Question 7**:

Explain how these cuts will avoid any detrimental impact on the Department's ability to promote peaceful relations with other countries.

**Answer:**

Facing a reduction in resources, the State Department would prioritize its engagement with emerging world leaders through United States Government-sponsored exchanges. Academic, cultural, and professional exchange programs, at reduced levels, would remain significant and effective tools to meet foreign policy goals, while building ties and establishing networks with current and future generations of foreign policymakers and leaders.

Engaging broad audiences at home and abroad leverages the expertise and resources of U.S. academia and the private sector in support of U.S. foreign policy goals. Through program evaluation and performance measurement, the Bureau of Educational and Cultural Affairs has developed cost-effective models for its exchanges and also leverages virtual programs, alumni engagement, and rapid-response mechanisms to respond to U.S. foreign policy and national security priorities. In addition, Private Sector programs run by U.S. private sector sponsors designated by the Department bring more than 300,000 exchange visitors to the United States each year in 13 different categories including professors, research scholars, college and university students, interns, trainees, au pairs, summer work travel participants and others; these programs are funded through fees paid by exchange visitors, and do not require many Department resources.

**Question 8:**

Explain the Department's current or proposed plans to curtail each exchange program within its purview.

**Answer**:

The Department's budget request proposes to retain its portfolio of established and effective exchange program models, in most cases, but to scale them back. The Bureau of Educational and Cultural Affairs will continue its support for core global programs such as Fulbright and the International Visitor Leadership Program (IVLP), as well as a nucleus of proven programs for American and foreign youth, professional fellows, artists, and athletes, that have both the scope and flexibility to serve the U.S. national interest.

The Bureau obtains efficiencies through streamlining and consolidating cross-cutting program management activities, such as alumni engagement and program evaluation, while continuing to track program impact and outcomes. Since U.S. Ambassadors rely on exchange alumni, who comprise ready-made networks of citizens prepared to work with us on shared goals, sustaining contact with them is imperative.

**Question 9:**

Civil Society: Democratic and inclusive governance and a space for civil society to engage with government in a robust and meaningful manner are cornerstones of stability, and stability is critical for security. I am therefore deeply concerned about how State Department cuts will undermine the ability of the United States to continue programming in countries where efforts to promote democracy, governance, and the role of civil society are crucial for creating greater security.

Has the Department conducted an assessment of the anticipated collateral impact of decreasing or eliminating funding for democracy, governance, and civil society programming abroad?

a. If so, was this assessment conducted prior to the submission of the budget request to Congress?
b. Please provide the results of this assessment.

Is the State Department preparing measures to mitigate identified anticipated negative impacts from reducing funding to these programs?

**Answer:**

An independent civil society is not only critical to the delivery of development and humanitarian assistance, it is also an important bulwark against state fragility and the political radicalization that is linked to extremism. Despite the critical role that Civil Society Organizations (CSOs) play in a country's development process, CSOs have faced a mounting backlash and closing of the political space in which they operate in many parts of the world. In 2017, Freedom House reported the eleventh consecutive year of global decline in civil liberties and political rights.

In response, the Department of State and USAID's FY 2018 budget request includes $1.6 billion for Democracy, Human Rights and Governance (DRG) programs, of which, $261.6 million is dedicated to civil society. This level support CSOs working in closing and closed spaces by building their capacity to galvanize citizen participation, foster a positive shift in government responsiveness to citizen demands, improve freedom of information, and expand civic participation and CSO engagement with governments for improved accountability.

As we work to streamline efforts to ensure efficiency and effectiveness of U.S. taxpayer dollars, we acknowledge that we have to make some tough choices about our approaches and

programming priorities. We will strategically allocate our resources to our most important policy priorities. It is also important to highlight that resources do not equate to outcomes nor the entirety of our commitment to these efforts. Our Ambassadors and our diplomats also advance DRG objectives in country.

**Question 11 and 12**:

Mr. Kushner's Role: To follow up on the Secretary's response during the hearing that it would be necessary to ask Mr. Kushner himself about whether he had engaged in foreign policy conversations without first consulting with the Secretary:

11. Explain how regularly Mr. Kushner takes part in foreign policy discussions with the Secretary or other officials within the State Department.

    a. As a principal member of the National Security Council and the chief foreign affairs adviser to the President, the Secretary of State regularly communicates – via multiple fora –with the President, the Special Assistant for National Security Affairs, and other senior advisors to the President on foreign policy matters.

12. Is there an established protocol for communication or collaboration between Mr. Kushner and the State Department when Mr. Kushner is engaged in matters of foreign policy?
    a. As a principal member of the National Security Council and the chief foreign affairs adviser to the President, the Secretary of State regularly communicates – via multiple fora –with the President, the Special Assistant for National Security Affairs, and other senior advisors to the President on foreign policy matters.

**Question 13**:

Have the Russians committed to any change in behavior in North Korea?

**Answer**:

Russia can play a constructive role in encouraging the DPRK regime to cease and roll back its nuclear program. However, Russia (along with China) has resisted and watered down all the sanctions measures the United States and partners have proposed in response to the DPRK's continued unlawful development of it nuclear and ballistic missile programs. Russia opposes tighter sanctions despite having allowed the passage of several recent UN Security Council resolutions in response to DPRK nuclear and missile tests, out of belief that additional political and economic pressure on North Korea will destabilize the entire region and possibly lead to armed conflict. Russia also states that the sanctions so far have failed to prevent North Korea nuclear and missile tests. We continue to urge Russia to downgrade its DPRK guest worker program as their remittances are siphoned off by the regime to fund the banned weapons programs. We also continue to urge Russia to cut its oil exports to DPRK and cut financial ties with the regime.

**Question 14**:

Has the State Department recommended any action be taken against Russia for their undermining of sanctions against North Korea? If so, what recommendations have been made and are there any plans to carry out any of those recommendations?

**Answer**:

We will utilize all tools at our disposal to choke off resources that fund the DPRK's nuclear, ballistic missile, and proliferation programs. This Administration will go wherever the evidence leads to impose targeted financial sanctions on entities or individuals that support North Korea's proscribed programs. We have already imposed sanctions against Russian entities and individuals found to be aiding the DPRK. If we find other bad actors supporting DPRK's illegal activities, we will take appropriate action.

**Question 15**:

What are the Department's policy recommendations for addressing the threat posed by North Korea if Russia does not stop aiding North Korea?

**Answer**:

With our allies and partners around the world – and we hope this includes Russia – we will show the Democratic People's Republic of Korea (DPRK) that the only path to a secure, economically-prosperous future is to abandon its unlawful programs that endanger international peace and security. We will utilize all tools at our disposal to choke off resources that fund the DPRK's nuclear, ballistic missile, and proliferation programs. This Administration will go wherever the evidence leads to impose targeted financial sanctions on entities or individuals that support North Korea's proscribed programs. We have already imposed sanctions against Russian entities and individuals found to be aiding the DPRK. If we find other bad actors supporting DPRK's illegal activities, we will not hesitate to sanction them as well.

Questions for the Record Submitted to
Secretary of State Rex Tillerson by
Representative Ann Wagner
House Foreign Affairs Committee
June 14, 2017

**Question:**
This week, Panama switched diplomatic relations from Taiwan and to China. China's checkbook diplomacy is a dangerous provocation to cross-Strait relations, and its cheap tricks in our own backyard are particularly concerning. I was impressed with President Trump's call to President Tsai Ing-wen, and I am adamant that we fully engage with Taiwan through high-level official visits, weapons sales, and pressing for Taiwan's inclusion in international organizations. Secretary Tillerson, how will you respond to China's actions, ensure that Taiwan will not be used as a bargaining chip in U.S. relations with China, and build stronger ties with our democratic partner in the Asia-Pacific?

**Answer:**
The United States continues to oppose unilateral actions by either side to alter the status quo across the Strait. We have a deep and abiding interest in cross-Strait stability and believe the dialogue between the two sides has enabled peace, stability, and development in recent years. The United States urges all concerned parties to engage in productive dialogue and to avoid escalatory or destabilizing moves. We consider the People's Republic of China's efforts to persuade Taiwan's diplomatic partners to switch recognition from Taipei to Beijing to be destabilizing, and we reaffirm our commitment to maintaining peace and stability in the region.

This Administration has reaffirmed the U.S. commitment to our one China policy, based on the Three Joint U.S.-China Communiques and the Taiwan Relations Act. Under the umbrella of our unofficial relationship, the United States and Taiwan conduct the full range of normal interactions, including arms sales, visits, trade negotiations, and education and cultural exchanges. In addition, we share strong economic ties: Taiwan is our 10th-largest trading partner and 7th-largest agricultural export market, and Taiwan's robust participation in events such as the SelectUSA Summit, wherein the delegation announced its intention to invest nearly $34 billion in the United States, demonstrates the importance of our economic relationship. We continue to pursue avenues of deepening our unofficial relationship with Taiwan, including working towards implementing a Global Entry program for Taiwan and coordinating Global Cooperation and Training Framework (GCTF) events to address global problems. Taiwan is a beacon of democracy in Asia, a reliable partner of the United States, and a force for good in the world, and we value advancing the U.S.-Taiwan relationship.

**Qnestion:**
What is the State Department doing to counter Iran's use of proxy militias to project power? Will the Administration apply sanctions to Iranian-backed militias that are working under the direction of IRGC Quds Force and with Hezbollah?

**Answer:**

Iran's destabilizing activities in the region are a threat to the United States and its partners. Iran continues to provide military equipment, financing, and training to the Assad regime and has mobilized foreign fighters in Syria. Iran has supplied Lebanese Hizballah with millions of dollars and arms and has trained thousands of its fighters.

Iran is providing military equipment, including sophisticated weapons, funding, and training, to Yemen's Houthi rebels to use against the Yemeni government, Saudi Arabia and its coalition partners, and to threaten the Red Sea shipping lanes. Iran also continues providing weapons, support, and training to militant groups in Bahrain.

Iran remains subject to a variety of U.S. sanctions, including a U.S. embargo on most trade with Iran, numerous restrictions related to Iran's designation as a state sponsor of terrorism, and other sanctions authorities targeting its ballistic missile program, human rights abuses, support for terrorism, and destabilizing activities in the region. This administration is committed to aggressively enforcing these authorities and has already announced numerous sanctions designations in response to Iran's malign behavior and has not hesitated to take action against Iran when its behavior warrants a firm response.

Iran's proxies, including Hizballah, also are subject to a variety of sanctions, including, the Hezbollah International Financing Prevention Act (HIFPA), which was passed in December of 2015, gives us the authorities to take action against any foreign financial institution that knowingly facilitates significant transactions for Hizballah, including any Iranian financial institution that facilitation such transactions for Hizballah.

We also continue to work extensively with likeminded countries, including those who are members of the multilateral export control regimes, our Gulf partners, and Israel to deter and disrupt Iranian threats. Examples of such cooperation include military and diplomatic efforts to prevent Iranian weapons shipments into Yemen and efforts to interdict ballistic missile technology destined for Iran. We also work with partners in Europe, Africa, Latin America, and Asia to bolster their capacity to investigate and prosecute Hizballah's illicit activities around the world.

**Question:**
I very much appreciate the President's serious commitment to theft of U.S. intellectual property, which costs us hundreds of billions per year. How will the State Department hold Chinese actors accountable for American IP theft?

**Answer:**
The Administration remains committed to ensuring that U.S. owners of IP have a full and fair opportunity to use and profit from their IP around the globe. We continue to press China to strengthen the legal and regulatory systems for entrepreneurship and innovation through high-level discussions including the Comprehensive Economic Dialogue announced by Presidents Trump and Xi, the "Special 301" and Notorious Market reports, and State Department programs to build public awareness of the value of IP rights. The State Department also works closely with the U.S. Trade Representative, Departments of Commerce, Treasury, and Homeland Security, as well as with international partners to use our available tools to combat the theft of American IP.

**Question:**
As a former U.S. Ambassador, I cannot support such large cuts in foreign aid, but I do genuinely appreciate your efforts to reorganize the State Department, and ensure safety for U.S. citizens, our allies, and partners. But with these goals in mind, I would like to better understand the rationale behind cutting State's Office to Monitor and Combat Trafficking in Persons—which has done fantastic work—by 68% from FY16 levels?

**Answer:**
The reduction in our FY 2018 request for anti-trafficking assistance largely reflects the Administration's broader reduction in economic, development, and law enforcement assistance. In a constrained budget environment, difficult trade-off decisions must be made, however the request continues support for targeted bilateral and regional anti-trafficking programs as well as $17 million in centrally-managed INCLE funds for the Office to Monitor and Combat Trafficking in Persons (J/TIP) to strengthen the ability of partner governments and civil society to prosecute traffickers, protect victims, and prevent human trafficking. The Administration has reaffirmed its commitment to counter trafficking in persons as part of the *Presidential Executive Order on Enforcing Federal Law with Respect to Transnational Criminal Organizations and Preventing International Trafficking.*

Question for the Record Submitted to
Secretary of State Rex Tillerson by
Representative David N. Cicilline
House Foreign Affairs Committee
June 14, 2017

**Question:**

Has the President ever asked you to pledge your loyalty to him on any occasion? If so, please describe the circumstances.

**Answer:**

I took an oath of office wherein I swore to support and defend the Constitution of the United States.

**Question:**

Secretary Tillerson, when you are speaking with leaders from allies or adversaries, are you confident that you are speaking accurately on behalf of this administration and the president? Do you believe that foreign leaders see you as having the authority to convey American positions and decisions?

**Answer:**

Yes, when I am speaking with leaders and allies I am confident they believe I am representing the administration and President accurately.

**Question:**

Based on your experience, what do you think are the comparative advantages of State and USAID's missions, timelines, projects, and personnel? Where do you see efficiencies that may be gained?

**Answer:**

These matters – the comparative advantages of State and USAID's missions, timelines, projects, and personnel, as well as possible efficiencies to be gained – will be discussed and articulated during our redesign process. We look forward to sharing our findings with you and seeking your feedback prior to implementation.

**Question:**

Was it your intention, by zeroing out the budget for family planning and reproductive health programs, to cause more unintended pregnancies, more maternal and newborn deaths, and more unsafe abortions around the world?

**Answer:**

The FY 2018 request includes $1.5 billion to prevent child and maternal deaths. While the composition of USAID funding across the health programs varies year-to-year, this effort has always relied upon partnership from country governments and other donors, and its continued success is linked to sustained involvement by all. Family planning and reproductive health programs are important contributors to maternal and child survival and we will work with other donors and host country governments to best coordinate all sources of health assistance in FY 2018.

**Question:**

You and others have consistently said that it is the intention of the Administration to ask other countries to step up and fill the gaping funding gaps that this proposed budget would leave. Have you conveyed to various countries what you expect their contributions to be, and received specific commitments for funding?

**Answer:**

The Department of State and USAID must advance our efforts to engage other countries to address global challenges. As part of our efforts, we will work to ensure that other donor countries contribute their fair share. We will continue to engage diplomatically with allies and partners to advance shared policy priorities and bilateral partnerships. Our allies are taking our calls for increased support seriously.

Even with reductions in funding, we will continue to be the leader in international development, global health, democracy and good governance initiatives, as well as humanitarian efforts. As we work to streamline efforts to ensure efficiency and effectiveness of U.S. taxpayer dollars, we acknowledge that we have to prioritize and make some tough choices. Focusing our efforts will allow us to advance our most important policy goals and national security interests.

**Question:**

During your first trip to Beijing, in a departure from the practice of your predecessors, you chose not to take traveling press, including to China which is a country that is notorious for limiting its citizen's access to information. On the same trip, the Korean press reported that you did not attend a dinner with government officials due to "fatigue." You later denied these claims, stating that the South Korean press had misrepresented the issue.

a) What did you mean when you said you weren't a big press access person?
b) In previous administrations, advancing free an open press has been a foreign-policy goal. Is that no longer the case?
c) Do you believe your exclusion of U.S. press – a break from longstanding practice – inevitably gave foreign media undue power to spin the narrative?
d) Do you see the media as an important amplifier for U.S. diplomatic leadership and soft power?
e) Will you take press with you on future trips?

