

**THE INTERNATIONAL AFFAIRS BUDGET REQUEST
FOR FISCAL YEAR 2007**

HEARING
BEFORE THE
COMMITTEE ON
INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS
HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
ONE HUNDRED NINTH CONGRESS

SECOND SESSION

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THURSDAY, FEBRUARY 16, 2006

HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES,
COMMITTEE ON INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS,
Washington, DC.

The Committee met, pursuant to notice, at 1:32 p.m., in room 2172, Rayburn House Office Building, Hon. Henry J. Hyde (Chairman of the Committee) presiding.

Chairman HYDE. The Committee will come to order. Before beginning our hearing, I would like to announce that our colleague, Russ Carnahan of Missouri, has been fortunate or unfortunate, depending on your perspective, to be assigned to this Committee. The Minority Members have completed their Subcommittee assignments, which reflect his membership. Without objection, the Subcommittee assignments of the Minority Members, which the Members have before them, are adopted by the Committee, and the Chair recognizes Mr. Lantos, the senior Democrat for such purposes as he may require.

Mr. Lantos.

Mr. LANTOS. Mr. Chairman, we are all anxious to get going with the hearing with our distinguished Secretary. Let me just say, on behalf of all the Democrats, how delighted we are to have Russ Carnahan join us. He has a distinguished record of public service. He will be very valuable. He is very lucky to attend his first meeting with the Secretary of State.

Chairman HYDE. The Chair will announce, because of the importance of the hearing today and the lack of time for all of us to participate in questioning, the opening statements will be made by myself and Mr. Lantos, and we will not have any further opening statements, but this will permit more time for striking the last word and getting a little more detailed conversation with our witness. So I think it will work out to everybody's advantage.

Lying at the heart of America's relationship with the world is a paradox. We have global reach, voluntarily assuming responsibility for preserving peace and order in much of the world for the blessed charge of bettering the lives of its inhabitants. And yet, we are absolutely very distant from that world, stubbornly uninstructed by its ancient cynicism and preaching a confidence in the future that defies the constraints of the present. This paradox, to massively engage the world while living on an autonomous island in the global sea, is made possible by our unprecedented power. It is a truism that power breeds arrogance. A far greater danger however, stems from the self-delusion that is the more certain companion. For our

individuals and countries alike, power inevitably distorts perceptions of the world by insulating them in a soothing cocoon that is impervious to what scientists term “disconfirming evidence.”

Our power then has the grave liability of rendering our theories about the world immune from failure. But by becoming deaf to easily discerned warning signs, we may ignore long-term costs that result from our actions and dismiss reverses that should lead to a re-examination of our goals and means.

To illustrate my point, let me focus on a school of thought that has gained increasing prominence in our national debate, namely, the assertion that our interests are best advanced by assigning a central place in the foreign policy of our Nation to the worldwide promotion of democracy. I call this the golden theory.

I should state at the outset, my own conviction that democracy and freedom are directly linked and that democracy has proven highly beneficial in those states where it has been securely established. But I take issue with those who argue that it is self-propagating and that it invariably produces beneficent results, for this view rests on a misinterpretation of cause and effect in our history.

Proponents rest much of their case on the triumph of democracy in post-World War II Europe and East Asia, focusing on the peace, stability and cooperation those war torn regions have experienced in its aftermath.

Certainly, democracy contributed enormously to these regions’ transformations, but I would argue that this outcome depended far more on the direct and long-term presence of American power. Far from being inevitable, prior to 1945, democracy had been virtually wiped out in Europe, even before Hitler began his conquests. It had been delegitimized in most of the continent, and authoritarian governments had become the norm. Democracy held on in Britain and in remnants elsewhere in Europe, but ultimately survived only because of United States intervention in the war.

Following the Allied victory, democracy was reintroduced on the continent in large part because the overwhelming United States presence made it possible and virtually mandatory throughout Western Europe. From this beginning we developed enormous resources toward enforcing order, promoting cooperation, defending against invasion, removing barriers, reviving economies, and a host of other unprecedented innovations. The resulting transformation is usually ascribed to the workings of democracy, but it is due far more to the impact of the long-term U.S. presence. And that role continues to this day, 16 decades later.

In regions where our presence extended over long periods, as in East Asia, the common result was peace, stability and cooperation, with democracy as an added and reinforcing benefit. But few areas outside those fortunate lands have become stably democratic, with examples, such as India, being exceptions that are far too rare.

I note these cases because they are invariably cited by those who believe that similar transformations can be affected elsewhere by the magic elixir of democracy alone. But democracy is more than a single election, or even a succession of them. It is a way of life for a nation embracing its life and institutions, and all their complexity and embraced in turn by its people and their actions, thoughts and beliefs. Viewed in its more complete historical con-

text, implanting democracy in large areas would require that we possess an unbounded power and undertake an open-ended commitment of time and resources, which we cannot and will not do. But without that long-term dominant American position, the odds of enduring success are long indeed.

Fidelity to our ideals means that we have little choice, but to support freedom around the world. No one with a heart or a head would wish it otherwise. But we also have a duty to ourselves and to our own interests, which may sometimes necessitate actions focused, or more tangible returns than those of altruism. We must also be cognizant of the fact that a broad and energetic promotion of democracy may produce not peace and stability, but revolution. We can and have used democracy as a weapon to destabilize our enemies, and we may do so again, but if we unleash revolutionary forces in the expectation that the result can only be beneficent, I believe we are making a profound, and perhaps uncorrectable mistake. History teaches that revolutions are very dangerous things, more often destructive than benign and uncontrollable by their very nature. Upending established order based on theory is far more likely to produce chaos than shining uplands. Edmund Burke's prescient warning of the deadly progress of the French revolution, a revolution guided by intoxicating theory and heedless of all warnings, endures.

There is no evidence that we or anyone can guide from afar revolutions we have set in motion. We can more easily destabilize friends and others and give life to chaos and to avowed enemies than ensure outcomes in service of our interests and security.

May I return to my original theme, namely that our enormous power allows us to maintain a highly theoretical approach to the world, one that draws so deeply from the universal truths embedded in our makeup as to be impervious to contrary evidence.

I am not making an abstract point. We are well advanced into an unformed era in which new and unfamiliar enemies are gathering forces, where a phalanx of aspiring competitors must inevitably constrain and focus our options. In a world where the ratios of strength narrow, the consequences of miscalculation will become progressively more debilitating. The costs of golden theories will be paid for in the currency of our interests.

For some, the promotion of democracy promises an easy resolution to the many difficult problems we face, a guiding light on a dimly-seen horizon. But I believe that great caution is warranted here. Without strong evidence to the contrary, we should not readily believe that without an enduring American presence, democracy can be so easily implanted and nourished in societies where history and experience suggest it is quite alien. It may, in fact, constitute an uncontrollable experiment with an outcome akin to that faced by the Sorcerer's Apprentice.

A few brief years ago, history was proclaimed to be at an end, our victory engraved in unyielding stone, our preeminence garlanded with permanence. But we must remember that Britain's majestic rule vanished in a few short years, undermined by unforeseen catastrophic events and unmanaged enemies that overwhelmed the impregnable palisades of the past.

We must not allow our enormous power to delude us into seeing the world as a passive thing to be remade in an image of our choosing. Instead, let us take guidance from the wisdom of our forebearers, whose clear-eyed and sober-minded understanding of this world made possible the miracles of our country's birth, its flourishing and its repeated triumphs.

Now I turn to my good friend, Tom Lantos, the Ranking Democratic Member for such remarks as he may care to make.

Mr. LANTOS. Thank you very much, Mr. Chairman. Let me first join you in welcoming our most distinguished Secretary of State, who conducted her first hearing in office with enormous diplomatic skill. We are all the beneficiaries of her wisdom and judgment and experience and we are delighted to welcome her.

Let me also say a special thanks to her for earlier this week hosting the commemoration of the 50th anniversary of the 1956 Hungarian uprising and for delivering a magnificent address on that occasion. The Hungarian uprising in 1956 has some serious lessons for us, not only in terms of the passion and commitment that people have to free and open societies, their willingness to undertake a struggle for living in free and open societies at an enormous cost, but also that success doesn't come instantaneously.

The 1956 uprising, despite the heroism of gigantic proportions of the freedom fighters, ended in defeat. It was a temporary defeat and it was followed in 1989 by the collapse of the Iron Curtain, the opening up of Central and Eastern Europe, and the integration of these countries into both NATO and the European Union. And those who seem to have no patience with the long struggle for democracy and freedom would do well to reread the history of the uprising in 1956 and its final culmination in ultimate victory in 1989.

Madam Secretary, the events of 2005 have been momentous. They bring to mind the words of one of your predecessors, Dean Acheson, when he was asked to describe foreign policy. As you recall, he said, "It's one damn thing after another."

Today, in the House, we have a rather good day. A bipartisan bill offered by our Chairman and Congresswoman Ileana Ros-Lehtinen and myself on Iran, was passed by a vote of 404 to 4. I think this legislation was meant to help change Tehran's calculations of what lies ahead—hopefully, by diplomacy and pressure, but if necessary, with international sanctions.

Iran has flouted every nuclear safeguard agreement and reneged on every commitment it has made. The International Atomic Energy Agency has documented that Iran acquired designs, equipment and facilities to produce nuclear weapons grade uranium and plutonium from the same nuclear black market that used to supply Libya, and Iran experimented with trigger material for a nuclear bomb.

I believe, Madam Secretary, we should be especially wary of the hidden traps within the seemingly attractive Russian offer to perform Iran's uranium fuel enrichment services on Russian territory. Russia has long been a lifeline to Iran's nuclear development. Russian companies have aided Iran's missile programs and may be continuing such assistance as we speak.

If Iran were to agree to Russia's offer to enrich uranium, it is expected there might be enough loopholes in the agreement for Iran

to gain vital Russian experience and technology for a covert nuclear weapons material production program on Iranian soil, and while the rest the world would be slumbering in the false belief that the Iranian nuclear crisis has been averted.

Mr. Chairman, today I want to take advantage of the opportunity of the presence of our Secretary of State to focus on Russia. This topic has many diverse implications for our diplomacy, raising challenges of enormous complexity we will have to face.

Let me preface my remarks, Mr. Chairman, by stating that I am a true friend of Russia and of the Russian people to whom I am profoundly grateful for liberating my native city of Budapest from Nazi oppression in 1945. I have traveled to Russia on countless occasions beginning in 1956, and I have a tremendous respect and admiration for the achievements of the Russian people as they shook off the chains of totalitarianism and tried to join the democratic world.

Recent events compel us to think very hard about Russia's future. Police state tactics are making a comeback. Prominent Russian businessmen and intellectuals are fighting for their very survival, facing arrest, and as we speak, prison in Siberia.