**Answer:**

We believe in the importance of a free and open press in all societies. I would point you to my World Press Freedom Day statement this year, which reaffirmed our commitment to promoting the fundamental principles of a free press around the world: https://www.state.gov/secretary/remarks/2017/05/270607.htm.

The Department is committed to transparency and accountability to the American people. We have multiple ways to ensure that U.S. and foreign publics remain informed about U.S. foreign policy. One important point to clarify, the U.S. and international media were part of my March 2017 trip to Japan, South Korea and China. I fielded reporters' questions a press conference at each stop, including in Tokyo, Seoul and Beijing as well as a TV interview with a U.S. network while standing on the North Korea side of the DMZ. My meetings, both in Washington and during my overseas travel, typically have a press component.

**Question:**

The FY16 omnibus requires you to certify and report to Congress that the Egyptian government has met a number of benchmarks on democracy, human rights, and the rule of law before releasing 15 percent ($195 million) of Egypt's military aid. Can you tell us if the Egyptian government, for example: has released political prisoners, is implementing laws or policies to govern democratically, is taking consistent steps to protect and advance the rights of women and religious minorities, and is providing detainees with due process of law? After President el-Sisi signed a draconian new law restricting civil society and reports of an escalated crackdown against civil society organizations in Egypt, do you believe the Egyptian government is implementing reforms that protect "the ability of civil society organizations and the media to function without interference"? What examples, if any, can you provide as evidence of those actions by the Egyptian government? What examples, if any, can you provide as evidence of the Egyptian government violating those principles?

**Answer:**

The Egyptian government periodically grants pardons and a fairly large number of prisoners have been released over the past few years. However, few political prisoners have been included in this process. Some notable exceptions are religious dissident Islam el-Beheiry, who was pardoned in November 2016, and Aya Hijazi, her husband, and their colleagues, who were acquitted in April 2017. Thousands of individuals remain detained on charges of violating Egypt's Demonstrations Law.

The government of Egypt conducted elections for the presidency and parliament that, were professionally administered in accordance with the country's laws. Nevertheless, there were concerns about restrictions on freedoms of peaceful assembly, association, and expression and its negative impact on the political climate surrounding the elections. Turning these institutional structures into a functioning democratic system of governance requires greater respect for civil liberties, including allowing civil society to freely operate and permitting opportunities to freely express dissent.

Egypt has made some positive steps on religious minorities and women's rights by improving the status of Christians and passing legislation restricting female genital mutilation. The passage of a new church construction law marked a positive development for ensuring more equal treatment of the Coptic population, and allowed the government to finance the construction

of churches destroyed under the previous government. However, perpetrators of violence against the Christian community still generally escape justice through the use of "reconciliation sessions." Courts generally acted independently, although individual courts sometimes lack impartiality and arrive at politically motivated outcomes. We remain concerned by lack of respect for fair trial guarantees, and about excessive use of preventative custody and pretrial detention, trials involving hundreds of defendants, and the use of military courts to try civilians.

I testified previously that we were extremely disappointed by President Sisi's signature of the NGO law. This legislation as written raises concerns about Egypt's commitments to reforms protecting the ability of civil society to function without interference. The law's implementation, however, will depend on the regulations that will determine how to apply the legislation. Civil society activists are regularly subjected to asset freezes, travel restrictions and arrests. The government has thus far failed to resolve the ongoing "foreign funding case" which involved convictions against U.S. citizens and Egyptian employees of U.S.-registered non-profits. Egypt recently blocked access to more than a hundred websites including those of some of the best known news and human rights organizations. We have raised – and will continue to raise – our serious concerns about the NGO law, and stress the fundamental importance of respect for human rights and the need for a robust civil society with the Egyptian government at the highest levels.

**Question:**

This budget requests $75 million in economic assistance to Egypt, which includes money for democracy and development programs. Egyptian President el-Sisi recently ratified a draconian new NGO law which would make it virtually impossible for independent civil society to operate in Egypt through restrictive registration and funding processes. According to the Project on Middle East Democracy, Egypt's new NGO law will also require international NGOs to obtain "prior approval from the National Authority to operate in Egypt. They have to purchase a $20,000 permit; this fee would increase by 20 percent every five years." A longstanding provision of U.S. law known as the "Brownback Amendment" asserts that "with respect to the provision of democracy, human rights, and governance activities, the organizations implementing such assistance, the specific nature of that assistance, and the participants in such programs shall not be subject to the prior approval by the government of any foreign country." In your view, does Egypt's new NGO law violate the Brownback Amendment by giving the Egyptian government veto power over U.S.-funded democracy programs? More broadly, with this new law in place, what kind of economic, development, or democracy programming is even possible for U.S. assistance to support in Egypt? Do you believe that repeal of this NGO law should be a pre-requirement to the United States providing continued economic aid to Egypt?

**Answer:**

The Egyptian government is an important partner on a number of key U.S. foreign policy priorities. Since the Trump Administration came into office, we have seen some progress in various aspects of the bilateral relationship: the release of American citizen Aya Hijazy, increased military cooperation (including agreement to move forward on Bright Star), and agreements with three U.S. companies totaling $750 million over ten years, including a $575 million letter of intent to purchase GE locomotives U.S. businesses. However, in the wake of

President al-Sisi's signature of the problematic NGO law, Secretary Tillerson has expressed his disappointment. From the time parliament proposed this legislation until President al-Sisi approved it, the U.S. clearly and repeatedly communicated our concerns about the law and urged the GOE to revise it.

We are actively considering how best to address this deeply problematic legislation, and are watching closely the development of the implementing regulations for this law. We are also examining the implications of the law for the implementation of U.S. assistance programs. We will continue to press the Egyptians to enable U.S. assistance programs and provide civil society the necessary freedom to operate.

The Department of State and USAID implement programs consistent with the Brownback Amendment. Many of the practical implications of Egypt's new NGO law remain unclear at this point, and we are trying better to understand the law, how it will be implemented, and how it might impact our programs and implementing partners.

**Question:**

This budget eliminates foreign military financing grants for every country in the world except for four, including $1.3 billion for Egypt. A May 2016 report from the GAO indicated that a lack of cooperation from Egyptian authorities "limited U.S. efforts to verify the use and security of certain equipment." Since that time, a disturbing video from April 2017 shows members of the Egyptian military shooting unarmed detainees to death at point-blank range in the Sinai Peninsula and staging the killings to look as if they had happened in combat. I am deeply concerned about the United States continuing to provide military assistance to Egypt while Egyptian authorities continue to deny access to U.S. officials seeking to verify that such equipment is not being used to commit gross human rights violations, in accordance with the Leahy Law. Have your Egyptian counterparts assured you that U.S. officials will have full access to the Sinai to make such verification? In your view, is the Egyptian military currently in compliance with the Leahy Law?

**Answer:**

The Foreign Military Financing program with Egypt underpins the U.S.-Egypt security partnership and promotes key U.S. security interests in a volatile region, including in the effort to defeat ISIS.

IS-Sinai continues to target Egyptian military, security, and government personnel and increasingly civilians in the Sinai. ISIS attacks in the Nile Valley, including the Palm Sunday bombing of churches in the Nile Delta cities of Tanta and Alexandria, are also increasing. We remain concerned by reports of repressive counterterrorism tactics in the Sinai that include curfews and raiding of homes. The Department is also deeply concerned by the recent video purportedly showing extra-judicial killings in the Sinai. The Department is continuing to analyze the video and working to identity those who have committed these actions. Senior Department officials have conveyed these concerns directly to the Egyptian government and urged the Egyptian government to conduct a thorough and transparent investigation, and hold the responsible individuals to account. The Department will continue to follow developments closely from both Washington and Cairo, and will continue to express U.S. concerns at senior levels.

The Egyptian government continues to limit outside access to the conflict area in northern Sinai, apart from official travel to Multinational Force and Observers (MFO) facilities. In the summer of 2016, the government allowed U.S. officials to tour development projects in the Sinai near the Suez Canal and the Egyptian 2nd Field Army Headquarters on the Sinai side of Ismailiyah. However, at senior levels, the Departments of State and Defense continue to press the Egyptian government for greater access to northern Sinai to conduct required end-use monitoring.

We have applied and continue to comply in full with the Leahy Law in Egypt. The Department continuously reviews information from all sources on potential gross violations of human rights by foreign security force units. If a unit is credibly implicated in a gross violation of human rights, the unit would not eligible for assistance under the Leahy Law.

**Question:**

Can you explain the rationale for completely eliminating the Emergency Refugee and Migration (ERMA) account, as the President's Budget Request would do? This account is authorized at $100 million and is drawn down by authority of the President so that the Department of State can respond to displacement emergencies and prevent regional instability. The President's Budget Request claims that these functions can be carried out under the Migration and Refugee Assistance (MRA) account, and yet that account would also be cut by 10%, rather than increased by $100 million. Can you explain the rationale for eliminating this tool of diplomacy?

**Answer:**

We remain committed to providing lifesaving assistance to those who need it most. The MRA request, in concert with FY 2017 resources, will enable the U.S. Government to respond to the major humanitarian emergencies around the globe. For several years, the MRA account has supported emergency refugee needs. The FY 2018 budget request still includes support for emergency refugee and migration needs within the MRA account, but eliminates duplication and streamlines support for refugee and migration needs into one account.

We will continue to ensure that we are using funds as efficiently and effectively as possible in order to meet current and unforeseen needs. Other donors will need to do more to assist in responding to humanitarian crises around the world.

**Question:**

Despite the fact that the two executive orders to stop the refugee resettlement program for four months were halted by a series of court injunctions, it appears that:

- The USCIS Refugee Corps interviews of refugee applicants have slowed down.
- Delays in the processing of security checks for refugee applicants has resulted in different parts of these clearances expiring at different times and since each step in the security check process is time limited, this has created setbacks and longer waits for refugees in the pipeline.

How is this in keeping with the court injunctions on the refugee executive order, as well as the congressional intent, made clear in the FY17 CR and Omnibus funding, that resettlement is to be

maintained? Congress has appropriated the same amount of funding to both the Bureau of Population, Refugee and Migration within the State Department, and the Office of Refugee Resettlement within Health and Human Services, as last year, when close to 85,000 refugees were admitted.

**Answer:**

It is important to note that the Department of State is only one of the federal agencies that implements the U.S. Refugee Admissions Program. The budgets and operational capacity of the State Department and all of our interagency partners affect the pace of refugee admissions. The Department of State defers to the Department of Homeland Security regarding questions about the pace of U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services Refugee Corps interviews and defers to our law enforcement and intelligence agency partners regarding questions related to security check processing.

The Consolidated Appropriations Act, signed by the President on May 5, provided full year funding for the Bureau of Population, Refugees, and Migration, including for the Refugee Admissions Program. Previous limits on the number of refugees who could travel to the United States had been put in place to operate within the budget allocated under the Continuing Resolution. After the Consolidated Appropriations Act was signed, the Department of State instructed its overseas partners to schedule refugees for travel without any numerical restrictions after they have completed the highly rigorous and necessary security vetting and other processing. This instruction was given in conformity with Department of Justice guidance regarding the Hawaii Court's injunction, in consultation with our interagency partners, and consistent with our operational capacity. The September 2016 Presidential Determination states that up to 110,000 refugees may be admitted to the United States in FY 2017. This language represents a ceiling on refugee admissions—it is not a mandatory target. We are not in a position to speculate as to the final number of refugees that will be admitted by the end of this fiscal year.

**Question:**

How many refugees does the President plan to admit this next fiscal year, and how does this compare to the historical average since the 1980 Refugee Act?

**Answer**:

Each year, the President makes an annual determination, in consultation with Congress, regarding the refugee admissions ceiling for the following Fiscal Year. That determination is expected to be made prior to the end of FY 2017. We do not have further information on this issue at this time.

**Question:**

Our assistance program for Nagorno Karabakh has, since FY98, supported life-saving maternal health care, provided clean drinking water for families, and cleared mines and unexploded ordnance from farms and villages. HALO Trust, which is leading the demining effort, reports that it has completed approximately 88% of its mission, but needs continued U.S. support to finish its life-saving work. Additional humanitarian needs exist in Nagorno Karabakh - which, aside from U.S. aid and help from Armenia, does not receive any international or multi-national

assistance or development support. Among these unmet needs are rehabilitation services, such as those that the Lady Cox Rehabilitation Center seeks - within its limited means - to provide for children, adults, and the elderly with disabilities.

Are you supportive of continued U.S. assistance to Nagorno Karabakh, with a special focus on completing demining efforts and expanding our support to include health care and rehabilitation services? Which regions might you anticipate a need for funding that is not in the current budget request?

**Answer:**

Since 1998, the United States has provided over $45 million in humanitarian assistance to victims of the Nagorno-Karabakh conflict, including food, shelter, emergency and medical supplies, access to quality healthcare and water, and demining projects.

Within our limited resource envelope, current U.S.-funded assistance programs have prioritized humanitarian demining. USAID's program with HALO Trust is scheduled for completion in September 2017. HALO Trust estimates that by this time, they will have cleared 97.6 percent of the areas that require demining. The State Department and USAID support the demining program and are currently reviewing information from HALO Trust requesting additional funds, while taking into account available resources and competing priorities. We remain focused on completing demining as quickly and as thoroughly as possible.

**Question:**

Has the Department of State formally requested that the Republic Turkey waive all claims of diplomatic immunity for those foreign diplomats or security personnel involved, either directly or indirectly in the May 16th assault at Sheridan Circle against peaceful protesters?

**Answer:**

No, the Department has not asked for a waiver of immunity from the Republic of Turkey. The Department of State is working with the Department of Justice to examine the findings of the investigation and is weighing what additional steps might be appropriate in this context. Each case will be considered individually and our actions will be responsive and proportional to the charges.

**Question:**

To your knowledge, has President Erdogan apologized or expressed any regret for the May 16th attack by his bodyguards against peaceful protesters on American soil?

**Answer:**

The Department of State has no knowledge of President Erdogan apologizing or expressing regret for the May 16 assault.

**Question:**

Are you satisfied with the Turkish government's response to your statements and other official U.S. reactions to the May 16th attack by President Erdogan's bodyguards against peaceful protesters on American soil?

**Answer:**

We are, of course, disappointed in the Turkish government's failure to take responsibility for the criminal actions committed by of some of President Erdogan's bodyguards.

**Question:**

Do you agree with Senators Graham and Leahy regarding the potential implications of the May 16th attack on future U.S. assistance to Turkey?

**Answer:**

Any actions taken in regards to the May 16 assult should not undermine greater foreign policy goals such as destroying ISIS and promoting regional stability in the Middle East.

**Question:**

Chairman Lindsey Graham and Ranking Member Patrick Leahy of the Senate Appropriations Subcommittee on State, Foreign Operations, and Related Programs warned, in a May 18th letter to Turkey's Ambassador to the United States, that the May 16th attack by President Erdogan's bodyguards against peaceful demonstrators in Washington, DC will result in "potential implications for assistance to Turkey."

In connection to that assault, I have several questions:

e. Has the pending sale of small arms to the Turkish government previously noticed to Congress been placed on hold or stopped altogether?

**Answer:**

I share your concerns regarding this issue. Following the May 16 incident between members of President Erdogan's security detail and protestors outside the Turkish Ambassador's residence, the Department determined that formal Congressional notification would not occur until Diplomatic Security and local law enforcement authorities completed a thorough investigation. As this investigation is now substantially complete, the Department is currently assessing the investigation's findings and considering how to proceed.

**Question:**

Armenia has welcomed over 20,000 refugees from Syria and, more broadly, has expressed willingness to serve as a regional safe haven for religious and other minorities fleeing violence and intolerance in the Middle East.

Are you willing to work with Congress to help provide Armenia - a landlocked, blockaded nation of limited means - with the resources needed to support transitional programs for at-risk refugees, including short-term housing/rental assistance and social and economic integration initiatives?

**Answer:**

The United States commends Armenia's welcoming of over 20,000 Syrians. The United States has provided sustained support for Syrians in Armenia, and worldwide, via contributions to international humanitarian organizations, including: the UN High Commissioner for Refugees, the International Committee of the Red Cross, as well as NGOs such as World Vision, the American Bar Association, Mission Armenia, the Armenian Red Cross Society, and the Aleppo Compatriotic Charitable Organization. The United States is UNHCR's largest donor, providing

about a quarter of their budget worldwide. UNHCR continues to provide needs-based assistance to persons of concern in Armenia, regardless of citizenship status.

**Question:**
Chairman Royce and Ranking Member Engel are leading a bipartisan initiative - known as the Royce-Engel Peace Proposals - to keep the peace in and around Nagorno-Karabakh. The proposals call for 1) the placement of OSCE-monitored, advanced gunfire locator systems and sound-ranging equipment along the line of contact to determine the source of attacks, 2) the addition of OSCE observers along the line of contact, and 3) an agreement on the non-deployment of snipers, heavy arms, and any new military hardware along the line of contact. The State Department has endorsed these cease-fire strengthening proposals, as has the OSCE, Armenia, and Nagorno-Karabakh. Only Azerbaijan opposes the Royce-Engel proposals, effectively obstructing their implementation.

Will the Department of State support U.S. funding for the Royce-Engel peace proposals?

**Answer:**
As a Co-Chair of the Minsk Group, the United States has played an active role in mediating a comprehensive settlement of this longstanding conflict, the resolution of which would usher in a new era of peace and prosperity for the people of the South Caucasus.

The State Department supports proposals to withdraw snipers, launch an OSCE investigation mechanism, and deploy sensors along the Line of Contact and the Armenia-Azerbaijan international border. We have been a strong advocate in the Minsk Group process for these confidence-building measures, which we believe would reduce violence in areas affected by the conflict. In light of recent ceasefire violations, which have resulted in multiple civilian casualties, the urgency of implementing such measures has never been greater. U.S. Co-Chair, Ambassador Richard Hoagland, together with his Russian and French counterparts, is discussing these proposals with the sides at the highest levels. We also continue to call upon the sides to cease military action and return to the negotiation table as soon as possible.

**Question**:
Would you support a suspension of U.S. military aid to Azerbaijan until its government ceases its attacks against Armenia and Nagorno-Karabagh, ends its threat of renewed war, and agrees to the peaceful resolution of regional conflicts?

**Answer**:
U.S. assistance to Azerbaijan promotes U.S. national security interests, which is why the President has waived Section 907 of the FREEDOM Support Act every year since 2002. The most recent waiver was signed on March 27, 2017. However, as a matter of policy, the United States does not approve any security assistance or sales that could undermine efforts to find a peaceful settlement of the conflict between Azerbaijan and Armenia. The United States remains actively engaged as one of the Minsk Group Co-Chairs to help the parties find a way forward.

**Question:**
In the wake of the 2015 signing of a U.S.-Armenia Trade and Investment Framework Agreement, we witnessed a surge in U.S. commercial engagement in Armenia - including, as

reported by our Ambassador, Richard Mills, upwards of $500,000,000 in new American investments in Armenia's energy and mining sectors. Similarly, a new U.S.-Armenia Double Tax Treaty, by establishing a clear legal framework for investors and individuals who have business activities in both jurisdictions, will facilitate the further expansion of U.S.-Armenia economic relations, by eliminating the threat of double taxation.

Will you engage the Secretary of the Treasury regarding the mutual benefits of negotiating a U.S.-Armenia Double Tax Treaty?

**Answer:**

The expansion of trade and commercial ties is a critical element of the United States' bilateral relationship with Armenia. We continue to advocate for reforms that will help improve the business climate for U.S. firms in Armenia, including curbing corruption, increasing judicial independence, and strengthening intellectual property protections. While we are confident the Trade and Investment Framework Agreement (TIFA) and resulting TIFA Council will prove to be useful tools for tackling existing trade issues and boosting levels of trade, the recent investments in Armenia's energy and mining sectors were underway before the TIFA was signed. The Department of State has discussed the Government of Armenia's interest in concluding a new double taxation treaty with the Treasury Department and understands that at this time, U.S. firms operating in Armenia are able to obtain relief from double taxation under existing U.S. law. The United States government will continue to assess the need for a new double taxation treaty on the basis of confirmed reports from U.S. businesses active or interested in Armenia that they are being harmed under U.S. and Armenian tax laws in the absence of a new treaty.

**Question:**

In December 2015, the General Assembly approved the UN Regular Budget, which was about $400 million less than the prior biennial budget, and moved to reassess staff compensation in order to save the organization more money. In addition, the UN has implemented a strategy to improve the cost-efficiency of peacekeeping missions, helping to reduce the cost per peacekeeper by 18% and reduce the number of support personnel in the field by 3,000. These reforms came as a result of the U.S. being fully engaged at the UN. Currently, Ambassador Haley and UN Secretary-General Guterres are working closely together to push forward on further reforms to the institution, particularly with regards to its peacekeeping missions. How do the President's proposed cuts to UN funding fit into that overall strategy? Aren't we undermining our own negotiating position by pushing for deep cuts before Ambassador Haley's reform push has even fully gotten off the ground? Why would any other UN member states, to say nothing of our allies, support any U.S.-backed reform proposals with the knowledge that the U.S. just plans to unilaterally reduce its financial contributions anyways?

**Answer:**

The President's budget proposal for FY 2018 reflects the U.S. commitment to remain engaged with the UN, even as we seek to spur long-needed reforms and more equitable burden-sharing among UN member states. As President Trump told UN Security Council ambassadors on April 24, "the United Nations has tremendous potential," but "for the United Nations to play an effective role in solving…challenges, big reforms will be required."

By demanding fiscal discipline, the United States is leading the effort to rethink the way that the United Nations and other international organizations operate. This budget reinforces the expectation that the United Nations and other international organization must become more efficient and effective, and that Member States must agree to distribute the costs of collective action more equitably.

**Question:**
Do you feel that UN supported peacekeeping is an important example of burden-sharing by countries across the globe?

**Answer:**
UN peacekeeping is an example of burden-sharing by countries across the globe, and provides a collective benefit to the entire international community. However, we believe all nations should share equitably in the costs. Currently, the U.S. pays a disproportionate share of the burden for UN peacekeeping, while other countries contribute far less than could be considered equitable burden-sharing.

The President's budget request reflects the Administration's commitment to reducing the United Nations' dependence on a single large contributor to finance UN peacekeeping operations. The request assumes greater burden sharing by other countries and a U.S. contribution rate below 25 percent.

**Question:**
The Administration's FY'18 budget proposes cutting the Contributions for International Peacekeeping Activities (CIPA) account, which funds our peacekeeping dues, by more than $700 million from final FY'17 levels. This would potentially deny critical resources to peacekeeping missions that are manifestly in our interests and that we voted to support on the Security Council; withhold troop reimbursement payments from countries who contribute troops to peacekeeping operations; and alienate our allies, effectively undercutting our reform efforts. This Administration, and many in this very body, have complained that the U.S. assessment rate for UN peacekeeping activities—which is currently just over 28.4%--is too high. While I'm sympathetic to the idea that all member states need to pay their fair share for core UN activities and functions, this fixation on the U.S. assessment rate ignores the significant personnel contributions made by other countries to UN peacekeeping operations. This is not a trivial matter: peacekeeping has increasingly become more dangerous in recent years, and over the last decade, more than 1,100 UN peacekeepers have died in the field. Do you think these types of contributions should be taken into account when considering the appropriate level of U.S. financial support for peacekeeping? When we fail to honor our financial commitments to UN peacekeeping—as your budget request would have us do—what message does this send to countries who send their sons and daughters into harm's way to carry out Security Council mandates that we ourselves have drafted?

**Answer:**
With over 100,000 uniformed and civilian peacekeeping personnel and an annual budget close to $8 billion, UN peacekeeping is a powerful tool to address global challenges to international peace and security. However, reform is needed to achieve better, smarter peacekeeping operations that are able to more effectively and efficiently address conflicts,

support political solutions, and meet the needs of people on the ground. As President Trump told UN Security Council ambassadors on April 24, "the United Nations has tremendous potential," but "for the United Nations to play an effective role in solving … security challenges, big reforms will be required."

The President's FY 2018 budget request proposes to reduce funding for the Department of State's Contributions to International Peacekeeping Activities (CIPA) account by approximately fifty percent from the previous year to $1.2 billion. By demanding fiscal discipline, the United States is leading the United Nations to rethink the way peacekeeping missions are designed and implemented. This budget reinforces the expectation that the UN must make peacekeeping more efficient and effective, and that UN Member States must agree to distribute the costs of collective security more equitably.

**Question:**
Some have argued that the U.S. should withdraw from the UN Human Rights Council. Over the past six years though, we have seen a number of positive outcomes from U.S. engagement. The Council voted to dispatch a team to investigate human rights violations committed by ISIS in Iraq; continues to scrutinize and bring attention to the dire human rights situation in Iran; authorized a groundbreaking investigation into human rights violations in North Korea; created a mechanism to push for the prevention and elimination of child and forced marriage, and saw a dramatic reduction in the number of special sessions on Israel. This record of success is markedly different than when the U.S. was not involved in the Council from 2007-2009. While the Council still has its flaws, the overwhelming view of human rights organizations is the U.S. should continue to engage with it. Is it the U.S.'s intention to withdraw from the UNHRC? If so, why? What impact would you expect withdrawal to have? If the U.S. does not see the UNHRC as a viable body, will the Trump Administration seek to replace it or enact serious reforms?

**Answer:**
We have ongoing concerns about the membership and anti-Israeli bias of the United Nations Human Rights Council (UNHRC). Although, at its best, the UNHRC calls out human rights violations and encourages positive action, all too frequently it fails to act as it should – not addressing critical situations for political reasons – and undermines its own credibility. Countries with poor human rights records are routinely elected to the Council, where they use their position to shield themselves and frustrate efforts to safeguard fundamental freedoms. The HRC maintains a clear anti-Israel bias in the persistence of Agenda Item 7.

This Administration believes that reforms are urgently needed to strengthen the Council's membership and revise its agenda. We are calling on member states to join together in the months ahead to develop and enact changes to the Council's election procedures, accountability measures, standing agenda, and operations to ensure that the world's most critical human rights situations – regardless of where they take place – are effectively addressed. If such reforms are not possible, we will have to reevaluate our participation in the UNHRC.

**Question:**
In a June 5th press statement entitled "Pulling U.S. from UN Human Rights Council Could Endanger Lives around the Globe", HRC Global Director Ty Cobb argued that: "U.S. foreign policy must protect and promote human rights. Turning away from the Council would signal to

brutal regimes—and all those they oppress—that the U.S. is looking the other way. Without U.S. leadership, despotic leaders will be emboldened to control the agenda and push their own goals." Given the central role played by the U.S. elevating discussion of LGBT rights at the Council, what message do you think a U.S. withdrawal would send to advocates of LGBT equality and inclusion around the world?

**Answer:**

Whether as a member of the UN Human Rights Council or not, the United States will remain steadfast in its commitment to the protection of human rights of all persons, including members of the LGBTI community, wherever they may be. The establishment last year by the Human Rights Council of a UN independent expert to address violence and discrimination on the basis of sexual orientation and gender identity, which we strongly supported, should send a clear message of broad multilateral support for addressing this important issue.

That being said, the Administration believes reforms are urgently needed to strengthen the Human Rights Council's membership and revise its agenda. We are calling on member states to join together in the months ahead to develop and implement reforms to ensure that the world's most critical human rights situations are addressed fully and effectively. If such reforms are not possible, we will have to reevaluate our participation in the UNHRC.

**Question:**

The Administration's FY'18 request seeks to reduce funding for the Contributions to International Organizations (CIO) account, which funds U.S. assessments for more than 40 multilateral organizations, by nearly $400 million from final FY'17 levels. The CIO account funds U.S. contributions to the UN Regular Budget, which in turn finances the UN's sanction monitoring activities. How do you square the Administration's support for multilateral sanctions on North Korea, with its unwillingness to fully fund its share of mechanisms—such as the UN panel of experts and North Korea sanctions committee—that monitor international compliance with these measures?

**Answer:**

The President's FY 2018 budget request proposes to reduce funding for the Department of State's Contributions to International Organizations (CIO) account by approximately thirty percent from the previous year to $1 billion. By demanding fiscal discipline, the United States is leading the effort to rethink the way that the United Nations and other international organizations operate. This budget reinforces the expectation that the United Nations and other international organizations must become more efficient and effective, and that Member States must agree to distribute the costs of collective action more equitably.

**Question:**

The Global Development Lab at USAID is among the many cuts in the President's proposed budget. The Lab is structured to bring in new ideas, new partners, and a new way of thinking into government. It can also be argued that part of its rationale for existing is that it ascribes to the theory that all of the best ideas don't come from inside government. How does zeroing out an office that seeks to bring in new partners and ideas from outside the government fit into your ambitions to transform development?

**Answer:**

USAID, through the U.S. Global Development Lab (Lab) and the broader network of USAID innovation teams emerging in Bureaus and Missions, continues to build an adaptable organization that is focused on bringing new partners and the best ideas to the Agency to lead the transformation of development. The tools and approaches the Lab brings to USAID remain critical for delivering on the broader mission. In a tight budget climate, what the Lab does is even more important, including finding transformative solutions to accelerate development results, engaging new actors, and taking advantage of advancements in science and technology. The FY 2018 request includes $15.5 million for the Lab. The Lab will continue to deliver on its two part mission to produce breakthrough innovations and transform the development enterprise but in a more focused way. The Lab will focus on working with Missions to take advantage of advancements in science, technology, innovation and partnership to achieve development objectives more cost-effectively, and to institutionalize the use of these tools, approaches, and technologies.

The Lab and this broader network of innovation teams provide USAID with a critical future-forward advantage by not only being ready for the changing development landscape, but by helping USAID lead that change.

**Question:**

I am disturbed by the proposed budget cuts to critical, life-saving development programs and the potential diminishment of USAID – our lead development agency – as part of this administration's reorganization efforts. It is vital that USAID remain independent and fully capable of achieving our aid objectives abroad. Please tell me:

a) How will you advise the President regarding the role of and independence needed for USAID to successfully achieve its mission?
b) How will a Senate-confirmed USAID Administrator engage in the administration's reorganization effort? Particularly since the administration requires agencies to submit a draft plan to OMB by June 30th?
c) Given the importance of any reform and reorganization effort, will you commit to consulting with Congress and the development community throughout the reorganization process?

**Answer:**

The USAID Administrator nominee is awaiting Senate confirmation. When confirmed, he will work with me to review various options to ensure the efficiency, effectiveness, and accountability of the United States' diplomatic and development operations. There are no preconceived outcomes for a potential reorganization, and the Department is committed to engaging with external stakeholders, including the Congress and development community, throughout the process. We will advise the President on the joint State and USAID transformation planning effort when recommendations are available.

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**Question:**

Based on your experience, what do you think are the comparative advantages of State and USAID's missions, timelines, projects, and personnel? Where do you see efficiencies that may be gained?

**Answer:**

These matters – the comparative advantages of State and USAID's missions, timelines, projects, and personnel, as well as possible efficiencies to be gained – will be discussed and articulated during our redesign process. We look forward to sharing our findings with you and seeking your feedback prior to implementation.