Under Putin, Russia has continued to participate in the Group of Eight industrialized democracies, and it expects to host a summit in St. Petersburg this summer. But under Putin, Russia has moved rapidly away from the democratic path of the 1990s and has moved in the direction of its authoritarian past.

Putin has taken steps to consolidate his authority by increasing pressure on opposition political parties, strengthening state control over national broadcast media, pursuing politically-driven prosecutions of independent leaders.

Putin's government has made changes to make regional governors appointed rather than elected, and the government exercises direct control over the hiring and dismissal of judges. The Parliament is no longer independent.

We have a remarkable situation where the Executive, the Judicial and the Legislative Branches and the media are basically under the control of the Kremlin. This is a long ways from the Soviet Union but it has dramatically undermined the democratic beginnings that President Yeltsin undertook.

Russia's actions vis-à-vis its neighbors, including Ukraine, Georgia and the former Soviet Republics of Central Asia and the Baltic States indicates that Russia is attempting to undermine both their democracy and their economies.

Just 2 weeks ago, the Russian military chief of staff was in Syria discussing new arms deals, including modern air defense systems.

Today, Putin's Russia offers us fresh reason to doubt its sincerity as a real player on the international stage. It has announced undercutting of the agreement of the Quartet, that it will hold talks with the terrorist group Hamas at the beginning of next month in Moscow.

By agreeing to host Hamas, Russia has shown how phony and how hollow is its attempt to make its struggle with Chechnya a part of the international war against terrorism. Putin's invitation to Hamas breaks the rules, and it is to be condemned as a cheap

and vulgar appeal to the worst elements of a fanatical and violent Islamic struggle.

We must do our utmost, Mr. Chairman, to ensure that Russia does not revert back to a regime that will become an enemy of this country. We want to be friends with Russia, we admire the Russian people, but current leadership trends in Moscow are extremely disturbing.

That is why some of us feel, Mr. Chairman, that the G-7 must reconsider Russia's participation in what has come to be called the G-8, when point in fact, only seven members of the G-8 represent industrial democracies and politically free societies. Russia is unable to meet the commitments of membership in the G-8.

Madam Secretary, I hope you will be able to enlighten us both on the subject of Iran and Russia during the course of your presentation and I look forward to your testimony. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman HYDE. Madam Secretary, it is a great pleasure to have you with us and you certainly are one witness who needs no introduction. And so please proceed with your testimony.

**STATEMENT OF THE HONORABLE CONDOLEEZZA RICE, THE
SECRETARY OF STATE, U.S. DEPARTMENT OF STATE**

Secretary RICE. Thank you very much. Thank you, Mr. Chairman, thank you Congressman Lantos. I am delighted to have an opportunity to appear before this Committee. It has been just a little over a year since I was confirmed as Secretary of State and it has been, as Congressman Lantos said, a very eventful year.

I have prepared a written testimony that I would like to enter into the record with your permission, Mr. Chairman, but I will not read it so that we don't all have to suffer through the reading of it and therefore we can have maximum time for questions. Instead, I will just make a few remarks.

Chairman HYDE. Without objection, so ordered.

Secretary RICE. We have seen monumental changes over the last year, and certainly, over the last several years since September 11th and the terrible attacks against this country. We have been engaged in a war on a group of terrorists who show no regard for innocent life, who spawn an ideology of hatred so great that they take innocent life without even thinking, whether it is the Twin Towers of New York or a wedding party, a Palestinian wedding party in Jordan, or whether it is school children in Russia, or whether it is a Metro in London.

They take innocent life not as collateral to their efforts but as the target of their efforts. And I think that we need to understand that this is a different kind of war. As a part of that war, rather, to make certain that any peace we achieve in that war will be a permanent one, the President has noted the importance of the spread of liberty and democracy as anecdotes to the ideology of hatred that we are experiencing in the world.

This is a process that we know well. It is a process that is difficult. It was difficult in this country, it was difficult in Europe, it was difficult in Asia. It is not easy to have men and women who have been accustomed to either repression or coercion as the means of settling political issues to turn instead to processes of com-

promise and cooperation, but indeed, if we are to have a more peaceful environment, that is exactly the process that we must encourage around the world.

The United States cannot, of course, impose democracy, but democracy does not have to be imposed, tyranny has to be imposed. Men and women long for liberty. We see that when we see long lines of men and women, many of them illiterate in Afghanistan, along on dusty roads, to vote for the first time in Presidential or Parliamentary elections; when we see the same in Iraq where they have voted three times in the face of terrorist threats. We see it in places like Liberia where after decades of civil war, we have just experienced elections.

I want to say one of the most heartening things I have done in recent years was to go to the inauguration of the Liberian President, who I think is going to try to bring that once proud country back to prosperity and democracy. We see it too in the troubled places like Haiti where there were elections that were largely free and fair and where there appears now to be a chance for movement forward.

It is not always a process that produces outcomes that are in accordance with our desires, but I do think we have to speak out as Americans for the process. Nonetheless, a vote, an election is not the full story. With governing comes responsibility and so what has happened in the Palestinian territories with an election for which the Palestinian people should be congratulated, an election that was free of violence, free and fair, but that brought to power Hamas, a terrorist organization that has killed thousands of innocent people in its quest.

There is now a responsibility first and foremost of the international community to make it very clear that a Palestinian Government, any Palestinian Government will have to meet international standards set out in the Quartet statement of the recognition of Israel's right to exist, disarming militias, disarming violence, because it is not possible to pursue a peaceful life for your people on the one hand in the political process and to have a foot in the camp of terrorism on the other.

And so the United States will stand strong in its determination that the next Palestinian Government will have to live up to those standards.

We have seen major changes in places like Lebanon where a government struggles to come out from under the yolk of Syrian occupation and Syrian oppression. And we just yesterday—2 days ago, we were able to commemorate the assassination of Prime Minister Rafik Hariri, and to, once again, state with the Lebanese people our desire that they should have a better, more democratic and political future in which all Lebanese are represented.

It is a difficult course and there have been setbacks along that course. I will perhaps—Congressman Lantos at some other point in the hearing address the questions about Russia. Obviously we are very concerned about issues of democracy in Russia, issues of the nongovernmental organization law, issues of freedom of the press, issues of the use of Russian gas and oil as a potential pressure point against neighbors, and it is especially important because as we try to encourage democratic development in the countries that

emerged from the Soviet Union, Russia's attitudes toward those developments is key. So we are supportive of, and working hard for, continued democratization in Ukraine, Kurdistan, Georgia, in places that have broken free and are trying to move forward.

We have other challenges as well, particularly the challenge of Iran, which is emerging, I think, as one of the great challenges for the United States, a strategic challenge for the United States and for those who desire peace and freedom. After all, Iran's policies in the world's most volatile region are policies that are destabilizing, they are policies that use terrorism and terrorist surrogates to destabilize this very volatile region.

We note in particular that the world has come together concerning Iran's ambitions for a nuclear weapon. Let me be very clear, this is not about civil nuclear energy for the Iranian people. Iran can have a civil nuclear program. The problem is that no one trusts Iran with the fuel cycle because Iran has been cheating for 18 years on its obligations under the International Atomic Energy Agency.

So we succeeded over the last year in bringing together most of the world, almost all of the world, with the exception of Iran's sidekick Syria, Venezuela, which, of course, is a challenge to democracy in our own hemisphere, and in Cuba, a country, I think, where democracy cannot be used in the same sentence with Cuba so perhaps those three in a sense belong together in their support of Iran.

But the rest of the world either supported or abstained on a resolution that has sent the Iranian dossier to the security council.

I want to assure Members of the Committee we will do everything that we can to deny Iran this course of the development of a nuclear weapon but also remind the world that this has to be understood in the context of broader Iranian policies in the region, in Lebanon, in Iraq, in the Palestinian territories. We will also remind the world that Iran is a country that is going 180 degrees in the other direction in terms of democracy for its own people. The Iranian people deserve better. This is a people who are connected to the outside world, it is a great culture, they are great people, and they deserve to be able to govern themselves.

I announced yesterday that the Administration would be seeking a supplemental appropriations; \$75 million additional funding for democracy promotion in Iran. We will have to seek some changes to our regulatory regime so we can work with nongovernmental organizations, work with human rights advocates. We will be getting back to you about that. We believe this is an important thing to do.

In that regard, I want to thank very much the House and this Committee and the sponsors of the resolution just passed on Iran. It helps us very much. Thank you for doing that because I think it helps us very much, Chairman Hyde, Congressman Lantos, Congresswoman Ros-Lehtinen, because the world can see the United States is united through both branches of its Government on this issue concerning Iran. So thank you very much for that.

Finally, let me say that there are other challenges. The United States is a country that I think recognizes now that we are not isolated from the world. That when there are countries that are poorly

governed, that there are failed states that cannot control their own borders, meet their own peoples' needs. When states become like Afghanistan, we suffer. Afghanistan became a failed state and became the home training ground for al-Qaeda, and we suffered. Not just on September 11th. We suffered with the Cole, we suffered with the Embassy bombings.

The failed state is a real threat to our peace and security. It is also a threat to us to have states that cannot sustain themselves. And so I have been working with our foreign assistance community to make some changes to the way that we in the State Department and USAID will try and align our foreign assistance to support the development of well-governed states, states that govern wisely, that fight corruption, are eligible for funding under the Millennium Challenge Account.

But even those not yet capable of Millennium Challenge compacts have to be encouraged to take responsibility for taking care of the needs of their people. We do not want foreign assistance to become a permanent dependency, we want it to be an enabler for well-governed states.

I have, therefore, under my authorities, made some changes to our foreign assistance organization. I want to say that we have a very fine foreign assistance organization. USAID is on the front lines in the promotion of democracy, in caring for the most vulnerable populations and leading our teams in humanitarian disasters. We do need better alignment, here in Washington as well as in the field of our foreign assistance priorities.

The United States wants to always remain, I think, a country that is compassionate. That is why the President has doubled official development assistance, why we have the President's emergency plan for AIDS relief, why we have the plan for malaria relief and so on.

But I know too that the American people are demanding, of all of us, good stewardship of their dollars, fiscal responsibility. I know that the American people are facing many, many priorities in this budget season. And so I want to assure you that we are trying to do everything that we can at the State Department to make certain that we are not just standing still, but rather that we are transforming ourselves to meet the challenges of the 21st century. That has meant that we have made some changes too; to the way that we are positioning our diplomacy. I have called it global repositioning. It is a bit the counterpart to the repositioning of our military forces that the Pentagon has done.

But it means that we are asking our officers to serve in places that are of growing interest to us, places like India and China and Brazil and that we are moving some people out of places where we have very fine relationships but where the demands are just different, largely in Europe.

So it has been an eventful year for the Department. I want you to know that the men and women of the State Department are some of the finest people with whom I have ever worked. They are dedicated, they are unafraid, they are on the front lines, they are working very, very hard, many times in places without their families for more than a year, places like Baghdad and Kabul. And they do it without complaint because they know that this moment in

history is a critical one and they want to be a part of this moment in history.

But I am very, very proud of the men and women of the State Department. I am very proud of what the United States is doing in the world and I am humbled to be the Secretary of State of this country. Thank you very much.

[The prepared statement of the Secretary of State follows:]

PREPARED STATEMENT OF THE HONORABLE CONDOLEEZZA RICE, THE SECRETARY OF STATE, U.S. DEPARTMENT OF STATE

Thank you, Mr. Chairman, Members of the Committee.

I appreciate this opportunity to address the Committee and to talk about America's role in meeting the unprecedented challenges of our world today. I look forward to working closely with Congress to ensure that America's diplomacy has the necessary resources to secure our interests, advance our ideals, and improve people's lives around the world. In all of these mutual efforts, of course, we must remain committed to our responsibility to be good stewards of the American taxpayers' hard-earned dollars.

The President's FY 2007 International Affairs Budget for the Department of State, USAID, and other foreign affairs agencies totals \$35.1 billion. President Bush also plans to request supplemental funding to support emergency, one-time programs that are essential to the success of some of our highest foreign policy priorities.

This money will do more than support our diplomacy; it will strengthen our national security. America today is a nation at war. We are engaged in a long conflict against terrorists and violent extremists. Across the world, the members of our Foreign Service, Civil Service, and our Foreign Service Nationals are advancing America's diplomatic mission, often working in dangerous places far away from their friends and loved ones. Our nation's men and women in uniform are also shouldering great risks and responsibilities. They are performing with courage and heroism, and many have made the ultimate sacrifice to secure our way of life. Today, I want to recognize these courageous public servants and their families, who endure long periods of service abroad and painful separation with fortitude.

America's enemies remain eager to strike us again, but our actions in the past four years have weakened their capability. Our diplomacy plays a vital role in defeating this threat. We are building partnerships with traditional allies and with new partners that share our perception of the threat. Most importantly, we are working directly with foreign citizens who wish to build thriving free societies that replace hatred with hope.

Mr. Chairman, I would now like to offer an overview of the current mission of the men and women of the State Department—a mission that we have called transformational diplomacy.

A NEW DIPLOMACY FOR A TRANSFORMED WORLD

In his Second Inaugural Address, President Bush laid out the vision that leads America into the world: "It is the policy of the United States to seek and support the growth of democratic movements and institutions in every nation and culture, with the ultimate goal of ending tyranny in our world."

The President's vision stems from the recognition that we are living in an extraordinary time, one in which centuries of international precedent are being overturned. The prospect of violent conflict among great powers is more remote than ever. States are increasingly competing and cooperating in peace, not preparing for war. Peoples in China, India, South Africa, Indonesia, and Brazil are lifting their countries and regions to new prominence. Democratic reform has begun in the Middle East. And the United States is working with our democratic partners in every region of the world, especially our hemispheric neighbors and our historic treaty allies in Europe and Asia, to build a true form of global stability: a balance of power that favors freedom.

At the same time, other challenges have assumed new urgency. The greatest threats today emerge more within states than between them, and the fundamental character of regimes matters more than the international distribution of power. It is impossible to draw neat, clear lines between our security interests, our development goals, and our democratic ideals in today's world. Our diplomacy must integrate and advance all of these goals together.

So I would define the objective of transformational diplomacy this way: To work with our many partners around the world to build and sustain democratic, well-governed states that will respond to the needs of their people and conduct themselves responsibly in the international system. This is a strategy rooted in partnership, not paternalism—in doing things with other people, not for them. We will use America’s diplomatic power and our foreign assistance to help foreign citizens better their own lives, build their own nations, transform their own futures, and work with us to combat threats to our common security, including the spread of weapons of mass destruction.

PRACTICING TRANSFORMATIONAL DIPLOMACY

Faced with such extraordinary challenges, we must transform old diplomatic institutions to serve new diplomatic purposes, and we must empower our people to practice transformational diplomacy. With the generous support of the Congress, my good friend and predecessor, Colin Powell, brought American diplomacy into the 21st century. Now, my leadership team and I are building on this strong foundation and beginning the generational work of transforming the State Department. This will not only strengthen national security, it will improve our fiscal stewardship. We are committed to using American taxpayers’ dollars in the most effective and responsible way possible to strengthen America’s mission abroad.

In the past year, we have begun making changes to our organization and our operations that will enable us to advance transformational diplomacy. We are forward-deploying our people to the cities, countries, and regions where they are needed most. We are starting to move hundreds of diplomats from Europe and Washington to strategic countries like China, India, South Africa, and Indonesia. We are giving more of our people new training and language skills to engage more effectively with foreign peoples. We are enabling our diplomats to work more jointly with America’s servicemen and women. And I have announced that I am creating a new position of Director of Foreign Assistance. This reform will transform our capability to use foreign assistance more efficiently and more effectively to further our foreign policy goals, to bolster our national security, to reduce poverty, and to improve people’s lives around the world.

We are making the initial changes using our existing authority, and the additional funding we are requesting in the FY 2007 budget will help us continue implementing our vision to transform the State Department to meet the challenges of the 21st century. For this purpose, we are requesting \$9.3 billion for State Department operations.

Transformational diplomacy begins with our people—ensuring that they are in the right places, with the necessary tools and training to carry out their mission. We are requesting \$23 million for 100 new positions on the new frontlines of our diplomacy: key transitional countries and emerging regional leaders in Africa, Latin America, the Middle East, and Asia. These new positions will complement the 100 that we are already repositioning as part of our ongoing effort to change our global diplomatic posture. This repositioning effort will require a renewed commitment to secure and modernize our many posts overseas, and we are seeking \$1.5 billion for security-related construction and rehabilitation of our diplomatic facilities.

In addition to requesting new positions, we will continue to invest in our people, our greatest resource. More and more, we are calling upon our diplomats to leave their families and serve at unaccompanied “hardship posts” that now make up 20 percent of our yearly overseas assignments. With your help, as part of our effort to modernize the Foreign Service, we will institute a new pay-for-performance system that fairly compensates our men and women working abroad. We will also further our efforts to train America’s diplomats to speak critical languages like Chinese, Urdu, and Arabic, which they will increasingly need, in addition to more traditional languages, as they progress in their careers. New training will also make full use of dynamic new technologies, and we are asking for \$276 million to integrate our workforce with the latest information technology and to support professional training needed for success.

These new tools and training will better enable our nation’s diplomats to tell America’s story to the people of the world, and in turn, to listen to the stories they have to tell. We have heard the legitimate criticisms that have been made of our public diplomacy, and we are rethinking how we do business. I have stressed that public diplomacy is the responsibility of every single member of our diplomatic corps, not just our public diplomacy specialists. One idea we are beginning to implement is the creation of forward-deployed, regional public diplomacy centers. These centers, or media hubs, will be small, lean operations that work out of our embassies or other existing facilities, enabling us to respond quickly to negative propa-

ganda, to correct misinformation, and to explain America's policies and our principles. The \$351 million that we seek will be essential for us to continue revitalizing our public diplomacy.

To complement our public diplomacy, we must ensure that America remains a welcoming place for all tourists, students, and businesspeople, while at the same time protecting our homeland from terrorists and criminals who would exploit our open society to do us harm. The State Department, in partnership with the Department of Homeland Security, has taken new steps in the past year to realize the President's vision of secure borders and open doors through information technology. Our request of \$1.1 billion will fund the Border Security Program and enable us to hire 135 new consular officers and passport staff to meet the growing demand of foreign citizens seeking to travel to America, while maintaining our fundamental commitment to serve each and every American citizen when they go abroad. At the same time, we are seeking \$474 million to support our educational and cultural exchanges, which increase mutual understanding between our citizens and the peoples of the world.

Finally, we must continue to enable our nation's diplomats to work effectively with their partners in the United Nations and other international organizations. We seek \$1.6 billion to fund U.S. assessed and voluntary contributions to international organizations. The United States takes our international obligations seriously, and we remain committed to strengthening the financial stability, efficiency, and effectiveness of international organizations.

DEFEATING TERROR AND ADVANCING LIBERTY

The President's FY 2007 budget will help prepare the men and women of the State Department to meet the goals of transformational diplomacy. Our principal objectives are to stem the tide of terrorism and to help advance freedom and democratic rights.

We are requesting \$6.2 billion to strengthen the coalition partners who are standing shoulder to shoulder with us on the front lines in the fight against terrorism. Our assistance empowers our partners to practice more effective law enforcement, police their borders, gather and share essential intelligence, and wage more successful counterterrorism operations. In many states, our assistance will also help to bolster thriving democratic and economic institutions reducing the societal schisms that terrorists exploit for their own ideological purposes. Our FY 2007 request includes, among others, \$739 million for Pakistan, \$560 million for Colombia, \$154 million for Indonesia, \$457 million for Jordan, and \$335 million for Kenya.

Essential to winning the war on terrorism is denying our enemies the weapons of mass destruction that they seek. Our diplomacy cannot focus on non-proliferation alone; we must also develop new tools and new policies of *counter*-proliferation: actively confronting and rolling up the global networks involving rogue states, outlaw scientists, and black market middlemen who make proliferation possible. We are building on the achievements of the Proliferation Security Initiative, the G-8 Global Partnership, and UN Security Council Resolution 1540. We are working to stop Iran and North Korea from succeeding in their quest for weapons of mass destruction, and we continue to do everything in our power to deny terrorists access to the world's most dangerous weapons, including threatening conventional weapons like MANPADS. The FY 2007 budget proposes to increase funding for our State Department's efforts to help countries fight the proliferation of dangerous weapons and materials.

These requirements are essential and immediate, but our vision must look beyond present horizons. To defeat the threat of terrorism, we must work to build a future of freedom and hope. As President Bush has said, in the long run, liberty and democracy are the only ideas powerful enough to defeat the ideology of hatred and violence. Freedom is on the march today all around the world, and the United States must continue to open a path for its expansion, especially in Iraq and Afghanistan.

In December, over 12 million Iraqi people voted in free elections for a democratic government based on a constitution that Iraqis themselves wrote and adopted. Through their actions, the overwhelming majority of Iraqis are demonstrating that they support freedom and oppose terrorism. The democratic government that is taking shape in Baghdad today should support human rights, foster new opportunities for prosperity, and give all Iraqis a stake in a free and peaceful future. It should separate stalwart Iraqis from the purveyors of terror and chaos. Iraq is on a track of transformation from brutal tyranny to a self-reliant emerging democracy that is working to better the lives of its people and defeat violent extremists.

Although Iraqis are undertaking this work themselves, international assistance remains essential to Iraq's success. U.S. assistance is helping Iraqis to build their

security capabilities, empowering civil society and democratic institutions, increasing and improving the production and availability of electricity, distributing millions of new textbooks, providing access to clean water for millions of Iraqis, and helping protect millions of Iraqi children from disease.