**Question:**

Please describe the relationship between the administration's reorganization planning that is currently underway and the State Department-USAID Joint Strategic Review process and how these efforts are being coordinated.

**Answer:**

Both agencies are coordinating closely on the report due to OMB in September, which will include findings from our efficiency review, ideas for redesign, and a joint strategic plan. State and USAID will continue to partner throughout the process on the execution of the Executive Order 13781.

**Question:**
Starting with President George W. Bush's 2002 national security strategy, there has been bipartisan consensus that U.S. global leadership is a three-legged stool of defense, diplomacy, and development. Republicans and Democrats in Congress and the Administration have carried out significant reforms to our diplomatic engagement and how we ensure that development activities are effective and aligned with broader U.S. foreign and national security policy. Do you agree that these three tenets are critical to an effective U.S. foreign policy? How are you coordinating with Secretary Mattis and the Pentagon on a comprehensive national security strategy that effectively utilizes both our military and civilian tools?

**Answer:**
Defense, diplomacy, and development are indeed critical components of the United States' National Security Strategy. Combining these key elements of statecraft in the right way and at the right time ensures the protection of the United States' core national security interests. The three-legged stool is a useful conceptual model for understanding the complementary nature of these elements of national power, but must be applied accordingly to match the context of the day based on the worldview and security framework established in the National Security Strategy. The Department of State, Department of Defense, USAID, and the other national security agencies are collectively working through the established interagency process to deliver a balanced, flexible National Security Strategy—one that balances the application of defense, diplomacy, and development in the most logical and prudent way to achieve our foreign policy and national security objectives. Additionally, the Department of State and USAID as well as the Department of Defense are in the process of developing their respective agency-level strategic plans. The development process includes interagency collaboration and engagement at the highest organizational levels to ensure alignment across their respective agency plans as well as with the broader objectives outlined in the National Security Strategy.

**Question:**

China's official development assistance to African countries has increased by more than 780% since 2003. And just last month, President Xi Jinping pledged $124 billion for a new global infrastructure and development initiative called "One Belt One Road." At the same time, the Administration is proposing to close nine USAID missions and eliminate economic and development assistance to 37 countries around the world. Are you concerned that these cutbacks could provide an opening for countries like China and Russia to exert additional influence?

**Answer:**
The Fiscal Year 2018 budget request will allow us to advance our foreign policy goals, while ensuring we are using U.S. taxpayer dollars as effectively and efficiently as possible. It includes substantial funding for many foreign assistance programs, but we have made tough choices to reduce funding for other foreign assistance initiatives. The budget request acknowledges that our operations must become more efficient, that our aid must be more effective, and that our primary mission must always be advocating for the national interests of our country. Focusing our efforts will allow us to advance our most important policy goals. We will continue to be the leader in international development, global health, democracy, good governance initiatives, and humanitarian efforts around the globe. At the same time, we are

mobilizing a broader effort beyond U.S. development assistance to attract private sector investment and exploring new approaches that engage other countries that share the same objectives for the region as we do to provide an alternative to Chinese state-directed financing.

**Question:**
Given the uptick of anti-Semitic hate crimes both in the United States and abroad.... Where on the State Department's priority list will fighting anti-Semitism fall and in particular U.S. cooperation with law enforcement to protect Jewish communities in Europe? What is your timeline for nominating a Special Envoy to Monitor and Combat Anti-Semitism? Should this be elevated to an Ambassador-at-large position?

**Answer:**
The Special Envoy to Monitor and Combat Anti-Semitism is a statutorily-required position that will be maintained within the Department. I want to assure you the Department is addressing anti-Semitism in the most effective and efficient method possible. We are exploring the best means to continue to do so.

The Department remains concerned by high levels of anti-Semitism in many countries. We continue to monitor acts of bigotry and intolerance internationally and condemns attacks on Jewish communities and individuals.

We consistently urge governments around the world to address and condemn anti-Semitism and work with vulnerable Jewish communities to assess and provide appropriate levels of security. The Department and our Missions abroad encourage and engage other governments to combat anti-Semitism bilaterally and multilaterally, and with outreach to Jewish communities.

Complementing our diplomatic work, the State Department continues to devote significant resources towards programs combatting anti-Semitism online and off, as well as building NGO coalitions in Europe to promote tolerance.

Our broader efforts to counter violent extremism reinforce our countering anti-Semitism mission. For example, we support bringing religious leaders to the United States to, among other things, learn how faith communities work internally and across faiths to prevent radicalization to violence, counter hate speech, and build tolerance.

**Question:**
Two Russian diplomatic compounds, in Maryland and New York respectively, were determined by the Obama Administration in December to have been "used by Russian personnel for intelligence-related purposes," and 35 Russians determined to be intelligence operatives were expelled from the United States. I am troubled by reports that the Trump Administration is considering returning these compounds. Does the Administration plan to return these compounds? What are we getting in return?

**Answer:**
We are working on certain issues in our bilateral relationship with Russia to try to stabilize our relationship in a way which protects United States interests. The Department's actions in December were part of a comprehensive response to Russia's interference in the U.S. election and their harassment of our personnel in Russia. The United States' actions sent a clear message that such behavior is unacceptable and will have consequences. The Department of State has the authority to determine how and for what purposes Foreign Missions can utilize their

properties. We are committed to using those authorities appropriately to protect the interests of the American people.

**Question:**
Does this Administration support Duterte's extrajudicial killing of drug addicts? Do you personally agree with this policy? What actions is the Department taking to assert our position on human rights while also ensuring that we don't rupture the U.S.-Philippines alliance relationship?

**Answer:**
The United States and the Philippines have a longstanding alliance, a relationship built on shared sacrifices, common values, and people-to-people ties. The United States government is working with the Philippines on addressing the shared objectives of eliminating the scourge of illicit drugs; there are U.S. programs in the Philippines that combat the transnational shipment of drugs and work on drug demand reduction. We have serious concerns, however, when elements involved in the drug war are operating outside the rule of law. This Administration condemns extrajudicial killings.

We have discussed our human rights concerns with the Philippine government on multiple occasions, and will continue to do so. We encourage our Philippine partners to conduct transparent investigations into reports of extrajudicial killings, and to ensure that all investigative and enforcement efforts uphold the rule of law.

We have also voiced these concerns publicly at the United Nations, including in the Universal Periodic Review for the Philippines held in Geneva on May 8. We will continue to work with the Philippines on this and other issues as we advance shared objectives in our multidimensional relationship.

Questions for the Record Submitted to
Secretary of State Tillerson by
Representative Brian Fitzpatrick
House Foreign Affairs Committee
June 14, 2017

**Question:**

Secretary Tillerson, as you know, last year the "North Korea Sanctions and Policy Enhancement Act" went into effect. This law mandates that the Administration sanction individuals and companies engaged in North Korea's ongoing illicit activity, including the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction and arms sales, cyber-attacks against the United States and our allies and human rights abuses.
While Treasury recently sanctioned several more entities that continue to do business with North Korea, it should be noted that no Chinese entity has been targeted with secondary sanctions. Can you assure the Committee that the Administration plans to implement this bill and other sanctions to the full extent of the law? If China and Chinese financial institutions do not step up, how will you proceed? What other countries are we proactively engaged with regarding North Korea?

**Answer:**

The Administration is fully committed to implementing the "North Korea Sanctions and Policy Enhancement Act." As part of our implementation of this law, we are using targeted financial sanctions to impede North Korea's nuclear and ballistic missile programs.

China's efforts to curtail North Korea's nuclear and ballistic missile programs and address North Korea's sanctions evasion have been insufficient. We have made clear to China that it has a responsibility to exert much greater economic and diplomatic pressure on the North Korean regime if it intends to prevent further escalation in the region. We want to work with China, but we've said many times that we would not hesitate to act alone, including by sanctioning Chinese or other third-country individuals and entities that provide support to North Korea's unlawful activities.

We continue to call on all countries to take appropriate steps to apply maximum pressure on the DPRK to change its calculus and return to serious and meaningful talks aimed at denuclearization. In each of my diplomatic engagements, whether with interlocutors from Eastern Europe, Southeast Asia, or Central and South America, I urge governments to fully implement the relevant UN Security Council resolutions and exercise to the fullest extent their leverage to convince the DPRK to abandon its destructive path. I have personally instructed each of our Chiefs of Mission to do the same.

The international community has made clear that North Korea will face consequences for its continued development of weapons of mass destruction and their means of delivery, and violations of UN resolutions. We are seeing unprecedented levels of cooperation from the international community in response to North Korea's unlawful and provocative actions. Like-minded countries including the Republic of Korea, Japan, and Australia have implemented their own unilateral sanctions. EU partners are augmenting autonomous restrictive measures to implement UN Security Council resolutions, and key European partners, particularly the UK, France, and Germany, are collaborating with us to maximize pressure on the DPRK.

**Question:**

As Co-Chair of the Congressional Ukraine Caucus, I want to ensure that our allies in Ukraine know that we have their back. Regarding Russian aggression in Ukraine, what is our position regarding the annexation of Crimea and the ongoing war in Donbas? And what is the State Department committed to doing with regards to these two ongoing affronts to Ukraine's sovereignty? Furthermore, how does the FY2018 budget request specifically address the threat of Russian propaganda? What is the Administration proposing to do with FY2018 funding to help "frontline" states, like Ukraine, Estonia, Latvia, and Lithuania, combat Russian propaganda?

**Answer:**

From the beginning of the crisis, the United States has stood united with the EU and our G-7 partners in defense of Ukraine's sovereignty and territorial integrity. We do not now, nor will we ever, recognize Russia's purported annexation of Crimea. We expect Russia to honor its commitments under the Minsk agreements, beginning by de-escalating the violence in eastern Ukraine. Moreover, we consistently urge Russia to use its influence with the so-called separatists it funds, trains and leads so that there is a visible, verifiable, and irreversible improvement in the security situation starting with a real ceasefire, pullback of heavy weapons, disengagement along the line of contact, and full access for OSCE monitors.

The United States' commitment to the Minsk agreements remains steadfast and we will continue to hold Russia accountable to its pledge to implement its security-related commitments. As Secretary Tillerson has said, U.S. sanctions will stay in place until Russia meets its Minsk commitments. Our separate Crimea-related sanctions will remain until Moscow returns the peninsula to Ukraine. We believe the existing sanctions regimes, in coordination with G7 and EU sanctions, provides us with leverage to compel Moscow to fulfill its commitments. We have also been clear with Russia that aggression in Ukraine is the key obstacle to the improvement of our bilateral relationship.

The FY 2018 budget request prioritizes funds to counter Russian aggression and malign influence. In addition to maintaining support for Ukraine, Georgia, and Moldova in sectors where U.S. assistance has a transformative impact, the FY 2018 budget request also funds other countries in the region – including the Balkans, Central Asia, and, via regional programs, countries that no longer receive bilateral non-security assistance such as the Baltic States – in support of a comprehensive strategy to build resilience, reduce vulnerability to Russian aggression and malign influence, protect U.S. national security and economic interests, and provide continued support for enduring commitments and non-crisis programming. In particular, U.S. foreign assistance programs will seek to counter Russia's covert and overt actions, including propaganda and disinformation, by strengthening democratic institutions, including through justice sector and anti-corruption reforms and by expanding the voice and watchdog role of civil society and a strong and independent media.

Questions for the Record Submitted to
Secretary of State Rex Tillerson by
Representative Ami Bera
House Foreign Affairs Committee
June 14, 2017

**Question:**

Secretary Tillerson, in your testimony both before the Senate Foreign Relations Committee and the House Foreign Affairs Committee, you stated that the implementation of the Mexico City policy was designed to mitigate its impact on the delivery of healthcare by our partners in global health:

What discrete actions did the State Department take in consultation with our global health partners to mitigate the policy's specific impacts?

**Answer:**

Interagency representatives continue to meet regularly to assess progress and challenges related to implementing the Protecting Life in Global Health Assistance (PLGHA) policy. Operating units from relevant agencies have begun meeting with partners to describe the policy's applicability and implementation. The State Department is working with affected agencies and departments to collect information on the extent to which the PLGHA may affect our global health programs.

**Question:**

What specific actions is the State Department currently taking to monitor the impact the Mexico City Policy in delivering healthcare to those in need?

**Answer:**

Ambassadors and agency heads in our overseas missions with PEPFAR or other global health programs have been notified about implementation of the expanded Mexico City Policy. Affected agencies and departments, including USAID, HHS, DOD, and the State Department, have begun notifying implementing partners and other stakeholders about the expanded policy. Training on the policy's applicability, implementation and key provisions for headquarters and field staff is underway. State Department and USAID are also working with the interagency to develop a publicly available web-based training module as well as webinars for field-based staff. Affected departments and agencies are discussing implementation of the policy and its impacts and preparing for a review of the policy's effect on programs. The review will provide an opportunity to recommend changes to the policy's implementation or scope, should they be needed to address unintended consequences.

**Question:**

Secretary Tillerson, in your testimony before the House Foreign Affairs Committee, you stated that the State Department would be completing a check in six months to determine the Mexico City's policy unintended consequences:

What criteria will the State Department use in evaluating the Mexico City's unintended impacts at this six month check? And do you plan to review these impacts at periodic intervals for effects that may not be obvious in the short term?

**Answer:**

Interagency discussions regarding the review of the impact of the expanded policy are ongoing. While this process is not yet finalized, we plan to review data, implementation steps and issues identified to date, and any other new information affecting implementation going forward. Newly covered programs, including PEPFAR, the President's Malaria Initiative, and other global health programs, will be given special attention under this review.

**Question:**

Finally, you also stated that you would be able to issue waivers for funding under the Mexico City policy in consultation with the Secretary of HHS:

In assessing the inadvertent impact on healthcare delivery, what will be the process and criteria for determining these waivers? And could you detail the specific coordination that has already taken place with the Department of Health and Human Services to lay the groundwork for the waiver process?

**Answer:**

As I testified, it is vital to retain a measure of flexibility to ensure the Protecting Life in Global Health Assistance (PLGHA) policy does not affect life-saving assistance in unintended ways. However, it is my expectation that any waivers would be used judiciously, and only after carefully weighing the immediate need for the assistance, other available options, and the potential effect on implementation of the policy. All of our assistance will continue to be subject to applicable legal requirements, including the Helms Amendment and the Siljander Amendment. This is a complex issue that deserves the most careful and thorough consideration possible. We intend to keep all interested parties, including Congress, updated as we move forward.

**Question:**

The FY18 budget proposes steep cuts to maternal and child health. The United States has had a tremendous impact on reducing maternal and child mortality but far too many children and mothers die each day. In 2012, the United States committed to ending preventable child and maternal deaths by the year 2035 – and the United States set in place a plan to save 15 million children and 800,000 women's lives by 2020.

Will the United States still be able to accomplish its goal of saving 15 million children by 2020 in light of these cuts? If you still believe the United States can despite the cuts, what steps have you taken to ensure that the U.S. will meet its pledge?

**Answer:**

Preventing child and maternal deaths is a priority for USAID and relies on investment in and linkages across health programs including maternal and child health, nutrition, and malaria. USAID committed to averting the deaths of 15 million children and 600,000 women by 2020, by working with other partners, including most importantly countries themselves, to mobilize additional resources and political will to focus efforts on the most effective and efficient interventions to prevent child and maternal deaths.

This commitment remains. The FY 2018 request includes $1.5 billion to prevent child and maternal deaths. While the composition of USAID funding across the health areas varies year-to-year, this effort has always relied upon partnership from country governments and other donors, and its continued success is linked to their sustained involvement by all. Family planning and reproductive health interventions are important contributors to maternal and child survival and we will work with other donors and host country governments to increase their funding for family planning/reproductive health in FY 2018.

**Question:**

The President's FY18 budget request makes substantial cuts to foreign humanitarian assistance at a time when tens of millions of people around the world are at risk of starvation. In particular, it eliminates the McGovern-Dole program and Food for Peace. How is the State Department working with our allies, partners, and other international actors to reduce the impact of American withdrawal in the areas of food insecurity and famine?

**Answer:**

The response to the question is Sensitive But Unclassified (SBU) information and will be sent via separate correspondence.

**Question:**

The Feed the Future Initiative was begun by the Obama administration to take a whole of government approach to reduce hunger, malnutrition, poverty, and food insecurity around the world. Does the Trump administration plan on still continuing the program? And if not, how are the State Department and USAID working within the government with the Department of Agriculture and others, and outside the government with implementing partners, such as our universities, to ensure that its progress and work is being brought forward?

**Answer:**

We remain committed to implementing the Global Food Security Act to reduce hunger, malnutrition, poverty, and food insecurity. We will continue to mobilize the entire array of tools and approaches across the U.S. government, including, partnering with the U.S. research and university community, leveraging investments from the U.S. private sector, and working with host country governments and civil society to achieve tangible results.

**Question:**

The FY18 budget requests proposes merging the Development Assistance (DA), Assistance to Europe, Eurasia and Central Asia (AEECA), Democracy Fund, and the Economic Support Fund

into a new Economic Support and Development Fund (ESDF). The State Department was chosen as the lead for the account.

Why was the State Department chosen as the lead for the new ESDF account? And what specific steps are being taken to ensure USAID expertise on foreign aid is being incorporated into the new ESDF account?

**Answer:**

The Economic Support and Development Fund (ESDF) requested in the FY 2018 budget is an effort to streamline accounts and ensure the most effective use of foreign assistance funding. The ESDF account will continue to support select programs and activities previously requested under the Economic Support Fund and Development Assistance accounts, allowing the Department and USAID to better assess, prioritize, and target development -related activities in the context of broader U.S. foreign policy objectives and partnerships around the world. Under this construct, USAID's role in advising the Secretary of State on development priorities and in implementing programs will remain unchanged. Having one streamlined account for economic and development assistance will increase State and USAID's flexibility to trade-off needs on an even footing within one account, rather than having budget and strategic priorities skewed by artificial distinctions.

**Question:**

How will the transfer of USAID-led programs impact program monitoring and evaluation in the new ESDF account? And what specific steps is the State Department taking to ensure that funds under the new ESDF account will be held to the same program monitoring and evaluation standards they were while under USAID?

**Answer:**

The Economic Support and Development Fund (ESDF) requested in the FY 2018 budget is an effort to streamline accounts and ensure the most effective use of foreign assistance funding by allowing the Department and USAID to better assess, prioritize, and target development -related activities in the context of broader U.S. foreign policy objectives and partnerships around the world. Under this consolidated account construct, USAID will continue to implement programs where it has the technical expertise and will continue to promote the use of program monitoring and evaluation to advance learning and improve decision-making. Having one streamlined account for economic and development assistance will simply increase State and USAID's flexibility to trade-off needs on an even footing within one account, rather than having budget and strategic priorities skewed by artificial distinctions.

**Question:**

USAID plays a major and important part in global health research and development (R&D). USAID's support in developing new health technologies helps to save lives and reduce program costs, while allowing these treatments and technologies to be deployed in regions of the world at the greatest risk for certain diseases, and returning the benefits to the United States. Due to the fiscal austerity of the last several years, global health R&D funding has stayed relatively flat, and

the State Department budget proposal cuts USAID funding for global health R&D. Among other items- it zeroes out investments in HIV/AIDS research.

Can you explain why the administration chose to deprioritize global health research in its budget request? And if the idea is for other international partners to step up, what steps are the State Department and USAID taking to increase the involvement of our partners in the global health R&D field?

**Answer:**

The FY 2018 budget consolidates all U.S. assistance for global HIV/AIDS efforts within the State Department to simplify the management and coordination of these investments. USAID will continue to remain one of the primary implementing agencies for PEPFAR, and will continue to implement a significant share of U.S. global HIV/AIDS assistance in this capacity. With regard to global health research, USAID intends to increase its efforts to leverage partners' expertise and resources, strengthen country capacity to conduct their own research and development (R&D), and strategically utilize market shaping and innovative financing tools to incentivize private companies to invest in R&D.

While the United States will continue significant funding for global health programs, other stakeholders must do more to contribute their fair share to global health initiatives.

Question for the Record Submitted to
Secretary of State Tillerson by
Representative Frankel
House Foreign Affairs Committee
June 14, 2017

**Question:**
Do you agree that it is Congress's prerogative to set the State and Foreign Operations Budget? Do you pledge to fully implement the budget that Congress passes?

**Answer:**
The Department of State and USAID will obligate funds appropriated by Congress consistent with applicable law, including congressional notification requirements

**Question:**
In your communications with the Director of the OMB, did you at any time advocate for funding above the level reflected in the president's budget proposal.

**Answer:**
Executive branch communications between agencies and OMB regarding budget planning are deliberative and pre-decisional in nature, but the Department and USAID work closely with OMB on all budgetary matters.

Questions for the Record Submitted to
Secretary of State Tillerson by
Representative Gabbard
House Foreign Affairs Committee
June 14, 2017

**Question:**

Like many Americans, I'm confused about the inherent contradictions in the Trump Administration's support for Saudi Arabia and the previous strongly stated commitment of President Trump to combat the spread of radical Islamist ideology.

I've attached a few articles that document the well-known fact that Saudi Arabia is one of the biggest state sponsors of terror in the world, as they pour billions of dollars into countries like Syria and Yemen to support al-Qaeda and other jihadist groups. Additionally, Saudi Arabia is without question the number one exporter of the extremist Wahhabi Salafi ideology which fuels terrorist groups like al-Qaeda and ISIS. Saudi Arabia has spent billions building mosques, funding radical Imams, creating extremist madrassa schools around the world, from Indonesia to India to Europe, creating fertile ground for the creation of future generations of terrorist recruits. Can you explain the contradiction between President Trump's rhetoric and his actions supporting Saudi Arabia? Why hasn't the US designated Saudi Arabia as a state sponsor of terror?

**Answer:**

The United States has worked closely with Saudi Arabia to combat terrorism for many years. Saudi Arabia strengthened its counterterrorism efforts in the early 2000s, when al-Qaeda launched a protracted series of attacks in Saudi Arabia in an effort to destabilize the government, and after 9/11. The United States has worked with the Saudi government to defeat al-Qaeda, and this has helped build a strong foundation for counterterrorism cooperation. For instance, in October 2010 Saudi Arabia provided vital intelligence that helped the United States discover bombs planted inside printer cartridges on airplanes destined for the United States. Saudi Arabia has made significant progress in cracking down on terrorist financing with regards to such groups as Hamas and Lashkar-e Tayyiba, and in May 2017, the U.S. and Saudi Arabia announced the joint designation of Hashem Safieddine, a senior leader in Hizballah, as a Specially Designatied Global Terrorist (SDGT). Saudi Arabia also hosted the inaugural meeting of the coalition to defeat ISIL in 2014 and has been a key partner in that effort since then, co-leading the Counterterrorism Working Group among other initiatives.

Many Saudi religious officials have made public statements, held public conferences, and taught university courses condemning the misuse of Islam to justify terrorism. To address CVE issues, the government has issued new regulations regarding Saudi proselytization abroad and has increased monitoring of mosque sermons for violent extremist content. The government has set up numerous institutions to rehabilitate violent extremists, and to counteract online recruitment, including the Global Center for Combating Extremist Ideology, the inauguration of which the President attended on May 21.

Salafism has been interpreted and practiced by some in a way that promotes intolerance toward non-Muslims and non-Sunni Muslims, and the past writings of several prominent Saudi clerics are still used by violent extremists today to justify violence and hatred of others.

However, we cannot draw simple causal linkages between a given interpretation of Islam and violence or terrorism. The question of how a person becomes radicalized to violence is complex; exposure to a fundamentalist ideology may play a role, but it is only one of many factors – particularly social-psychological ones – that drive radicalization to violence. The vast majority of Saudi and non-Saudi Salafists around the world are peaceful and do not advocate violence. Furthermore, in recent years, the Saudi government has removed anti-Shia fatwas from government websites, restricted the power of the religious police, and made some small first steps toward improving the status of women. More work needs to be done, and we will continue to press Saudi Arabia on this.

As a matter of law, in order for any country to be designated as a state sponsor of terrorism, the Secretary of State must determine that the government of that country has repeatedly provided support for acts of international terrorism. These designations are made after careful review of all available evidence to determine if a country meets the statutory criteria for designation. Currently there are three countries designated as a state sponsor of terrorism: Iran, Sudan, and Syria. Saudi Arabia does not fit that description.

**Question:**

In January, the Syrian branch of al-Qaeda changed its name to Hayat Tahrir al-Sham (HTS). Why is it that the State Department has still not updated or listed this al-Qaeda organization as a terrorist organization? Is this simply an oversight that you plan to correct or has there been an official change in U.S. policy regarding al-Qaeda in Syria?

**Answer:**

The core of HTS is al-Qa'ida's affiliate in Syria, Jabhat al-Nusrah, also known as Jabhat Fatah al-Sham, a designated Foreign Terrorist Organization and Specially Designated Global Terrorist entity under Executive Order 13224. These designations apply to Jabhat al-Nusrah regardless of what name it uses or what groups merge with it. Jabhat al-Nusrah's long-term goals have not changed and the group remains al-Qa'ida's affiliate in Syria, committed to al-Qa'ida's objectives, including eventually conducting attacks against the United States and our partners. We remain committed to taking any and all steps toward countering Jabhat al-Nusrah.

**Question:**

Under U.S. law it is illegal for any American citizen to provide money or assistance to al-Qaeda, ISIS or other terrorist groups. Yet the U.S. government has been violating this for years, by quietly providing direct and indirect support to allies and partners of al-Qaeda, ISIL, and other terrorist groups with money, weapons, and intelligence support, in their fight to overthrow the Syrian government. Our government has also been funneling weapons and money through Saudi Arabia, Turkey, Qatar and others who provide direct and indirect support to groups like ISIS and al-Qaeda. This support has allowed al-Qaeda and their fellow terrorist organizations to establish strongholds throughout Syria.

**Answer:**

Defeating terrorism, including the Islamic State in Iraq and Syria (ISIS), is one of our foremost foreign policy priorities. Our security and intelligence cooperation with our regional

allies is critical to our ability to combat ISIS, AQ and other terrorist groups in the region and elsewhere. Regional allies and partners are also key members in the Global Coalition to Defeat ISIS, providing invaluable resources to support not only Coalition military efforts, but also to track foreign terrorist fighters and disrupt terrorist financing networks. For example, Al-Udeid Air Base in Qatar is an important facility for our air operations against ISIS in Syria and Iraq, and Incirlik Air Base in Turkey also supports the Syria component of the Defeat-ISIS campaign. Further, over the past several years, efforts by regional allies and partners have led to a significant reduction in foreign terrorist fighter flows into Syria, including via Turkey, and the constriction of ISIS supply lines and networks into and out of Syria and Iraq. Through bilateral information sharing arrangements and agreements we have exchanged identities on known or suspected terrorists, including foreign terrorist fighters, with key allies and partners which has helped facilitate a greater ability for governments and their border screening and law enforcement entities to identify and interdict terrorists from travelling. Further, countries in the Gulf have improved their terrorist financing regimes in recent years, including in implementing targeted financial measures and prosecuting terrorists and their financiers, but we continue to push Gulf countries to improve implementation of their counterterrorism financing laws, including in the informal financial sector. Most recently, we signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) with the Qatari government on combatting terrorism, including terrorist financing. We will continue to work with the Qataris to ensure they meet the commitments outlined in the MOU.

Along with our military colleagues, State and USAID play an important role in the campaign to defeat ISIS through diplomatic initiatives and the provision of humanitarian, mine action, and stabilization assistance. Department of State and USAID non-lethal and stabilization assistance to the moderate opposition and Syrian people in liberated areas enables the restoration of essential services and empowers moderate local actors to serve as a bulwark against terrorist groups like ISIS and AQ who seek to exploit the vacuum in security and services. This assistance is often the only lifeline keeping Syrians inside Syria, which helps to stem the flow of refugees to Syria's neighbors and beyond. It also keeps moderate Syrians who share our values employed and, therefore, able to play a role in a future Syrian state.

Questions for the Record Submitted to
Secretary of State Rex Tillerson by
Representative Joaquin Castro
House Foreign Affairs Committee
June 14, 2017

**Question:**
Pickering / Rangel / Payne Fellows: How will the hiring freeze affect the Pickering, Rangel, and Payne programs? How will it affect fellows' appointments to the Foreign Service? What are the budgets for each program in FY2018 and what were the budgets for each program in the prior three fiscal years (FY2017, FY2016, and FY2015)?

**Answer:**
The U.S. Department of State's Pickering and Rangel Fellowship diversity recruitment programs were created to increase diversity in the Foreign Service. Fellows are trained to and expect to join the Foreign Service upon the completion of the programs. Historically, the Fellows have entered the Foreign Service as career conditional entry level officers.

As of June 14, the Department was unable to offer this year's cadre of Fellows a spot in an A-100 class at that time, as had been customary. We value these talented individuals and are determined to bring their skills into the Department. Although the Department was not able to offer the Fellows a spot in an A-100 class as of June 14, the Department offered them the opportunity to join the Consular Fellows Program as an alternative to waiting until the next A-100 class. Fellows were given the option to choose to enter the Foreign Service as a Consular Fellow now, or wait until the next A-100 class, depending on their personal and individual circumstances. Fellows who would have chosen to begin their service as Consular Fellows would have been placed in the next available A-100 class upon completion of their one or two two-year Consular Fellows tour(s).

As of June 29, we are pleased to share that the Department will hold A-100 entry-level Foreign Service Officer classes in July and September. All eligible Pickering and Rangel Fellows have been offered spots in these classes. The Department looks forward to welcoming these talented individuals and the entire future membership of these upcoming A-100 classes to our workforce.

We refer you to USAID for questions about their Donald M. Payne International Development Fellows.

Below is a chart that shows the FY-2015 –FY-2018 budgets for the Pickering and Rangel programs:

| Program Year | Program Name | Program Budget | |
|---|---|---|---|
| 2015 | Pickering | $ | 3,636,000 |
| | Rangel | $ | 3,711,750 |
| | | | |
| 2016 | Pickering | $ | 3,654,771 |
| | Rangel | $ | 3,711,750 |
| | | | |
| 2017 | Pickering | $ | 3,654,944 |
| | Rangel | $ | 3,789,788 |
| | | | |
| 2018 | Pickering | $ | 3,655,125 |
| | Rangel | $ | 3,720,938 |

**Question:**

I understand the State Department offers centrally-funded professional development programs for mid-career and senior employees. What is the race/ethnicity breakdown, by program, over the past three years, for Foreign Service and Civil Service personnel selected for long-term professional development programs outside the Department at war colleges, the NSC, the Pentagon, and the Hill?