The President's request of \$771 million, along with the forthcoming supplemental request, is an essential part of our National Strategy for Victory in Iraq. The funding for the Department's operations and programs is a critical counterpart to the efforts of our troops in the field as we pursue our integrated security, economic, and political tracks to success in Iraq. The supplemental request will fund programs that are integral to our counter-insurgency campaign and to the operating and security costs of our diplomatic mission, while the FY 2007 request supports capacity development essential for Iraq's transition to self-reliance. The money requested by State will allow us to work effectively with our Iraqi partners to advance our strategy of "Clear, Hold, Build"—clearing areas of insurgent control, holding newly gained territory under the legitimate authority of the Iraqi government, and building economic infrastructure and capable national democratic institutions that are essential to Iraq's success.

Our work also continues in Afghanistan. After the United States, along with our allies and friends, removed the Taliban regime, the Afghan people set out to liberate themselves. They did so with the international community by their side. And today, the Afghan people have achieved the ambitious vision that we all set together four years ago in Bonn, Germany: a fully functioning, sovereign Afghan government. This government was established through successful presidential and parliamentary elections, in which millions of men and women voted freely for the first time. Today, Afghanistan has a democratic constitution; an emerging free economy; and a growing, multi-ethnic army that is the pride of the Afghan people.

Despite this dramatic progress, there is still much hard work to be done. President Bush's request of \$1.1 billion for Afghan reconstruction, along with supplemental funding to be requested, will allow us to continue helping the people of Afghanistan meet the remaining political, economic, and security challenges they face. With your continued support, along with help from NATO, the United Nations, and all other contributors from the international community, we can help the Afghan people complete their long journey toward a future of hope and freedom.

The people of Iraq and Afghanistan are helping to lead the transformation of the Broader Middle East from despotism to democracy. This is a generational challenge, in which elections are an important and necessary beginning. The freedom to choose invests citizens in the future of their countries. But as President Bush has said, one election does not establish a country as a democracy. Successful democracies are characterized by transparent, accountable institutions of governance; a thriving civil society that respects and protects minority rights; a free media; opportunities for health and education for all citizens; and the official renunciation of terrorism and ideologies of hatred. On this last point especially, we will continue to insist that the leaders of Hamas must recognize Israel, disarm, reject terrorism, and work for lasting peace. Helping the nations of the Broader Middle East to make progress in building the foundations of democratic societies is the mission of the Middle East Partnership Initiative, for which we are seeking \$120 million. We are also requesting \$80 million for the National Endowment for Democracy to continue its good work in promoting lasting democratic change all around the world.

The progress of the Broader Middle East is hopeful, but it still faces determined enemies, especially the radical regime in Tehran. Iran is a strategic challenge to the United States, and we have a comprehensive view of the threat that Iran poses. The regime is seeking to develop nuclear weapons. It is a leading state sponsor of terrorism. It is working to destabilize its region and to advance its ideological ambitions. And the Iranian government oppresses its own people, denying them basic liberties and human rights. Through its aggressive and confrontational behavior, Iran is increasingly isolating itself from the international community.

In recent months, U.S. diplomacy has broadened the international coalition to address Iran's nuclear ambitions, and Iran's case will soon be heard in the U.N. Security Council. Our goal now is to broaden this coalition even further, to intensify the international spotlight and encourage our many international partners to respond to the full spectrum of threats that the Iranian regime poses.

For our part, the United States wishes to reach out to the Iranian people and support their desire to realize their own freedom and to secure their own democratic and human rights. The Iranian people should know that the United States fully supports their aspirations for a freer, better future. Over the past two years, the Department of State has invested over \$4 million in projects that empower Iranian citizens in their call for political and economic liberty, freedom of speech, and respect for human rights. We are funding programs that train labor activists and help

protect them from government persecution. We are working with international NGOs to develop a support network for Iranian reformers, political dissidents, and human rights activists. We will devote at least \$10 million to support these and other programs during this year (FY 2006), and we are eager to work more closely with Congress to help Iranian reformers build nationwide networks to support democratic change in their country.

MEETING GLOBAL CHALLENGES

Like terrorism and nuclear proliferation, many of the greatest challenges in today's world are global and transnational in nature. These threats breach even the most well-defended borders and affect all nations. Today's global threats require global partnerships, and America's diplomats are helping us transform our relationships with countries that have the capacity and the will to work on a global basis to achieve common purposes—countries like India, Japan, South Korea, Australia, El Salvador, and our allies in Europe.

One major global threat comes from disease, especially the scourge of HIV/AIDS. This pandemic affects key productive members of societies: the individuals who drive economies, raise children, and pass on the customs and traditions of their countries. The United States is committed to treating people worldwide who suffer from AIDS because conscience demands it, and also because a healthier world is a safer world. The hallmark of our approach is the President's Emergency Plan for AIDS Relief. This program is the largest international initiative ever by one nation to combat a single disease. The Emergency Plan combines our strong bilateral programs with complementary multilateral efforts to fight AIDS and other debilitating infectious diseases through contributions to the Global Fund to Fight AIDS, Tuberculosis, and Malaria, of which America is by far the largest contributor since the program's inception.

The Emergency Plan is rooted in partnership. Our approach is to empower each nation to take ownership of its own fight against HIV/AIDS through prevention, treatment, and care. The results to date have been remarkable. In the past two years, the Emergency Plan has expanded life-extending antiretroviral treatment to 471,000 people worldwide, 400,000 of whom are located in sub-Saharan Africa. And as of last year, the Emergency Plan has extended compassion and care to more than 1.2 million orphans and vulnerable children. The President's 2007 Budget requests \$4 billion, \$740 million more than this year, to continue America's leadership in the global fight against HIV/AIDS.

The 2007 budget also includes \$225 million to fight malaria, which is a major killer of children in sub-Saharan Africa. This request is part of the President's pledge to increase U.S. funding of malaria prevention and treatment by more than \$1.2 billion over five years. The United States is committed to working with the international community to increase preventive and curative programs in 15 African countries with particularly high rates of infection by 2010. We seek to reduce malaria deaths by 50 percent in these countries after three years of full implementation.

The United States is also playing a key global role in preparing for the threat of a possible avian influenza pandemic—providing political leadership, technical expertise, and significant resources to this effort. In September 2005, President Bush announced the International Partnership on Avian and Pandemic Influenza. The Partnership, which includes 89 countries and nine international organizations, generates political momentum and coordinating action among all partners. At the January 2006 International Pledging Conference on Avian and Pandemic Influenza held in Beijing, the United States pledged \$334 million in current budget authority to protect health in the United States and around the world. The most effective way to protect the American population from an influenza outbreak is to contain it beyond our borders. The 2007 Budget provides resources to continue these activities in countries already experiencing outbreaks of influenza and in other countries on the cusp of infection.

Another key global challenge is to curtail the illicit drug trade and to dissolve the relationships between narco-traffickers, terrorists, and international criminal organizations. The 2007 Budget requests \$722 million for the Andean Counterdrug Initiative, which advances the President's goal of strengthening democracy, regional stability, and economic development throughout the hemisphere. The Initiative provides funding for law enforcement, security programs, and alternative livelihood assistance for those at risk from the trade of illicit narcotics.

Finally, as we transform our diplomacy to meet the increasingly global challenges of the 21st century, the United States remains committed to putting the power of our compassion into action wherever and whenever it is needed. In 2005, the United

States led the world with our generous emergency responses to people suffering from unprecedented natural disasters—from the Indian Ocean tsunami, to the earthquake in Pakistan, to the mudslides in Central America. Our swift action has helped to provide relief, to prevent the spread of disease, and to begin restoring livelihoods and rebuilding these devastated regions. The United States remains the world's most generous provider of food and other emergency humanitarian assistance. Throughout the world, we are also helping refugees to return to their countries of origin. When that is not a viable option, the United States leads the international community in resettling refugees here in our nation. The FY 2007 request of \$1.2 billion for humanitarian relief, plus \$1.3 billion in food aid, will ensure that we are prepared to extend the reach of American compassion anywhere in the world.

THREE GOALS OF U.S. FOREIGN ASSISTANCE

The United States will continue to build strong partnerships to meet the global challenges that increasingly define international security in the 21st century. But we recognize that many states cannot meet the basic responsibilities of sovereignty, including just and effective control over their own territory. In response, the United States must assist the world's most vulnerable populations through our transformational diplomacy—using our foreign assistance and working with our partners to build state capacity where little exists, help weak and poorly governed states to develop and reform, and empower those states that are embracing political and economic freedom. These are three main goals of our country assistance programs, with the ultimate purpose being “graduation” from foreign economic and governance assistance altogether. Vibrant private sectors in free, well-governed states are the surer form of sustainable development.

Building State Capacity

We must do all we can to anticipate and prevent the emergence of failed states that lead to humanitarian crises, serious regional instability, and havens for terror and oppression that threaten our security. On September 11, we were attacked by terrorists who had plotted and trained in a failed state, Afghanistan. Since then, we have spent billions of dollars and sacrificed precious lives to eliminate the threat and liberate the brutally repressed people of Afghanistan. We must use all the tools and resources available not only to prevent future failed states, but to help nations emerging from conflict and war to become responsible, democratic states.

The Office of the Coordinator for Reconstruction and Stabilization was established to address complex and challenging situations around the globe. Partnering with the international community, we will help countries in crisis achieve a path to lasting peace, good governance, and economic development. Working in conjunction with our lead regional bureaus, our Reconstruction and Stabilization office is already beginning to advance this mission in the field. It deployed a team to Sudan to assess the effectiveness of our assistance programs in implementing the Comprehensive Peace Agreement, in negotiating a political settlement in Darfur, in delivering humanitarian assistance, and in establishing security. As a result of these assessments and planning efforts, U.S. resources have been allocated more effectively to help people in need in Sudan. Our office has also helped the Haitian people take a decisive step toward a better future, pinpointing problems with voter registration and the electoral council in time for them to be remedied before last week's historic elections.

The 2007 Budget proposes to strengthen this office's ability to lead U.S. planning efforts for countries and regions of most concern, and to coordinate the deployment of U.S. resources when needed. The Budget proposes \$75 million, including a Conflict Response Fund to build our civilian response capabilities, to prevent failing states, and to respond quickly and effectively to states emerging from conflict around the world. With an early and effective civilian response, we can reduce the need for a more robust and costly military commitment by more quickly shifting responsibility for key functions to civilian actors.

Our efforts to build state capacity continue in Sudan. The need for security is of the utmost importance to this effort, and the Comprehensive Peace Accord (CPA) points the way forward. The CPA, which ended 22 years of North-South civil war in Sudan, is the framework for resolution of conflict throughout Sudan. The CPA created a Government of National Unity that shares power and wealth, and establishes elections at every level by 2009.