**Answer:**

The Department offers long-term training and detail assignments to our Foreign Service and Civil Service workforce, including at academic institutions, other government agencies, and non-governmental organizations. Through these opportunities, employees develop and demonstrate the management skills and breadth of technical knowledge important for advancement, up to and into the senior ranks. Although the race/ethnicity breakdown by program is not available, the overall results for the last three assignment cycles are as follows.

| **2014-2015** | |
|---|---|
| Asian-American | 6 |
| African-American | 10 |
| Hispanic/Latino | 8 |
| Native American | 0 |
| White/Did not self-identify | 164 |
| **Total Assignments** | **188** |

| **2015-2016** | |
|---|---|
| Asian-American | 11 |
| African-American | 5 |
| Hispanic/Latino | 8 |
| Native American | 0 |
| White/Did not self-identify | 108 |
| **Total Assignments** | **132** |

| **2016-2017** | |
|---|---|
| Asian-American | 27 |
| African-American | 14 |
| Hispanic/Latino | 14 |
| Native American | 0 |
| White/Did not self-identify | 192 |
| **Total Assignments** | **247** |

**Question:**

**Data Calls:** I understand there have been instances where the State Department has failed to fully respond to data calls through OPM and from the Hill concerning personnel issues. How confident are you in the way human resources data are captured and reported? What efforts have the State Department's Human Resources and Civil Rights divisions taken to correct improve data collection and reporting issue? Has the State Department's capacity to provide accurate data improved?

**Answer:**

The Department has instituted a series of checks and balances to ensure data integrity and reporting. These include internal data review processes that expose inconsistencies in our databases and reporting systems. These steps have improved the timeliness and accuracy of data collection and analysis. – We adhere closely to all data security and privacy legal requirements as required by law. Staff from the Bureau of Human Resources and the Office of Civil Rights are committed to working continually to improve data reporting whenever necessary.

**Question:**

Diversity Strategy: What is the Department's strategy for addressing the underrepresentation of people of color among Civil Service and Foreign Service ranks? What efforts is the Department undertaking to correct the severe underrepresentation of minorities and women in the Senior Foreign Service and Senior Executive Service?

**Answer:**

The Department of State's diversity efforts are outlined in the Diversity and Inclusion Strategic Plan, which aims to attract and cultivate a workforce reflecting the strengths of our nation, promoting an inclusive merit-based culture that encourages collaboration, flexibility, and fairness. The Department's Diversity and Inclusion Strategic Plan can be found on the Office of Personnel Management's website: https://www.opm.gov/policy-data-oversight/diversity-and-inclusion/.

The Department remains committed to the Pickering and Rangel programs as our premier diversity recruitment programs, which together are responsible for 21 percent of the diversity currently in the Foreign Service. We look forward to welcoming these talented individuals to our workforce.

As of 2015, the Department of State and USAID Civil Services were more diverse in terms of gender, race, and ethnicity than the Federal workforce as a whole. The trend for increasing diversity in the Foreign Service has also gained momentum over the past two decades via targeted outreach, internship opportunities, and our flagship Pickering and Rangel Fellowships. Women now make up 41 percent of our Foreign Service Generalist (FSG) and 28 percent of our Foreign Service Specialist (FSS) workforce and more than 50 percent of the Civil Service workforce. Women account for approximately 36 percent of the Generalist Senior Foreign Service (SFS) – a 200 percent increase from 16 percent twenty years ago; the representation of women in the Senior Executive Service (SES) has more than doubled, going from 18 percent to 38 percent over the same period. Minorities constitute 24 percent of the Foreign Service (FS) workforce and 42 percent of the Civil Service (CS) workforce.

The Department is committed to providing a climate that is conducive to people with diverse backgrounds and that is supportive of our employees throughout their careers. We are determined to preserve a future leadership pipeline and provide a variety of training opportunities, mentoring, and career development programs, such as the International Career Advancement Program, to ensure that all employees have the skills necessary for current and future work assignments. For the SES, the Department hired a dedicated Executive Diversity Outreach Manager to ensure a broad applicant pool. We recently advertised for admission into the Senior Executive Service Candidate Development Program, which trains and prepares rising leaders for entry into the Senior Executive Service. The SES Qualifications Review Panels are themselves diverse.

The gains we have made in hiring a diverse workforce are not yet reflected at the leadership levels and may not be for another 10 years, but we are determined to retain our talent and preserve our pipeline for future leadership. As entry and mid-level cohorts advance in their careers, they will populate more and more of the senior level positons. And, as these targeted groups' progress, we will continue to provide mentoring and career development counseling to help them develop the skills necessary for advancement while strengthening the leadership and adaptive capacity of our workforce. We have also developed a centralized exit survey process for all Foreign Service and Civil Service employees separating from the Department. This survey will systematically capture reasons for attrition and address ways to improve retention. While we have made gains in diversity, we know we have more work to do.

**Question:**

Representation in Policy Positions: The State Department's MD-715 report reveals that people of color are severely underrepresented in civil service policy-related job codes as compared to administrative job codes. What efforts is the Department undertaking to yield more diverse representation in policy positions?

**Answer:**

The Department's 2016 Diversity and Inclusion Strategic Plan (DISP) aims to attract and cultivate a workforce reflecting the strengths of our nation, promoting an inclusive merit-based culture that encourages collaboration, flexibility, and fairness. The DISP also seeks to ensure that the Department's workforce reflects the strengths of our diverse nation, while promoting an inclusive culture that encourages collaboration, flexibility, and fairness throughout the organization. Key objectives include improving and enhancing mentoring programs, expanding outreach to managers who make hiring decisions, and encouraging collaboration with external partners.

One of the primary goals of the DISP is to use data analytics to drive performance excellence. To that end, the Office of Civil Rights (S/OCR), in coordination with HR, examined whether there were barriers for multiple underrepresented groups. The FY 2014 barrier analysis in the Management Directive 715 (MD-715) report focused on African Americans in senior leadership due to their low representation in the SES as compared with the Federal workforce (FW) SES representation (3.8% vs. 11.4%). The FY 2015 barrier analysis focused on representation of women in the SES and SFS. The FY 2016 barrier analysis focused on Hispanic employees in the GS-12 grades and above in accordance with an EEOC and OPM memo on low representation of Hispanics in the FW. Specific corrective strategies are developed based on the barrier analysis conducted.

For instance, as reported in the FY 2016 MD-715, applicant flow data showed Hispanic employees apply and qualify at rates at or above their representation outside the Department. However, in the 2210 job series (Information Technology Management, an important feeder pool into the senior ranks), this did not occur. Based on this analysis, S/OCR is interviewing managers in key bureaus to ascertain what criteria they use to hire employees and ensure that they adhere to merit system principles. In addition, S/OCR is working with HR to evaluate why Hispanic employees are not participating in career development opportunities at a rate commensurate with their representation at the Department, and develop strategies that can benefit Hispanics as well as underrepresented groups.

**Question:**

Is there anything preventing the State Department from publishing its Equal Employment Opportunity Commission MD-715 reports and related data tables on the State Department website? Other agencies make their reports available on their website.

**Answer:**

The State Department currently posts the MD-715 report on its internal website and is in the process of posting on the Department's external website as well.

**Question:**

Security Clearance Denials: It is our understanding that denials and delays in granting security clearances affect people of color disproportionately. Have these denials been examined as a factor in hiring barrier analyses?"

**Answer:**

During the course of the investigation and adjudication of a security clearance, the race of the applicant is never requested in the documentation (i.e. Standard Form 86), interview, or any contact with the Subject or sources. Security records, therefore, do not reflect an applicant's race. In part, this helps to ensure that the security clearance process remains impartial to the Subject's race and is not considered in the determination. Moreover, per ODNI's 2015 Annual Report on Security Clearance Determinations, the number of Department final security clearance denials is relatively small, with only 0.1% of applicants being denied a security clearance. Internal data for 2016 indicates a DOS security clearances denial rate of 0.2%. Thus the impact of security clearance denials as a factor in hiring would appear to be very limited, and the Department would not be able to calculate the effects of race on denials and hiring.

**Question:**

Schedule C Appointees: What consideration is given to promoting a diverse and inclusive workforce in selecting political appointees to serve in the State Department?

**Answer:**

It is a priority of the State Department to promote a diverse and inclusive workforce. The Department is working closely with the White House on the identification of qualified candidates for our senior political appointees.

**Question:**

Statement on Diversity and Equal Employment Opportunity: The State Department's careers webpage previously included a statement by the Secretary on the importance of diversity. Do you plan to publish a similar statement?

**Answer:**

The Secretary's statement on diversity is currently available on the State Department owned site, careers.state.gov. The direct link to the statement is: https://careers.state.gov/learn/diversity-inclusion/eeo-policy/

The statement reads as follows: "At our core are our people and we are committed to having a workforce that reflects the diverse people that we represent. Not only because embracing diversity enhances the development of human capital resources, increases proficiency levels, promotes a workplace culture that values the efforts of all members, and enhances the professional experience of our valued public servants, because we represent the United States to the world.

To that end, the Department is committed to equal employment opportunity (EEO) and ensuring that the Department's work environment is free from prohibited discrimination in all phases of employment – including recruitment, hiring, evaluation, promotion, and training. This includes improving and enhancing our mentorship programs, expanding outreach to managers who make hiring decisions, and encouraging collaboration with external partners.

The Office of Civil Rights works to resolve workplace conflicts and complaints in a prompt, impartial, constructive, and timely manner. Those found to have violated this commitment to non-discrimination, including retaliation for participating in an EEO-protected activity will be discipline appropriately.

I am honored to reaffirm our long-standing Department commitment to diversity, in background as well as ideas, today and for the future."

**Question:**

Personnel Reductions: In a time when the Department is projected to experience significant personnel cuts and undergo a complete reorganization, how will the lack of diversity within the Foreign Service and Civil Service be addressed? Are we correct in understanding that the reduction of State Department personnel will be based on attrition and buyouts for retirement-eligible individuals by bureau? How many buyouts do you anticipate? At what costs? What are the RNO (Race or National origin) breakdowns for the group of personnel who meet the criteria for buyouts?

**Answer:**

In the near term, we plan two cohorts of Rangel and Pickering fellows in our July and September Foreign Service intake classes. We anticipate continued Rangel/Pickering hiring in FY2018 as well.

As I stated in my testimony, the reduction of State Department personnel will be accomplished without Reductions-in-Force. Rather, the reduction would be accomplished through limited attrition intake hiring and possibly be supplemented with buyouts. The Department is still exploring the buyout alternatives based on the criteria laid out from OPM, and exact skill categories and demographics are still to be determined.

**Question:**

What role do you envision for employee affinity groups in the State Department under your leadership? What regular engagement do you plan to have with these groups?

**Answer:**

In recent years, employee affinity groups (EAGs) have collaborated with Department leadership and stakeholders on significant issues affecting their constituencies and the Department at large, such as revising assignment preclusion regulations and promoting awareness of affirmative hiring for people with disabilities. The Department's Office of Civil Rights and Bureau of Human Resources liaise regularly with EAGs to promote diversity and inclusion, career development and in support of the Department's retention and recruitment efforts. We also keep our Unions informed of collaborations with the EAGs and put the EAGs in direct contact with the Unions as appropriate.

Last year, during ongoing Diversity Forum meetings hosted by the Deputy Secretary, EAG leaders identified three crosscutting issues of interest: diversity data, unconscious bias training, and recruitment and retention. I support the Department's ongoing dialogue with EAGs and plan to continue this collaboration by engaging personally or by delegation to a senior member of my team.

Questions for the Record Submitted to
Secretary of State Rex Tillerson by
Representative Titus
House Committee on Foreign Affairs
June 14, 2017

**Question:**

A new round of exploratory drilling of natural gas fields in the Exclusive Economic Zone (EEZ) of Cyprus is due to begin this July. This exploration is critical to U.S interests, as it could lead to sources of energy that would enable key allies and strategic partners like Israel and Cyprus to become energy independent while decreasing the reliance of European states on Russian gas.

Turkey has already issued threats against this exploratory drilling. The United States has consistently supported the rights of Cyprus to explore and exploit its EEZ. What diplomatic pressure are you exerting or are prepared to utilize on Turkey to encourage them not to interfere with the lawful exploration set to begin in Cyprus' EEZ?

**Answer:**

Finding a resolution for Cyprus is a priority for the Administration. We continue to press all sides, including Turkey, to show maximum flexibility, and we have and will continue to encourage Turkey to show restraint in its response to EEZ drilling activities. We believe hydrocarbon resources should be shared equitably with all Cypriots, and that a durable settlement to the Cyprus problem is the best way to ensure the stability and predictability necessary for the full development of Cypriot energy resources.

**Question:**

Many refugees are currently stranded in Greece, which given its economic crisis has little ability to care for them, and Greece continues to be susceptible to increased flows of refugees because of its location and vast shoreline. Is the State Department prepared to assist Greece in the event of a new refugee crisis? Does the United States currently provide Greece with technical assistance, intelligence, or equipment? Is there a plan in place should there be a new surge in refugees to Greece, as well as to Europe as a whole?

**Answer:**

The United States understands Europe's refugee and migration challenges will continue, and significant humanitarian needs must still be addressed. In addition to actively supporting the development of comprehensive, coordinated, and humane responses, we continue to focus on addressing the primary drivers of global migration, including protracted conflicts, poverty, and instability.

The United States has contributed close to $72 million in humanitarian aid in response to Europe's refugee and migration crisis. This funding supports the efforts of humanitarian partners to provide food, water, shelter, and other types of assistance. Most of this funding has been contributed to the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) for activities in Greece and the Western Balkans, but it is contributed without earmarks for a specific

country, activity, or location, so UNHCR has the flexibility to respond to new and emerging needs in the region. UNHCR continually undertakes contingency planning, and if the need surpasses a designated threshold (usually $10 million), it will issue a new emergency appeal.

The United States has been working with Greece since mid-2016 to help authorities develop an identification management system that enhances border security.

Question for the Record Submitted to
Secretary of State Rex Tillerson by
Representative Norma Torres
House Foreign Affairs Committee Hearing
June 14, 2017

**Question:**

Following revelations of criminal activity at the highest levels of the Honduran National Police, the Government of Honduras appointed a Police Reform and Purge Commission. How does the President's Fiscal Year 2018 budget request support the work of the Honduran Police Reform and Purge Commission and other police reform efforts in Central America?

**Answer:**

The Department of State's main objectives in reforming the Honduran National Police (HNP) are to build the institutional capacity of Honduran law enforcement officials to prevent, address, and combat crime and to provide services that meet the needs of communities.

The Bureau of International Narcotics and Law Enforcement Affairs (INL) supports comprehensive law enforcement reform through training and advisory opportunities, as well equipment and limited infrastructure support. With INL support, the Purge Commission has been assisting the Honduran Congress in the creation of a new organic police law which, if done correctly, will further bolster the institution and reduce impunity in Honduras. INL is assisting the HNP to develop and implement new, more rigorous standards for candidate qualifications, including a high school diploma, successful financial and criminal record background check, investigator interview of family and associates, and completion of an 11-month basic training. INL provides recent graduates from the basic training academy with mentoring and advising to help put into practice lessons learned from the academy and appropriate, professional, and practical application of skills learned upon assignment into areas of the HNP where INL is working, including: Police Investigative Directorate, TIGRES, and Community Police.

With the President's Fiscal Year 2018 budget request of $36.7 million for Honduras, INL will support the continued development of the HNP through training and advising as well as the renovation and outfitting of facilities for the HNP's Criminal Investigations School (EIC). INL support to police education is a critical component of the police plan to build a competent and educated force to 27,000 by 2022; the EIC is intended to become the driving force towards increased specialization of the HNP. This assistance will complement INL's ongoing law enforcement efforts to include providing advising and training to specialized units; promoting and enhancing community policing throughout the country; and supporting telecommunications abilities between and among law enforcement entities.

As part of regional efforts in Central America, INL law enforcement reform programs address the security-related drivers of illegal immigration from Central America to the United States. Focusing primarily on the Northern Triangle, FY 2018 law enforcement programs will continue to strengthen the ability of Central American partners to dismantle criminal networks, combat gang and localized violence, and modernize and increase the transparency of law enforcement institutions. This will be accomplished through a three-pronged approach of bottom-up, top-down, and operations coordination. Bottom-up community security efforts address the security-related causes of illegal immigration through U.S. law enforcement capacity

building programs, including the Gang Resistance Education and Training (GREAT) program, Model Police Precincts, and the Place-Based Strategy programs in Guatemala, Honduras, and El Salvador. These programs are responsible for a 30-70 percent reduction in homicides in targeted areas.

Top-down institutional reforms, primarily implemented through the Central America Police Reform Initiative (CAPRI), strengthen and standardize police academies and foster inter-country information sharing, such as the nascent Gang Information Sharing Platform, which is being implemented across the Northern Triangle. Specialized advisors ensure sustainability and long-term results by strengthening police and addressing destabilizing conditions of corruption, impunity, and weak institutions. Through operational coordination with partner country law enforcement, INL helps dismantle transnational criminal organizations by supporting specialized task forces and interagency vetted units throughout the region, which address immediate high-threat security issues related to gangs, money laundering and financial crimes, and human trafficking and smuggling.

**Question:**
Sexual violence against women and children is widespread in Central America and is an important driver of migration to the United States. How does the President's Fiscal Year 2018 budget request prioritize efforts to address issues of sexual violence in Central America?

**Answer:**
The United States is committed to prioritizing efforts that deter sexual violence. Gender-based violence (GBV), which includes sexual violence, is a global epidemic that hinders the ability of individuals, especially women and girls, to fully participate in and contribute to their families, communities, and societies – economically, politically, and socially. U.S. efforts in Central America aim to deter GBV by increasing policing capacity to recognize victims and perpetrators, strengthening the judicial sector, assisting survivors, and facilitating enhanced messaging to increase public awareness of GBV and women's rights. The Administration has made a clear commitment to the region by seeking $460 million for programs in the FY 2018 budget request. These programs will build on existing efforts, including specific programs to prevent sexual violence as well as components of larger capacity-building initiatives. A good example is in Guatemala, where USAID supports the Government of Guatemala's institutions in establishing and implementing coordinated prevention strategies for mitigating GBV. USAID is responsible for the successful establishment of eight, 24-hour courts. USAID adapted a 24-hour court model to respond to the needs of female victims of violence and implemented a 24-hour court that specializes in cases of violence against women.

**Question:**
Corruption has also enabled the growth of transnational criminal organizations in Mexico, and the Mexican Congress recently approved reforms to address growing concerns about government corruption. How does the President's Fiscal Year 2018 budget request support Mexico's efforts to combat corruption, including the implementation of the new National Anti-Corruption System?

**Answer:**

Through the Merida Initiative, the United States and Mexico have forged a multi-faceted partnership to combat transnational organized crime and drug trafficking and to support Mexico's efforts to strengthen its security and justice institutions, enhance rule of law, improve border security, disrupt illicit financial networks, and promote respect for human rights.

U.S. support for Mexico's ongoing transition to an accusatorial criminal justice system has been, and continues to be with the FY 2018 request, an integral component of our strategy to combat organized crime and the corruption it breeds. A transparent, efficient, and effective criminal justice system is essential to the Administration's goal of dismantling transnational criminal organizations, and helps the Government of Mexico combat impunity and corruption. It also strengthens the rule of law by protecting due process, promoting assistance to crime victims, and strengthening human rights. As Mexico advances these reforms, the United States continues to provide essential support for law enforcement professionalization, strengthening judicial institutions, training prosecutors and judges, curriculum support for law schools, accreditation of federal and state forensic laboratories and certification of their personnel, and improving the corrections system.

Our assistance complements the Government of Mexico's own efforts to promote accountability, professionalism, integrity, and adherence to due process among the country's 350,000 federal, state, and municipal law enforcement officials through training and police professionalization, including improved vetting and internal affairs. In addition, we support the efforts of civil society and the private sector to transform the underlying culture of justice sector institutions.

The U.S. Agency for International Development is working with the government, private sector, and civil society to implement the new National Anti-Corruption System to address impunity and corruption in Mexico. The State Department's Bureau of Democracy, Human Rights, and Labor also currently provides support, through prior year funds, that builds the advocacy skills of civil society organizations, including through engagement with the private sector and universities to bolster their role in promoting anti-corruption measures, and encourages policymakers to act more effectively on issues of corruption.

Questions for the Record Submitted to
Secretary of State Rex Tillerson by
Representative Brad Schneider
House Foreign Affairs Committee
June 14, 2017

**Question:**

As Chairman Royce said in his opening statement, I wish you and our nation success in your tenure. As Ranking Member Engel said in his opening remarks, I am deeply skeptical of this budget proposal. In the Politico article, Why Foreign Aid is critical to U.S. national security, by Admiral Mike Mullen and General James Jones, the authors state that investing in prevention is, on average, 60 times less costly than war and post-conflict reconstruction costs. Adequately funding diplomacy and development up front makes sense, and saves money and lives in the long-term. How then can you justify drastically reducing funding to manage political and development challenges before they become full-blown crises in favor of inevitably having to pay far more in financial and human resources in the future?

**Answer:**

The FY 2018 request for the State Department and USAID will allow America to continue to assert U.S. leadership, defend national security, and foster opportunities for U.S. economic interests. Even with the reductions in funding, we will continue to be the leader in international development, global health, democracy and good governance initiatives, and humanitarian efforts. The U.S. government is actively engaging with partners to reduce fragility and promote stability in conflict-affected states. This includes enhancing the ability of fragile countries to mitigate shocks and prevent conflict, and advancing the stabilization of conflict-affected areas so that they can transition to long-term political, economic and social stability.

**Question:**

I firmly believe that the national security of the United States relies on what I refer to as a three-legged stool: diplomacy, development, and defense. If you take away one leg of the stool you destabilize the others, and the national security of the U.S. becomes precarious. I am afraid this is exactly what the President's drastic cuts to the FY 2018 budget request will do. How do you view the roles of diplomacy and development in ensuring the national security of the United States?

**Answer:**

Diplomacy and development play an indispensable role in protecting our nation's safety and advancing prosperity for the American people. With such a broad array of threats facing the United States, our FY 2018 budget request aligns with the Administration's objective of making America's security our top priority. Even with the reductions in funding, we will continue to be the leader in international development, global health, democracy and good governance initiatives, and humanitarian efforts. As part of our efforts, we will continue to partner with key allies to protect Americans and American interests, advance bilateral partnerships, open new markets for U.S. businesses, and promote American interests abroad, in a manner that puts

America first. Focusing our efforts will allow us to advance our most important policy goals and national security interests, while ensuring that other donor countries contribute their fair share toward meeting global challenges.

**Question:**

As you mentioned in your prepared remarks, we are living in extraordinary times and consistently dealing with more and increasingly complex challenges all over the world. These immediate challenges include threats from North Korea, Iran, and Russia, as well as Islamic extremist non-state actors such as ISIS, Al Qaeda and others. We are also confronting challenges ranging from the emerging global reach and influence of China, to failing and failed states such as Syria and South Sudan, and severely at risk states like Afghanistan, Somalia, and Venezuela. And let's not forget the global refugee crisis with the greatest number of refugees since World War II, increasing food insecurity caused by global warming trends, and increasingly sophisticated networks involved in transnational crime and human trafficking. In every one of these examples and numerous others, I share the view of countless foreign policy experts, that diplomacy and development initiatives--the foreign aid and assistance the U.S. people generously provide around the world, and the dedicated professionals who are devoted to these national priorities—are vital to overcome these challenges. I would like you to explain how pulling back on our commitments and investments in diplomacy and development, as is the case with the President's FY 18 budget request, can have any effect other than diminishing our leadership and hampering our ability to protect our national interests and achieve our strategic objectives.

**Answer:**

The FY 2018 request for the State Department and USAID will allow America to continue to assert U.S. leadership, defend national security, and foster opportunities for U.S. economic interests. Even with the reductions in funding, we will continue to be the leader in international development, global health, democracy and good governance initiatives, and humanitarian efforts. As part of our efforts, we will continue to partner with key allies to protect Americans and American interests, advance bilateral partnerships, open new markets for U.S. businesses, and promote American interests abroad, in a manner that puts America first. Focusing our efforts will allow us to advance our most important policy goals and national security interests, while ensuring that other donor countries contribute their fair share toward meeting global challenges.

**Question:**

How do you view America's role in international affairs and the global world order? On May 3, 2017, you spoke to the dedicated men and women of the Department of State. In those remarks, you made the assertion that our values are different and separate from our policies. I could not disagree more. Rather, excluding our values from our work severely diminishes our decades of credibility as a leader among other nations, and negatively impacts our ability to support global stability based on principles of democratic governance, commitment to international conventions and agreements, and respect for human rights. How do you believe that our values are relevant to our diplomatic and development efforts overseas? How will you ensure these values drive our

diplomacy and development work? What are some specific examples of ways in which basing our policy on our values benefits our national security?

**Answer:**

Promoting U.S. values—such as the pursuit of democratic governance and commitment to human rights and the freedom of religion, press, and speech—contributes to the long-term U.S. strategy of strengthening the international order. An example of one of the many ways we promote such values is through our annual reports on International Religious Freedom and Trafficking in Persons—two recently released reports in which we both publicly highlight countries that have made progress and expose those that continue to commit abuses.

The security of American people is the highest priority in our foreign policy, and protecting our country sometimes necessitates hard choices to partner with countries that may not share our values in order to achieve that goal. As we grow trust and cooperation in relationships rooted in maintaining our international security, we will continue to identify new ways to promote our values and raise human rights issues with our partners.

**Question:**

Reports indicate that career staff who have served under Republican and Democratic administrations, who have deep knowledge and expertise on complex international issues, are not being consulted by you and your personal aides. It strikes me that excluding these committed public servants from key policy discussions can only be detrimental to our national security. In addition, purposely disengaging from those who literally put their lives on the line for our country on behalf of the State Department and USAID is extraordinarily detrimental to staff morale and all but disregards the sacrifices that these officers make. If these rumors are true, why are you not engaging the career staff in policy making and program management?

**Answer:**

These rumors are false. Our employees are our most valuable resource. Their continued engagement and candid input are vital to the success of the Department, as well as the employee-led assessment and redesign initiative on which the Department is now embarking.

Per Executive Order 13781 of March 13, 2017, the Department of State (Department) is looking at aligning resources, people, and our overarching mission, including restructuring the Department's operations, in order to deploy the talent and resources of the Department in the most efficient way possible. This review has no preconceived outcomes, and our discussions of the goals, priorities, and direction of the Department are robust exercises that involve all stakeholders. To guide how we approach both our work process design as well as our organizational structure, the first question we are asking is: How do we deliver on mission? Once we understand how we get the work done, then we will put the organization structure in place to support it. Ultimately, we expect our talented workforce to be more satisfied with their daily work because they will know exactly how what they do every day contributes to our delivery on mission. And in the process we will have removed obstacles that divert attention away from the priorities at hand.

In May, we asked all Department employees to complete a survey to shape the future way in which the Department will deliver on mission and think creatively about work process design. Over 35,000 surveys were completed. From the report produced by the consulting firm we hired

to review the surveys, the overarching theme is the extraordinary dedication and patriotism of the men and women in the Department and why they undertake careers with this agency. That is a strength that we will build upon. We will take a good, hard look at employee feedback, which includes needing greater clarity around how our mission is defined; reducing duplicative layering of work processes and approvals; and addressing a number of leadership areas. Overall, the feedback has been extremely valuable to begin to help us focus on where the greatest opportunities are to remove obstacles for people to get their work done more effectively and more efficiently.

**Question:**

When you choose to accept the responsibilities of Secretary of State, was your purpose to build up and strengthen America's role in making the world a safer place? Or, did you take this job to captain the retreat from our nation's long-held position of leader of the free world?

**Answer:**

The 21st century has presented many evolving challenges to U.S. leadership, including our national security and economic prosperity. Our diplomatic efforts around the world are motivated by the conviction that we will engage with other nations on issues of security and prosperity while also continuing to be the leader in international development, global health, democracy and good governance initiatives, as well as humanitarian efforts. Our mission is at all times guided by our longstanding values of freedom, democracy, individual liberty and human dignity. As Secretary of State, I will continue to uphold this mission to advance American interests while holding high the aspiration that all will one day experience the freedoms and peace that our great nation has known.

Questions for the Record Submitted to
Secretary of State Tillerson by
Representative Adriano Espaillat
House Foreign Affairs Committee
June 14, 2017

**Question:**
Do you believe President Trump's Tower in the Philippines poses a potential conflict of interest?

**Answer:**
Questions concerning the President should be addressed to the White House.

**Question:**
Do you believe President Trump's International Hotel and Tower in Azerbaijan poses a potential conflict of interest?

**Answer:**
Questions concerning the President should be addressed to the White House.

**Question:**
Do you believe the Cap Cana Resort in the Dominican Republic poses a potential conflict of interest?

**Answer:**
Questions concerning the President should be addressed to the White House.

**Qnestion:**
Do you believe the Hotel and Tower in Vancouver poses a conflict of interest?

**Answer:**
Questions concerning the President should be addressed to the White House.

**Question:**
Do you believe the golf course in Aberdeen poses a potential conflict of interest?

**Answer:**
Questions concerning the President should be addressed to the White House.

**Question:**
Do you believe the victory from a Chinese court that ruled in Trump's favor in a trademark dispute that had been going for more than a decade poses a conflict of interest?\

**Answer:**
Questions concerning the President should be addressed to the White House.

**Question:**
And finally, do you value our relationship with the Caribbean?

**Answer:**
We deeply value our relationship with the Caribbean. Geographic proximity, strong societal ties, and a fruitful tourism and trade relationship have yielded tangible benefits for U.S. citizens. The United States is the primary trading partner for the Caribbean, representing a robust economic partnership that in 2016 saw a $4.6 billion trade surplus for the United States, 14 million U.S. tourists, and 11,042 Caribbean students studying in the United States.

Our commitment to strong relations was made clear through our multi-year strategy on the Caribbean, which we submitted to Congress June 19 under the United States – Caribbean Strategic Engagement Act of 2016 in coordination with USAID. This strategy, the first of its kind for this administration, establishes a framework for enhancing U.S.-Caribbean relations in six broad areas: security, diplomacy, prosperity, energy, education, and health. The Department has already begun to deliver on the commitment to enhanced diplomatic relations delineated in the strategy. Our Under Secretary for Political Affairs, Tom Shannon, traveled to Grenada July 5-6 to meet with Caribbean leaders and Foreign Ministers on the sidelines of the Caribbean Community's annual heads of government meeting. Under Secretary Shannon was the first high-ranking U.S. official to attend this annual meeting. We have also begun planning a Caribbean trade conference, scheduled to take place in Miami this fall, which will facilitate trade and investment opportunities for U.S. and Caribbean companies alike. This will be the first time the State Department has ever hosted a Caribbean focused trade conference.

The Department remains committed to working closely with Congress, as well as members of the Caribbean diplomatic and diaspora communities, as we continue to develop more robust U.S.-Caribbean relations.

**Question:**
Have you consulted with the Office of the Legal Advisor to determine whether such payments violate the emoluments clause?

**Answer:**
Questions regarding foreign government payments to businesses in which the President has an interest are more appropriately addressed to the White House.

**Question:**
Is the State Department doing anything to communicate to other countries that payments to President Trump could violate the U.S. Constitution?

**Answer:**
No. Related questions remain in active litigation, and the Office of Legal Counsel at the Department of Justice has the relevant Constitutional law expertise in the Executive Branch.

**Question:**
How much of the State Department time and money have gone to support Trump Organization's efforts in these countries?

**Answer:**

The Department of State does not provide preferential support to the Trump Organization; we approach matters involving the Trump Organization as we approach matters involving other similarly-situated companies. All federal employees are bound by federal ethics rules, which prohibit working on matters in which they have conflicts of interest, and which prohibit misusing public office for private gain.