Implementing the CPA is essential to ending the genocide in Darfur. The United States is appalled by the ongoing atrocities that have persisted in Darfur, and we continue to lead the ongoing international effort to aid the region's displaced people, assisting over 1.8 million internally-displaced persons and over 200,000 Sudanese

refugees in Chad. I ask for your full support of the President's upcoming supplemental request, which will include support for the African Union and for transition to a UN Peacekeeping Mission to bring peace to this war-torn area. We are requesting \$1.1 billion in the FY 2007 budget to transition to peace in Sudan, meet humanitarian needs, lay the foundations for economic development, and strengthen sustainable democratic institutions.

We are also continuing to partner with the people of Haiti to advance the cause of freedom and build lasting foundations of a democratic state. Just last week, the people of Haiti held fair and free elections. We now look forward to working with the citizens of Haiti, their newly elected government, and the international community to help Haiti chart a positive path of freedom and prosperity by strengthening good governance, improving security and the rule of law, fostering economic recovery, and addressing critical humanitarian needs.

As is evident by the hard work and sacrifice of the UN peacekeepers in Haiti, international peacekeeping missions carried out by the United Nations and partner organizations are essential to creating the secure conditions conducive for democratic elections and basic state capacity. The \$1.3 billion request for these efforts worldwide is also crucial to facilitating the delivery of humanitarian relief and providing a stable political and economic environment that fosters democratic institutions and development. To continue to provide well-trained, effective peacekeepers that understand and respect human rights, I am requesting over \$100 million for the third year of the Global Peace Operations Initiative to train and equip 75,000 troops by 2010. Current missions and capacity building efforts increase our security at home and provide relief to the heroic troops in our own armed forces.

Helping Developing States and the Most Vulnerable Populations

Where the basic foundations of security, governance, and economic institutions exist, the United States is advancing bold development goals. Under President Bush, the United States has embarked on the most ambitious development agenda since the Marshall Plan, including a new debt relief initiative, the doubling of Official Development Assistance since taking office, and funding for the international financial institutions that is linked to performance. Development is an integral pillar of our foreign policy. In 2002, for the first time, the President's National Security Strategy elevated development to the level of diplomacy and defense, citing it as the third key component of our national security. States that govern justly, invest in their people, and create the conditions for individual and collective prosperity are less likely to produce or harbor terrorists. American diplomacy must advance these development principles.

U.S. development assistance focuses on building the tools for democratic participation, promoting economic growth, providing for health and education, and addressing security concerns in developing nations, while at the same time responding to humanitarian disasters. Such investments are crucial to improving the lives of people around the world and enhancing our own national security. At the same time, we must invest in reform in countries so that these efforts will not go to waste, but provide both the necessary tools and the right incentives for host governments to secure the conditions necessary for their citizens to achieve their full potential.

Relieving the burden of heavily indebted countries is essential to ending a destabilizing lend-and-forgive approach to development assistance for poorer countries and allowing these countries to progress on the road to prosperity. At the Gleneagles summit last July, the G-8 agreed on a landmark initiative to provide 100 percent cancellation of qualifying Heavily Indebted Poor Countries' debt obligations to the World Bank, the African Development Bank, and the International Monetary Fund. U.S. leadership was instrumental in securing this agreement. We estimate that a total of 42 countries will receive up to \$60 billion in debt relief as a result of this initiative. The Budget that I present to you today fully supports the U.S. share of the multilateral debt forgiveness provided by the G-8 proposal.

The United States and our G-8 partners went much further than relieving debt. I ask you to go much further as well and support our government's commitment for the most ambitious package for Africa ever supported by the G-8. This package will fight malaria, HIV/AIDS, and corruption and help create an environment where democracy and economic opportunity can flourish. Specifically, the 2007 Budget supports the President's commitment to double our assistance to Africa between 2004 and 2010. In addition, the request supports the U.S. Government's commitment to help African countries to build trade capacity; to educate their citizens through the four year, \$400 million Africa Education Initiative; and to combat sexual violence and abuse against women through a new Women's Justice and Empowerment Initiative.

Although Africa is a focus of our efforts to reduce poverty and invest in people and reform, it is by no means the only continent on which our resources are directed. We seek a total of \$2.7 billion for Development Assistance and Child Survival and Health funds. By investing in the citizens of developing countries, we are investing in the future of the American people.

Empowering Transformational States

The final goal of our country assistance programs is to empower those states that are governing justly and to help them address key constraints to their economic growth and poverty reduction. The flagship of our efforts is the Millennium Challenge Account, which is helping states that are making measurable progress to achieve sustainable development and integration into the global economy.

In 2002, in Monterrey, Mexico, the nations of the world adopted a new consensus on how to reduce international poverty. Developed nations agreed to dramatically increase their amount of assistance to developing countries, and developing countries committed to making progress toward good governance, economic freedom, and an investment in the health and education of their people. In response to this Monterrey Consensus, our Administration and the Congress created the revolutionary Millennium Challenge Account, which targets billions of dollars in new development assistance to countries that meet benchmarks of political, economic, and social development. This innovative approach partners with and invests in low and lower-middle income countries that take ownership for their own sustainable development and poverty reduction.

In the past year, we have accelerated our efforts to negotiate and sign development compacts between transformational countries and the Millennium Challenge Corporation. To date, the MCC has identified 23 countries eligible for development compacts, and we have approved compacts worth a total of \$1.5 billion with eight countries: Armenia, Benin, Cape Verde, Georgia, Honduras, Madagascar, Nicaragua, and Vanuatu. Nine eligible countries have prepared proposals totaling \$3.1 billion, and another six will soon submit proposals of their own. We are seeking \$3 billion of new funding in the FY 2007 budget, with the goal of approving up to 10 new compacts.

As important as our foreign assistance is, free trade is ultimately the key to every country's sustained development and economic growth. As the President stressed in the State of the Union, promotion of free trade is essential to enhancing the prosperity of the American people and to supporting developing countries in their effort to participate fully in the global economy. The Bush Administration has signed or negotiated free trade agreements with Chile, Singapore, Jordan, Bahrain, Oman, Morocco, Australia, five Central American countries plus the Dominican Republic, and most recently, Peru. Fostering free trade is a vital part of our development policy. In the past five years, the United States has more than doubled our investment in helping developing countries to trade freely and competitively in the global economy. We pledged at the recent WTO ministerial in Hong Kong to increase this assistance to \$2.7 billion by 2010, and our FY 2007 request for trade-related development assistance will be an important step toward that ambitious and hopeful goal.

Mr. Chairman: America's purpose in this young century is to marry our democratic principles with our dramatic power to build a more hopeful world. Our purposes are idealistic, that is true; but our policies are realistic, and we are succeeding. President Bush and I have called upon the men and women of the State Department to practice transformational diplomacy, and they are rising to this challenge with enthusiasm and courage. They are helping our many partners around the world to build a future of freedom, democracy, and hope for themselves and their families.

Realizing the goals of transformational diplomacy will require a sustained effort over the course of a generation. Most importantly, it will require a strong partnership with the Congress. We at the Department of State will do our part to use our existing authority to make our foreign assistance more effective and to enhance our ability to serve as responsible stewards of the American taxpayers' money. Our goal in establishing the new position of Director of Foreign Assistance is a first step. We welcome a dialogue with Congress about how we can work together to improve America's foreign assistance further, enabling us to respond more quickly and more effectively to the world's development challenges. By making America's foreign assistance more efficient and more effective, we will help people around the world to improve their lives, we will strengthen the hope that comes with freedom, and we will advance our national security.

Chairman HYDE. Thank you, Madam Secretary. We will now take motions to strike the last word for 5 minutes.

Mr. Lantos.

Mr. LANTOS. Thank you much, Mr. Chairman.

Soon, Madam Secretary, we will be revisiting the Iran-Libya Sanctions Act, and because of your extremely carefully, calibrated policy it will no longer encompass Libya because Libya has moved in a very desirable direction, given up its weapons of mass destruction, and is moving toward normalized relations with us. But we will have Iran very much on our agenda.

And I would like to ask you to sort of project for us the future of the Kabuki Dance in which Iran and the civilized world is engaged in. We had great success at Vienna, a very strong vote, but we are a long ways from Iran's compliance with the demands of the civilized community.

I would be grateful if you can comment on what your plans are with respect to future United States policy toward Iran. And in this connection, if I may, it seems to some of us that the extremely promising UN investigation of the assassination of the late Prime Minister of Lebanon has slowed down in recent times. Syria is attempting to escape its clear cut responsibility for that odious mass murder which resulted in the death of a couple of dozen people. I would like to ask you what you plan to do to reinvigorate that investigation.

Secretary RICE. Thank you, Congressman Lantos. First of all, on the ILSA. We recognize that it will come up for reauthorization in the summer. There is a lot that could happen between now and then, and right now we are working very hard to maintain the strongest possible coalition so that Iran gets the right message. But as I said to Senate Foreign Relations yesterday, I do not underestimate the challenge that we have in getting robust action should Iran continue to defy the international community when we go into the security council.

There are many different interests that will be represented there by many different countries, and we will have to work very hard to get robust measures. I am nonetheless—I am not pessimistic about it because Iranians are doing nothing but defy. They are giving really no reason to believe that they are going to live up to the just demands of the international community.

So I would like to continue to work with our close friends and with others in the international community. I think we should not jump to the conclusion as to what kinds of sanctions might be appropriate. I think we ought to look at the effect on the international community, but also on what would be most effective on the Iranian regime, hopefully not hurting the Iranian people with whom we have no quarrel. I would hope that we would also look frankly at what we might be able to do as like minded states. If we cannot get everyone to agree, there may be some measures that like minded states can take that will still have a significant effect on the Iranian economy.

It is also the case that just the fact that the Iranians are in the Security Council and behaving in this way is already costing the Iranian economy in terms of capital flight. A number of banks have pulled out because of reputational risks. I think as this continues, you will see more of that. And Iran, I do not believe, can endure the kind of international isolation that for instance North Korea

endures because it is a state that, in some sense, thrives on its own isolation. Iran is a very different country, with trading relations, with a population that travels, with a leadership that travels.

And so I think we will look at all the tools but I would like to reserve how we might go about improving ILSA, and you are right and thank you for your very nice comments about Libya, but you, too, Congressman Lantos, have worked hard at that relationship and we have gotten some very good forward movement.

Let me just, on the investigation, we have had the transfer of responsibility from Mr. Mellice to Mr. Bromitz. It has taken, as you might imagine, when that happens, things do slow down as the new investigator gets up to speed. But those who have met him say that he is a serious investigator, he is tough-minded. We will need, I really do believe, to go back to the Security Council at some time in the not too distant future to get a report on what is happening with Syrian cooperation, because the resolution demanded full and complete Syrian cooperation. I don't believe that we have gotten that, and I think we will have to go back and, at least, take stock of where we are.