Questions for the Record Submitted to
Secretary of State Tillerson by
Representative Lieu
House Foreign Affairs Committee
June 14, 2017

**Question:**
Does the Saudi-led coalition have the capacity to decisively end the conflict in Yemen through military action?

**Answer:**
No. There is no decisive military solution available to either side to end the conflict. An enduring solution will only come through a comprehensive political agreement, which will require compromise from all sides.

**Question:**
During a May, 2017, press conference that you held with Saudi Foreign Minister al-Jubeir, you stated:

> "In terms of the situation in Yemen, our emphasis is on finding a political solution. We view it as a tragic situation, obviously of millions of people on the brink of starvation, because of the impact of the fighting. But we also think it's important to put the pressure on the parties to come to the table and talk."

Does the Trump administration support a political solution along the lines of the roadmap developed by former Secretary Kerry and the UN Special Envoy? If so, what leverage does the administration plan to use to ensure that the Government of Yemen and the Saudi-led coalition engages constructively in talks to achieve it after President Hadi torpedoed the last round of negotiations? If not, what is the administration's strategy for reaching a political solution?

**Answer:**
We support a framework for an agreement in which political concessions from the Yemeni Government are traded for security concessions from the Houthi/Saleh group. We have impressed upon both sides that there is no other option available than to reach agreement. Saudi Arabia engaged in good-faith to promote negotiations to reach an agreement during more than 100 days of UN-led peace talks in Kuwait last summer and continues to remain engaged. The Yemeni Government has also publicly indicated its support for the UN Special Envoy's efforts to reach a compromise solution for management of Hudaydah port. We remain engaged with both, and have urged compromise as soon as the Houthi/Saleh group demonstrates a willingness to negotiate in good faith. We view the UN Special Envoy's proposal to hand management of Hudaydah port to a neutral, local third party, as the best way to reinvigorate the political track.

**Question:**
What specific diplomatic steps, to date, has the administration taken to achieve a political solution to Yemen?

**Answer:**

The Secretary of State, in his discussions with regional interlocutors, to include members of the Coalition, has urged a speedy end to the conflict and emphasized the need for a political solution. Our Ambassador to Yemen, Matthew Tueller, is based in Saudi Arabia and actively engages with all parties to the conflict all over the region in an effort to urge a return to political negotiations. We recently hosted Saudi and Emirati delegations at the Department of State to discuss practical next steps for ending the conflict and impressed upon them the urgent need to reach a resolution through an agreed-upon framework of priorities and principles.

**Question:**

On March 13, 2017, 53 of my colleagues and I sent you a letter urging the Department of State to use all diplomatic tools at your disposal to help open the Yemeni port of Hodeidah to international humanitarian aid organizations to allow them to deliver critical food, fuel and medicine into northern Yemen. Nevertheless, famine continues to plague Yemen, aid organizations struggle to deliver aid through Hodeidah, and the World Food Programme has been unable to deliver a U.S.-sponsored crane to the port. What steps have you taken to increase or improve the U.S. response to the humanitarian crisis in Yemen?

**Answer:**

We share your deep concern regarding the devastating humanitarian impact of the conflict, particularly the ongoing cholera and food security crises affecting millions of Yemenis, both of which are the largest crises of their kind in the world. As a result, we have increased our assistance and remain one of the largest donors to the Yemen response. The United States is providing nearly $467 million in humanitarian aid for the Yemen response in the region to date in Fiscal Year 2017. U.S. government humanitarian assistance includes the provision of health care, support for clean water and sanitation, food distribution, emergency shelter support, emergency relief supplies, protection, and other types of aid. We continue to call on all parties to the conflict to ensure unfettered access for humanitarian aid workers to populations in need. While moving humanitarian goods into and around Yemen remains challenging due to the ongoing conflict, humanitarian organizations continue their heroic work to reach Yemen's 20.7 million people in need.

Regarding Hudaydah port, we support the UN Special Envoy's proposal to place Hudaydah port under the control of neutral Yemeni authorities as a confidence-building measure to bring the parties back to peace negotiations. If successful, the neutral control of Hudaydah would enable further capacity improvements at the port and also provide assurances needed to emplace the U.S. government-funded cranes in Hudaydah. As imports at Hudaydah account for approximately 70 percent of commercial food imports into Yemen, the U.S. is also continuing its support and funding for the U.N. Verification and Inspection Mechanism (UNVIM). By providing an efficient, neutral clearance process, UNVIM has facilitated the flow of commercial goods to Red Sea ports and improved the confidence of commercial shippers.

**Question:**

Your budget request cuts USAID's Global Health programming for Yemen. Yemen is currently the largest humanitarian crisis in the world, with a cholera outbreak that is rapidly spiraling out of control and could reach epidemic levels by mid-summer. A child dies every 10 minutes in Yemen due to preventable diseases and now is infected with cholera every 35 seconds

due to the elongation of the civil war, and the Saudi-led coalition airstrikes that have destroyed the country's vital health and sanitation infrastructure. There is also a Saudi-led, US-aided naval blockade preventing medicine and other assistance from entering the country. What is your strategy for ending Yemen's humanitarian crisis, and how would cutting USAID's Global Health programming for Yemen affect that strategy?

**Answer:**

We will continue providing humanitarian assistance to alleviate the crisis, continue supporting the U.N.-led efforts to negotiate a sustainable political solution, and work with international partners to prepare for recovery and reconstruction. In partnership with the World Health Organization and UNICEF, among others, USAID's humanitarian partners are responding to the cholera outbreak by training health care workers, supporting cholera treatment centers and mobile health and nutrition teams, implementing basic water, sanitation, and hygiene (WASH) activities, providing medical supplies, and promoting messaging campaigns on cholera.

USAID's humanitarian assistance in the health sector is not supported with funds from Global Health. USAID uses Global Health funding for longer term health development programs. While Yemen was not allocated Global Health funds in Fiscal Year (FY) 2017, health remains a key priority area in USAID's early recovery response. USAID is using other funds to support critical activities to prevent the further erosion of health services across the country. Using FY 2016 and prior-year Global Health and WASH funds, we are planning to increase our early recovery health activities by the end of this FY. USAID also coordinates closely with the World Bank and other donors to ensure unity of effort, economy of resources, and effective oversight of development assistance.

USAID is also supporting the UN Verification and Inspection Mechanism (UNVIM) to facilitate the flow of commercial goods and services to Yemen by providing timely and impartial clearance services for shipping companies transporting commercial imports to ports outside of the authority of the Yemeni government.

**Question:**

In the case of Yemen, U.S. support, in part, has contributed to an extreme blockade by the Saudi-led military coalition on the import of humanitarian assistance and commercial imports that has led to nearly 20 million people facing extreme hunger and more than 7 million people on the brink of famine. How do you respond to those who say that a policy of supporting a military coalition in Yemen that is directly contributing to the humanitarian crisis, coupled with extreme cuts to our humanitarian and development assistance account, will make us less secure, as these policies drive radicalization and extremism against the U.S.?

**Answer:**

We are deeply committed to alleviating Yemen's devastating humanitarian crisis. The United States is providing nearly $467 million in humanitarian aid for the Yemen response in the region to date in FY 2017. This exceeds our FY 2016 total of more than $327 million in humanitarian assistance for the Yemen response.

We firmly believe the only solution to this conflict is a political solution, in the form of a comprehensive political agreement. Our efforts are focused on supporting the UN as it works to restart dialogue and de-escalate military activity. Our support to the Saudi-led Coalition is

limited and focused around core U.S. national security priorities. We have serious concerns about Iranian-supported Houthi military actions, including the use of anti-ship cruise missiles and explosive boats that threatens vital Red Sea shipping lanes and ballistic missiles that threaten the Saudi border and have killed Saudi civilians. We are also deeply concerned about civilian casualties and damage to civilian infrastructure resulting from Saudi-led coalition airstrikes, and we continue to press the Saudi-led Coalition at the highest levels to take all appropriate measures to mitigate the impact of the conflict on the civilian population. We also continue to call on all parties to the conflict to ensure unfettered access for humanitarian workers to reach those in need.

**Question:**

What commitments did the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia make to the U.S. government regarding changes to their operational conduct and targeting procedures to prevent civilian casualties in their war in Yemen?

**Answer:**

The Saudi government has told us it supports a political resolution to the conflict, is committed to complying with the law of armed conflict (LOAC) and mitigating civilian casualties, and in this regard has told us the following:

- It is taking steps to create a more thorough vetting process for target selection, to address concerns over civilian casualties and comply with LOAC. The Saudi-led Coalition strives to meet NATO standards for targeting and training.
- The Saudis have expanded their no-strike list and restricted target list to over 33,000 targets, with items on the list provided by the UN, other humanitarian organizations on the ground in Yemen, and other governments including the United States.
- The Saudis have put in place stricter rules of engagement.
- The Saudis plan to grant access to U.S. military personnel to the Saudi Air Operations Center and any other targeting facilities.
- The Saudis plan to consult with the U.S. government on further assistance in improving the targeting process.
- The Coalition is implementing the recommendations of the Saudi Joint Incidents Assessment Team (JIAT).
- The Saudi Ministry of Defense is consulting with DoD to increase U.S. support for operations, including targeting.

The Saudi Ministry of Defense has also committed to take training from U.S. forces on LOAC and minimizing civilian casualties, including as part of a $750 million, multi-year FMS training case. We have already delivered courses and planned future training events for the Royal Saudi Air Force (RSAF) that will specifically include further training on LOAC and air-to-ground targeting processes. We are expanding professionalization training to improve RSAF targeting capabilities and reduce the risk of civilian casualties. Future bilateral and multi-lateral training is designed to improve the RSAF's understanding of identifying, targeting, and engaging correct targets while minimizing collateral damage and civilian casualties.

Additionally, we intend to renew LOAC and civilian casualties training at lower levels, send senior current or former military officers to periodically consult and encourage Saudi progress on their efforts, and review what other intelligence, surveillance, and reconnaissance

(ISR) or other capabilities we can provide to the Saudis to help their processes. We also will continue to emphasize at all levels of the Saudi government the importance of continued adherence to LOAC and taking all feasible steps to protect civilians.

**Question:**

The State Department has agreed on several occasions to share with Congress the written commitments that the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia sent to the administration to address concerns on civilian casualties. When will you provide those documents to Congress?

**Answer:**

These documents have been shared with the House Foreign Affairs and Senate Foreign Relations Committees; we would be glad to coordinate further opportunities for Members or Staff to review these documents.

**Question:**

What safeguards has the Trump administration put in place to address any additional misuse of U.S.-made munitions by the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia, especially if credible third parties again determine that the Saudis have committed violations of the laws of armed conflict?

**Answer:**

We take reports of violations of the laws of armed conflict seriously and look closely into such reports.

The U.S. Conventional Arms Transfer Policy requires that arms sales take into consideration, among other factors, "the likelihood that the recipient would use the arms to commit human rights abuses or serious violations of international humanitarian law, retransfer the arms to those who would commit human rights abuses or serious violations of international humanitarian law, or identify the United States with human rights abuses or serious violations of international humanitarian law." Whether there is credible information that a proposed recipient unit has committed a gross violation of human rights or violated the Laws of Armed Conflict, and whether effective steps are taken to hold individuals or military units accountable for such abuses, are critical elements to this analysis.

**Question:**

What progress has the Royal Saudi Air Force made in improving its targeting capabilities from the beginning of the conflict until now? Can you provide data to justify that assessment?

**Answer:**

The Saudi-led Coalition reported to us that they have instituted more rigorous rules of engagement and arrangements to ensure that targets are thoroughly vetted. According to the Saudi military, the Coalition joint force commander must approve targets, taking into account a wide range of factors, including what the target is, what is around it, how it affects the overall mission, the legal aspects of the strike, and collateral damage estimates. He then delegates the air tasking order to an appropriate unit, which determines the right weapon for the target. If there is a time sensitive target, such as information about the imminent launch of a ballistic missile, the target vetting process has to be shortened, but pilots have a five-step vetting process, in which they have to positively identify the target, check the rules of engagement, check the

target against the no-strike list, and make a collateral damage estimate; then, he has target engagement authority (which allows the pilot to abort the mission if he is unsure for any reason).

The Coalition has informed us it also has placed stricter protocols for strikes called in by Yemeni government forces, which led to problems in the past; now Yemeni government forces' calls for airstrikes must go through the aforementioned vetting process led by the Coalition joint force commander. We understand that the coalition has civilian and military legal advisors embedded in the air operations center. The Saudi military briefed us on these improvements. (Note: we believe they provided this briefing to Congress, as well.) We assess that faulty target selection and vetting has contributed to the majority of incidents that resulted in civilian casualties, so these process improvements have the potential to reduce the risk of civilian casualties.

The Saudi military also informed us they have changed procedures in line with the recommendations of the Joint Incidents Assessment Team (JIAT), though we have not yet been able to verify this.

We do not have definitive data at this point to assess whether the Royal Saudi Air Force made improvements in its targeting capabilities. Such an analysis is significantly complicated by the changing nature of the conflict, making it difficult to make meaningful comparisons between different time periods.

**Question:**

In State's assessment, have Saudi-led coalition strikes on civilians and civilian targets increased radicalization among the Yemeni civilian population?

**Answer:**

We are deeply concerned by the suffering this conflict has brought upon Yemeni civilians. De-escalating this conflict is a priority for the Secretary of State. The instability in Yemen has allowed terrorist groups like AQAP and ISIS to expand their presence, and Iran to exploit the political and security vacuum. All parties to this conflict bear responsibility for this suffering. While we do not assess that the Saudis are intentionally targeting civilians, we continue to have deep concerns about civilian casualties and damage to civilian objects and infrastructure resulting from the Saudi-led Coalition's conduct of the air campaign in Yemen. Our message – both publicly and privately at the highest levels – has been that although we understand Saudi Arabia's strategic goals and the real threat that it faces from cross-border attacks, that the protection of civilians and civilian objects must be a top priority. Houthi-Saleh forces have also engaged in attacks that have killed civilians, including through shelling and the use of land mines in civilian areas. They have allowed Iran's presence in Yemen to increase, and continue to engage in aggressive military actions that destabilize Yemen and the entire region.

**Question**

Secretary Tillerson, were you asked by President or President-elect Trump to take a loyalty pledge before being offered your current position or at any time since you were offered the job?

**Answer:**

I took an oath of office wherein I swore to support and defend the Constitution of the United States.

**Question:**

Education offers the hope of a better future for millions of children and youth worldwide, including the poor, people with disabilities, women and girls, and those living in countries affected by conflict. Beyond that, education is a critical building block for the development of an inclusive, democratic society and must be a central component of U.S. efforts to promote stability around the world. A quality basic education also equips children and youth with 21st century skills needed for gainful employment. For every dollar spent on preschool programs, there is a $4 to $9 return to individuals and society, a return on investment that could drastically improve the trajectories of countries working towards economic independence. U.S. government support for these programs serves American values and is in our national interest. However, the President has proposed cutting global basic education programs by more than 50 percent in his FY18 request. Will you elaborate on the reasoning for ending these critical interventions and the effect they will have on children and youth in the countries where USAID currently works?

**Answer:**

The FY 2018 request for education is robust, at more than a half billion dollars, and $377.9 million alone for basic education. Our effort to streamline resources is in keeping with the Administration's priority of ensuring effectiveness and accountability to the U.S. taxpayer. This does require some tough decisions. However, we recognize that investments in basic education creates pathways not only for learning, but also for greater economic growth, improved health outcomes, democratic governance, and more resilient societies.

For that reason, USAID basic education programs are targeted on supporting countries' achievement of specific, measurable results: children reading; children and youth – particularly girls – accessing safe, quality education in crisis and conflict; and young people learning the skills they need to gain employment and contribute to society. USAID basic education programs also invest in countries where additional donor resources can be leveraged, another priority of the new Administration.

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