We have, as you know, taken advantage of another Congressional tool, the Syrian Accountability Act, to designate some further Syrian personalities who have been involved in one way or another in the investigation. And so we are not sitting still, but I think you are right, Congressman, we are going to need to really reenergize that and I think once we have given Investigator Bromitz a little time to get up to speed, we probably want to go back to the Security Council.

Mr. LANTOS. Thank you, Madam Secretary.

Chairman HYDE. Mr. Leach of Iowa.

Mr. LEACH. I would like to turn to another part of the world, that being North Korea. As you know in the context of six party talks last September, the North Koreans agreed to dissolve their nuclear program, except the MPT and accept IAEA safeguards. Since then, little progress has been made and so one of the questions is do we have new plans for Six-Party reinvigoration, do we have any plans for alternative approaches that might supplement the six party talks. For example, there has been discussion of the possibility of a joint United States-South Korean initiative to bring a formal end to the Korean War.

So my query to you is, where do you see the future of the Six-Party Talks? Are you considering supplemental initiatives that could involve the Executive Department people visiting North Korea, and are we at a stand-still, or is there light at the end of the tunnel?

Secretary RICE. Well, thank you, Congressman Leach. We have been very active with the Chinese and with others in being very clear that we are prepared at any time with no conditions to go back to the 6 party talks. In fact, Secretary Chris Hill met with his counterpart in Beijing last month, because the Chinese believed that this might be helpful in pushing the North Koreans back to the talks. The North Koreans have focused on the fact that the United States has been pursuing defensive measures to deal with illicit North Korean activities, for instance, the counterfeiting of

our money, which we are going to have to pursue whether we are in Six-Party Talks or not.

It is simply the responsibility of the United States Government to pursue these measures if someone is trying to counterfeit our currency. And I think, actually, the North Koreans are getting very little traction with the other states with the argument that that is the reason they won't go back to the Six-Party Talks.

We are ready to go back at any time. We have heard mixed messages from the North Koreans on this. It is my hope they are ready to go back, and ready to go back seriously to discuss what was in, I think, a very good statement out of the September meetings that gives a way ahead, not just on the nuclear issue, although the nuclear issue remains the center, but on a variety of other parts of the dialog that could begin. If you remember, the statement of principles talked about other kinds of issues that might be addressed as well.

We are more than ready to do that. At this point our conversations are principally with our other interlocutors, South Korea, Japan, China and, to a certain extent, Russia. But it is our hope that the Chinese, in particular, are going to be able to convince the North Koreans that it is time to come back to the talks and to come back seriously. We are ready.

Mr. LEACH. Thank you, Madam. Yield.

Chairman HYDE. Mr. Ackerman of New York.

Mr. ACKERMAN. Good to see you again, Madam Secretary. Thank you for your good work. Madam Secretary, on February 1, President Bush was asked if the United States would defend Israel militarily, a very specific question, not in general, but militarily. And the President answered rather unambiguously, "You bet we'll defend Israel, period."

That was crystal clear, very understandable. I take the President at his word and think that he was entirely profound and justified. Unfortunately, the next day, the *Washington Post* reported that White House staff were suggesting that that is really not what the President meant to say and that his statement should have been no different from previous comments that we are committed to "the security of Israel as a vibrant Jewish state and we are committed to the safety of Israel." There is a world of difference between the two positions.

I would like to ask a very simple question. Will the United States defend Israel militarily? Before you answer, and I know there is a lot of temptation, I think that the only answer that is clearly understandable is yes, period. Less than that, an answer with an explanation is really a watered-down version of what we thought was a clear and unmistakable policy.

Secretary RICE. Well, thank you. First of all, let me just say that the President was speaking, of course, for the United States and our complete and total commitment to the existence and prosperity of Israel as a Jewish state. That is longstanding American policy. That has not changed. We have with Israel always recognized that Israel believes first and foremost that it must be capable of defending itself and that its defense is the responsibility of the Israeli Government, to the Israeli people. That is why we have had strong defense relationships, strong support for Israeli military programs,

strong cooperation, for instance, in missile defense on the Arrow system, and a strong commitment to make certain that Israel can carry out its obligation to its people to defend itself.

We also, with Israel, this President, in particular, has defended, I think without reservation, the right of Israelis to defend themselves, particularly against terrorism, which they have experienced at so many times. But I think that what you are saying, Congressman Ackerman, is that what the President is stating is that we are totally and completely committed to Israel as a Jewish state to its existence, to its continuance, to its prosperity, and that we will stand by our ally.

Mr. ACKERMAN. So there is no, "Yes, period"?

Secretary RICE. Congressman, I think I have stated it best. The President has stated it. We are going to——

Mr. ACKERMAN. The President said, "You bet." So I will ask you, will you say, "You bet"?

Secretary RICE. When the President says, "You bet," he means it.

Mr. ACKERMAN. The White House said something else, and you didn't repeat what he said.

Secretary RICE. When the President says, "You bet," by the way, he is the one who matters, he means it.

Mr. ACKERMAN. He is not the one we have the ability to talk to right now.

Secretary RICE. Congressman——

Mr. ACKERMAN. I am sure the President means it, but there is an awful lot of people interpreting for him after he says what he means.

Secretary RICE. Congressman, my point is when the President says it, he means it. The way that we discharge our duty and responsibility to Israel, because the Israelis themselves say it, is that Israel——

Mr. ACKERMAN. I want to go to a different question. Maybe I will get more of a slam dunk answer or something. It is a question about the legitimacy of Hamas, of which there is probably a thousand different questions on what our policy is. First, the Palestinian Authority derives its legitimacy out of a contrived process called the Oslo Agreement, in which there was an exchange of letters signed by the authority and Israelis which mutually recognized each other and each other's right to exist. That is the document that gave status to the Palestinian Authority.

There has been a change or in the midst of a process of change in the government in the Palestinian Authority. The very fact that Hamas becomes the Government of the Palestinian Authority violates the Oslo agreement because it is an organization, a terrorist organization, according to you, according to us, according to the Europeans, a terrorist organization, and therefore, from the outset, by agreement, should not have been allowed to participate in the election. My first question goes to why did——

Chairman HYDE. The gentleman's time has expired.

Mr. ACKERMAN. Mr. Chairman, I have waited 2 minutes less than an hour to ask the question.

Chairman HYDE. Everybody has to be treated the same.

Mr. ACKERMAN. Mr. Chairman.

Chairman HYDE. Mr. Ackerman.

Mr. ACKERMAN. I would note for the record that we usually have a clock that indicates when we have a minute left. I don't know if I was given 5 minutes or 1 minute or 2 minutes.

Chairman HYDE. Take my word for it, your time expired.

Mr. ACKERMAN. It might be there but my vision is impaired by something that is covering it because none of us can see it.

Chairman HYDE. Without objection, the gentleman is granted 2 additional minutes.

Mr. ACKERMAN. I thank the Chair.

Chairman HYDE. I hope he can finish then.

Mr. ACKERMAN. Mr. Chairman, I can and I do appreciate that, but these are key questions and we get very little time to talk to the Secretary and we benefit greatly from the leadership on both sides making statements, but the membership would like to ask questions. My question is Hamas. Why did we pressure the Israelis to allow them to participate in the election in complete contravention of the agreement that the Palestinians had that terrorist organizations such as Hamas would not be allowed to participate.

And inasmuch as they are now the government, what do we do about it? Your statement that the leaders of Hamas—and I am quoting from your statement—“must recognize Israel, disarm, reject terrorism and work for lasting peace.” Or what? Do we recognize them now? Do we deal with them? It is our policy not to deal with terrorist organizations. Do we give them legitimate status because they were elected without any mechanical flaws to the process?

Secretary RICE. Our policy is very clear on this. First of all, the Palestinians wanted to have an election in which all Palestinians could participate, and we supported that decision, the understanding being and if you look back at the Quartet statement prior to the election—

Mr. ACKERMAN. Was that a mistake?

Secretary RICE. I believe it was important for the Palestinians to have their election in a way that they believed legitimate. We, however, say and believe that Hamas is a terrorist organization and no, we will not deal with a terrorist organization. We will not fund a terrorist organization. We will make certain that we do everything that we can to work with the international community so that others do not fund a terrorist organization. And I believe that Hamas has come to the point that it has to make a choice. If it is going to govern and reach the aspirations of the Palestinian people for a peaceful life, it can't, on the one hand, say that it wants to have a partner in peace, and on the other hand, that partner doesn't have a right to exist.

Mr. ACKERMAN. Must they change their charter?

Secretary RICE. They must recognize Israel and Israel's right to exist, which is the core of their charter.

Chairman HYDE. Mr. Burton from Indiana.

Mr. BURTON. Mr. Chairman, I would like to preface my remarks by saying I hope that you will show the same kind of deference to all the other Members that you just showed to Mr. Ackerman.

Mr. ACKERMAN. I hope so.

Mr. BURTON. Mr. Ackerman traditionally goes 2 or 3 minutes longer than the rest of us. And I think it is unfortunate that the Chair continues to give him that privilege.

Now let me just ask a couple of questions real quickly. First of all, I think you're a great Secretary of State, and second, I would like to bring your attention back to the western hemisphere if I might. I have two questions, and I will let you answer those questions together.

First of all, President Chavez of Venezuela, who has been a problem for some time, who is getting \$100 million a day in oil revenues and has about \$3 billion in reserves, \$60 billion of that coming from the United States, has reached out evidently to Iran, and the head of their Parliament is coming over or is there now for a visit. And Cuba, Nicaragua—Hamas, he is allegedly going to give \$50 million to Hamas. We just heard a discussion about that. It is a known terrorist organization.

And I would just like to know what the Administration is going to do and is doing to deal with President Chavez and give us some guidance on how you think the Congress should address this very severe issue.

He is allegedly spreading money all over the place down there. I talked to a number of Presidents in various countries in Central and South America that are very concerned about his influencing the elective process in those countries. And so I would like to get your take on that.

The second thing I would like to say, we met with President Uribe yesterday of Colombia, and we talked to him on a number of issues. But one of the issues that was of most concern to him was the war against drugs.

He was also concerned about the Free Trade Agreement, which I won't get into right now, but nevertheless, he was concerned about the war against drugs. They have lost 22 aircraft over the last year, and they need those in order to continue their effective fight against narcotics trafficking. They have done an outstanding job so far under his leadership. But they need the tools with which to continue the fight. Their budget, the Administration's budget this year is cutting the interdiction, drug interdiction, moneys by about \$11 billion. And I was wondering if the Administration would reconsider that in a supplemental or something, because most of us feel the war against drugs is so very important and vital not only to the security of the United States but to the well-being of a lot of our kids.

So if you could answer those two questions, I would really appreciate it. And Mr. Chairman, I want you to know, I got all those questions done in 3 minutes. I didn't need 7 or 8.

Chairman HYDE. It was a remarkable performance.

Secretary RICE. Congressman Burton, first of all, Latin America, the western hemisphere is our neighborhood. And it is essentially important that we have a safe and secure neighborhood and one where democratic progress is continuing, and I think it is fair to say that one of the biggest problems we face in that regard, are the policies of Venezuela, which, as you rightly say, are attempting to influence neighbors away from democratic processes.

We are doing a couple of things. One is that we are working with others to try and make certain that there is a kind of united front against some of the kinds of things that Venezuela gets involved in. Frankly, one of the problems that we face is that you have a bit of a relationship or quite a relationship between Cuba and Venezuela at this point, which I think is a particular danger to the region.

We have noted—for instance, I will give you an example of what I will call this inoculation strategy. In Nicaragua, it was very clear that support for Daniel Ortega, lining up with Aleman, was producing a situation in which the democratically elected Government of Nicaragua could not function and the fingerprints of others were on that situation.

Bob Zoellick went to Nicaragua. We took some steps against some of the figures there with financial freezes and visa denials. And I think we have helped to begin to turn that situation around. It is not yet stable. But we have begun to turn it around. So sometimes, with us or with the OAS, it is intervening very directly to try to help a democratic government stabilize itself against that sort of outside pressure.

Sometimes it is the Organization of American States helping in that process. And I think we do have a very good person in Mr. Insulza there who is an active secretary general of the Organization of American States in trying to create that.

The best thing that we can do is to have an alternative, though, for these places that are vulnerable to this kind of particular brand of Latin American populism that has taken democratic states down the drain before.

And so, when we were able to pass the Central American Free Trade Agreement, I think it made a huge difference to the stabilization of Central America. And hopefully we can continue and get free trade agreements with the Andean nations we are now working with, Peru, Colombia and others.

Trade assistance, caring about the poor, the message has been a little bit sometimes just growth, not about the concerns of the poor, and so we are working to retool some of our programs to deal with the most vulnerable in health and education.

I think these are answers to the Venezuelan Government. That and working with responsible governments, even responsible governments of the left, like the Brazilian Government or the Chilean Government, to try and counter these influences. We also have to raise the profile on some of the things that are going on in Venezuela. This kangaroo trial of Sumate is a disgrace. And just a couple of days ago, I was on the telephone with my European Union counterpart, the foreign minister of Austria, with the Spanish foreign minister, with the Brazilian foreign minister, saying, you really have to pay attention to what is going on here. We have to expose what is going on here. And indeed the European Union now has observers in that trial. I think we just have to let the world know what is going on.

It has been useful that there is international support for this truckers union strike that is going on in Venezuela where I think labor could play—international labor—could play a role in exposing the pressures on free trade, union movements in the way that

international labor did with solidarity in Poland. There are now people in Venezuela who need that help. So the international community has just got to be much more active in supporting and defending the Venezuelan people.

Finally, as to Colombia, I know that we have had some small cuts. We do not believe that it will undermine the interdiction program that we are—that we have anticipated for Colombia. We work very closely with them. We are even in the process now of moving on to what the follow on to plan Colombia will be so that we don't have a gap and so that we stabilize what, as you say, is a good, success story for what the Colombians have been doing.

Obviously, it is a tough budget year. We have had to make some—but we really do believe that this is a program that is adequate to the task.

Chairman HYDE. Mr. Faleomavaega of American Samoa.

Mr. FALEOMAVAEGA. Madam Secretary, I want to take you to the Pacific now. I just have two issues. I only have 5 minutes. And I will not even expect a response from you so all I need is a big yes nod that you are in a position to make the decision and dispense with these two issues very clearly and precisely, and I hope you will bear with me.

Madam Secretary, I have approximately 20,000 United States citizens, United States nationals, living in my district who are married to citizens from other countries, the Independent State of Samoa. While citizen nationals enjoy unlimited right to travel to and from the United States, their spouses are not. I understand that it is a law that the visa applications apply—appear for both interview and biometrics in order to apply for a visa. My constituents and their spouses are burdened with a 3,400-mile, 7-hour flight to and from Auckland, New Zealand, and an air fair that averages over \$1,500 with hotel expenses. And given these restrictions, it is more frustrating there is no guarantee whether that visa will be issued. It is my understanding, Madam Secretary, that we do have an Embassy in Apia, Samoa, that has been fully equipped to secure the necessary documentation as far as properly processing visa applications. And I would really appreciate your assistance in allowing an officer from our consular office out of Auckland, New Zealand, to come to Papua Samoa and to process the visa applications. And you can well understand and appreciate the burdensome—the financial burden it is causing my little district out there in the Pacific.

Issue number two: Last week, a frontpage headline of the *Washington Post* stated, and I quote, “A lost world in Indonesia yields riches for scientists.” This frontpage article was about the discovery of an unknown region of rare plants, flowers and animals recently discovered in the province of West Papua New Guinea as part of Indonesia. Media outlets throughout the world were eager to give media coverage to this new discovery. No doubt this was an exciting scientific discovery in West Papua New Guinea. But I am deeply saddened, Madam Secretary, that the newly discovered plants and animals of West Papua New Guinea could be worthy of frontpage news and yet the plight and suffering of the indigenous people of West Papua New Guinea was totally ignored. The people of West Papua New Guinea, Madam Secretary, have struggled for

some 40 years to seek their right of self determination from Indonesia's brutal military rule. Yet their gut-wrenching cause rarely receives a note from our own Government, its former colonial ruler the Dutch, Australia, New Zealand and other Pacific and European domestic nations.

Only a few weeks ago, Madam Secretary, on January 17, 43 West Papuan, seven of them are children, arrived on the shores of Australia to seek asylum. They had left their homes in West Papua New Guinea and sailed some 2,200 miles during a monsoon season in a small open boat; 43 Papuans fled a rapidly deteriorating human rights environment where the Indonesian military has committed human rights abuses and atrocities against the people of West Papua for decades. Yet no one would give heed to their suffering or plead their cause before the world community of nations.

Madam Secretary, in 1969, 1,200 West Papuan elders, with the lives of their own families being threatened by the Indonesian military, were forced into voting supposedly while not surprisingly unanimously on behalf of some 1 million West Papuans to make West Papua at part of Indonesia. This Act of No Choice is generally regarded in the international community as a fraudulent tactic that was used by Indonesia's military regime to claim control of West Papua. Last year, 37 Members of the Congressional Black Caucus and myself joined in calling on the United Nations' review of the Act of No Choice that was forced upon the people of West Papua by President Suharto's military regime.

My colleague, Mr. Payne, and I have called about the African nations to request a United Nations General Assembly review of the Act of No Choice since the United Nations was involved. Secretary Kofi Annan informed us that should the Assembly decide to revisit this issue, he will do his utmost to implement the Assembly's mandate.

Madam Secretary, I plead with you again, the crisis in West Papua New Guinea will not go away. We need your help. I would repeat again that the issue of West Papua is not an internal matter for the Government of Indonesia to resolve given the historical evidence that clearly questions Indonesia's claim of sovereignty over West Papua New Guinea. This said, Madam Secretary, I am hopeful that in the spirit of America's great mission of diplomacy to end tyranny in our world that our Government will stand with the people of West Papua, and support their right to self determination, just as we gave East Timor a couple of years ago. Thank you, Madam. Just give me the nod, Madam Secretary.

Secretary RICE. That would be dangerous, Representative.

Let me address a couple of things. First of all, I will look into the visa issue that you raise. We have been trying to create visa policies that do take some of the load off people who are trying to get visas. I don't know the specific case, but I will refer to our consular affairs people and ask for an answer, and we will get back to you.

Of course, as you know, United States policy is that Papua is a part of Indonesia. We do, however, represent with Indonesia all the time the need for the sensitivity to and protection of people, of minorities within Indonesia and for significant autonomy for those

populations. And so you can be sure that the issue is not off of our radar screen even though we may not agree on the same solution.

Mr. FALEOMAVAEGA. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Thank you, Madam Secretary.

Chairman HYDE. Mr. Smith of New Jersey.

Mr. SMITH OF NEW JERSEY. Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I apologize, Madam Secretary, I didn't get to hear your testimony. Sam Alito, who is actually from my home town of Hamilton, was being sworn in at 2:05, so I made my way over there for the historic investiture of a wonderful and very fine judge. So I apologize, I didn't get to hear you. I do have 19 questions, like my friend from American Samoa, but I will collapse it to just a couple and submit the remainder for the record if I could.

In Vietnam, where I was recently on a human rights trip, I met with Venerable Thich Quang Do and about 60 dissidents in Ho Chi Minh City, Hue and in Hanoi, including a cyber dissident's wife. But also when I met with Venerable Thich Quang Do, who is under pagoda arrest, as you know, or house arrest as is Father Ly, I also met with Father Le Thanh Que. We had just gotten a report that the Venerable Thich Quang Do had been arrested. I would hope that the Department would, by any means possible, try to effectuate his release. He is, as you know the head of the Unified Buddhist Church of Vietnam, a wonderful man who uses the Internet and often finds his e-mails and the like are very severely curtailed. In regards to the push toward WTO extension by the Vietnamese while they are on CPC status, Country of Particular Concern, in my opinion it would be unconscionable for us to be collaborating with them to get the benefits of WTO while they are going in the opposite direction on religious freedom and are persecuting as never before.

Secondly, yesterday we had a very extensive hearing on the abuse of the internet by China and by other repressive countries. I introduced the Global Internet Freedom Act of 2006, a comprehensive effort to try to mitigate this abuse and to at least stop the partnering of some corporations like Yahoo!, Cisco and others with the secret police in places like China. And I would hope that the Department could provide early recommendations for any changes or additions or deletions that you think are important when it comes to this.

I applaud your Internet freedom effort that you announced earlier this week. And hopefully, that will come. I would say parenthetically that Ambassador Gross and Mr. Keith did a wonderful job yesterday at the hearing. So you might want to touch on that briefly.

On trafficking, thank you for the fine job that you and the President and Ambassador Miller are doing on human trafficking. The signature of the President on the new bill I think will greatly take us to that next level. But you are doing a wonderful job. And I would hope that we continue and expand. I would ask you to take a look at Sudan, which is on the tier 2 watch list, but should be put back on tier 3.

They have not lived up to some of the suggestions and some of the ameliorating actions that they said they would take. And they certainly are not looking at child slavery, which they have been ac-

cused of and I think they stand convicted of. North Korea, we haven't accepted, to the best of my knowledge, a single person for refugee status. The human rights in North Korea bill, which Mr. Leach was the prime sponsor of, is a wonderful bill. I think it still awaits full implementation, and that goes to the issue of refugees.

And finally, on the issue of Liberia, our Subcommittee, and I know the Full Committee and Members of Congress are very, very encouraged by your efforts to provide additional moneys to the newly elected President Johnson-Sirleaf, but anything further we could do collaboratively together to make sure that she succeeds and to ensure her protection. We are very concerned about other personal security. In 5 minutes, that is all we get to ask.

Secretary RICE. Thank you very much. On Vietnam and religious freedom, we are working very hard, and we are trying to use the leverage of all that we are doing with Vietnam. The fact is that I will be in the region, of course, for the Asia regional forum some time this summer, and I am sure that if I were to go there, we would want to be in a better place than we are right now on human rights. Barry Lowenkron our Assistant Secretary For Democracy, was just there to have conversations—or will be there to have conversations. We want to push very hard on the religious freedom side.

On the Internet, thank you for being supportive of the task force that we have put together. This is a new difficult area. I frankly think that the Chinese are going to have a very hard time trying to control the Internet. The fact is, it is a very special tool, but it is a very special tool that can promote democracy. And we recognize that. And we recognize how important it is that people who are on the Internet not somehow be persecuted for having been on the Internet. And we have seen those cases in China. And, we are working to develop policies that develop ideas so that we can be reasonable contributors to anything that we want to see going forward. I felt we needed to get organized inside the Department of State first. And so we will do that work, and we will do it quickly.

Thank you for your comments on trafficking. Ever since the President put this on the agenda a couple of years ago with the United Nations, it has been a central issue for us. I do believe that we are doing a good job in calling these issues to attention. Countries don't like to be in tier 2 or tier 3. That gives us a lot of leverage. And you can be certain that we will keep working it. And we will—I believe we are to review Sudan after a 6-month period, and so we will make that a serious review.

Finally, on North Korea, we are very appreciative of the North Korea Human Rights Act. I think it is something that has brought to the fore the problems for human rights in North Korea and the fate and condition of the North Korean people. We have a human rights envoy now in, Jay Lefkowitz. As a matter of fact, I met with him just a couple of days ago. We are going to get him out more. One of the things we really need is, we need the rest of the international community to also pay attention to this issue.

The EU has a human rights dialogue with North Korea that is largely moribund. And how they pursue that will matter to whether or not this becomes an issue. We have talked about this issue

with South Korea, which has not always been an easy conversation.

But the South Koreans of course do take the refugees. The Mongolians, we were just in Mongolia, and the Mongolians have been stalwart in refugees.

We are reviewing our policies on refugees, reviewing them with DHS, reviewing them with the FBI, to see if we can find a way to participate in the refugee activities as well.

Chairman HYDE. Mr. Payne of New Jersey.

Mr. PAYNE. Thank you very much.

Thank you, Madam Secretary. It is good to see you again, and all the hard work that you are doing well.

Let me ask you about Sudan. We have indicated that with the Sudan Peace Act, South Sudan under the Government of Salva Kiir is supposed to be able to have—to not have restrictions on development and ESF funds.

Now, Chairman Hyde's Darfur Accountability Act, H.R. 3127 in the Senate passed legislation certainly even clarifies more what is meant by the Government of Sudan and the Government of Southern Sudan. But your State Department, continually indicates to us that they cannot operate and support officially South Sudan. And it seems that that is not in the spirit of the Darfur Peace Act. And so if that could be clarified, we would appreciate it because they tend to be confused. And it is actually restricting development in the south.

As you know, they are supposed to have a referendum after 6 years to decide whether the government will come together in unity or whether there will be two separate Sudans. So I think it is important to clarify that so that we can move forward.

I would also like to ask that since we have the presidency of the Security Council with Ambassador Bolton, it may be an opportunity for us to do some bold statement on Darfur. It would appear to me that, you know, the African Union says they do not, since they are having difficulties with lack of funding for peacekeepers, that they were not opposed to the UN taking over. Of course they would like African Union troops to be integrated into the UN force. And so I think it would be a bold step if Ambassador Bolton would take a bold stand on the question.

As you know, things are worsening in Darfur. The Government of Sudan is still encouraging the Janjaweed to kill and rape and maim. And so, if we could have a strong resolution and if the Chinese decide they want to veto it, then let them do it. Let's expose them. Or let's not use the excuse that China may not go along with it or Russia—China gets away with everything. And at some point, we have to start saying that the world is not run by China time. We have got to be able to say that we are tired of always coming out on the short end of the negotiations with China.

And so I would hope that we would take advantage of that situation. And just finally, there is some of the people in State are starting to equate a small band of people who are fighting, who are freedom fighters, JEM and the SLA, who are in Sudan, who are protecting themselves against the Government of Sudan. And they are starting to equate this small group equal to the atrocities of the

government. And I hope that we don't do that. That is a dangerous thing. There is no comparison, as you know.

Just to finally, in the Ethiopian-Eritrean situation. We have absolutely practically zero funding for Eritrea, even though we have had difficulties with the President of Eritrea. It would appear to me that it was Ethiopia that violated the borders agreement. And if we could somehow try to work with Eritrea. I think that the accord said that Badme belonged to Eritrea and that they were right.

Ethiopia rejected it. We still have very strong relations with Ethiopia. But we have cut Eritrea off totally. I don't think it is fair. I know they are both difficult to deal with. But I would hope that we could look at that.

And also, finally, in Nairobi where the Somali legislature is attempting to come up with a government—as a matter of fact, there are about seven Americans who are a part of their national legislature. If we could at least have our Kenya Embassy—and they are asking if we could give them technical assistance or just recognize that they exist. Thank you very much.

Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Secretary RICE. Thank you, Congressman Payne.

On the matter of being able to develop the south, we do believe that while we work on Darfur, we cannot let the Comprehensive Peace Agreement fail. And as you know, Salva Kiir was here just not too long ago, and Rebecca Gurang was just here. And of course, we want to develop the south. We do believe that there are restrictions currently on what we can do in the south because the restrictions apply to Sudan as a whole. But we are looking at that. We have got people looking intensively at what we can do.

We are particularly concerned, for instance, about rail links and transportation links to be able to bring the country together. The transportation minister, Mrs. Gurang, described the problems of being unable to use mobility even for humanitarian means. And so I can—I will tell you, we will look very closely at it. We have already asked our lawyers and our experts to look very clearly at what can be done. And if we need to come back to you to get some dispensation, then I think we will do that. Because we don't want the Comprehensive Peace Agreement to fail.

We are very concerned about Darfur, particularly now with the threat of West Darfur and destabilization in Chad looming. We are looking very hard at what we can do to support the AMIS mission, the African Union Mission until we could get a blue-hatted mission, and we would hope during our presidency to be able to get a Security Council resolution for a UN mission. The holdup right now is that the African Union has not requested it. And people are resistant or reluctant to do so without African Union backing, given that they are still going to be the dominant part of the force. But we are working very closely with the AU to try to get this resolved because we would like to use our presidency to highlight the Darfur issue.

We are also working in Abuja, directly in Abuja to try to bring rebels—and I don't disagree about not getting into any kind of an equivalence between the rebels and the government, but we do need the rebels and the government to come to some kind of an

agreement to form a basis on which you could, like the CPA, again to reintegrate west—to reintegrate Darfur into Sudan.

On the matter of Ethiopia and Eritrea, we have been trying to work with both parties. Without determining who is or is not responsible for what happened, Assistant Secretary Jendayi Frazer went out to the region. She was ready to meet with the Eritreans. They weren't quite ready. We are going to pursue it again because we believe that we can have an effect.

As you know, we even appointed a U.S. envoy, General Fulford, to be someone who could go back and forth to work on this issue. We are working, for instance, to try to perhaps convene the committee of witnesses to try to restimulate discussion on both the grievances of Eritrea and Ethiopia.

It is a complicated issue as you well know. But I just want you to know that it has very high-level attention. Assistant Secretary Frazer has it as a personal task which she is working. And you can be certain it will get full attention.

And I will look into the Somalia issue. I am not familiar enough to comment.

Chairman HYDE. Ms. Ros-Lehtinen.

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

Madam Secretary, thank you for being such a wonderful spokesperson for the ideals that we hold as a country and that should be universally adopted as freedom and human rights, respect for the opinion of others and democracy. And few people who come into this hearing room get a spontaneous standing ovation. I think that says a lot for the respect that a lot of us give to you.

I would like to ask you questions on three issues. The Palestinian Authority that you have heard a lot of discussion about in this Committee; secondly, the “wet-foot, dry-foot” policy for Cuban freedom seekers; and thirdly, the UN Human Rights Council.

On the issue of direct aid and nonhumanitarian project assistance to the Palestinians, as you know, it is a grave concern to many of us in this Committee. Can you provide further details on the current status of our programs and our funding for the Palestinian territories? And I know that this has been a review that is underway. What is new with this review?

Related to that issue, the United States courts have found that the Palestinian Authority has been responsible for the deaths of Americans through acts of terrorism sanctioned by the PA. The courts have actually issued judgments against the PA for over \$100 million to compensate to the victims' families. Does the Administration intend to withhold funding for the PA to pay off these judgments? Are the efforts underway to execute the judgments using frozen Palestinian Authority assets? And those are my questions on the PA.

Regarding the “wet-foot, dry-foot” policy for Cuban refugees, that remains in place. It was started by the Clinton Administration but has been carried over. As you pointed out in your opening statement, the word democracy cannot be used in the same sentence as Cuba. That is very well said. The Castro regime remains a gross violator of human rights, and he does practice torture against those who disagree with the regime's policy.

So this Clinton era policy appears to have been placed, to place the U.S. at odds with our international human rights obligations concerning torture and refugees. And most recently it resulted in a decision by our Government saying that the old 7-mile bridge located in my congressional district in the Keys, was not U.S. territory. And it means that they were sent back.

I respectfully request that the Administration reconsider this failed policy that has cost so many lives and, specifically, those 15 Cubans.

And lastly, Madam Secretary, the UN Human Rights Council, I know that you have made this a priority, but there are some worrisome parts about it that I would like to raise with you: The lack of substantive criteria for membership on this new council; secondly, the proposed secret balloting, which combined with the two thirds or simple majority vote could actually keep the democracies, such as ours, off the new council while empowering rogue states. And if this proposal is adopted, we could have gone from bad to worse in our efforts to get true accountability for human rights violators.

So I hope that the United States, and you especially, with Ambassador Bolton, are working closely with our democratic allies to prevent this travesty. So I wanted to know the current status of our efforts regarding the UN Human Rights Council.

Thank you, Madam Secretary.

Secretary RICE. Thank you very much. First, on the Palestinian Authority, let me restate very clearly that the United States considers Hamas a terrorist organization. That has not changed. And without a change in Hamas, it is not going to change.

That means that the Palestinian—any Palestinian Government, whatever the outcome of the election has been, any Palestinian Government will have to meet what are now internationally established requirements. These are not the requirements of the United States. These were established by the Quartet. And these requirements include, at a very basic level, the recognition of Israel's right to exist, the foregoing of violence, and disarming militias. These are the basics of being a peaceful and respectable government.

And so we are reviewing our assistance. We are reviewing it really in three ways. First of all, we are reviewing to make certain that there is no funding that has already gone out that would be at risk if there is a change in government. And so we have said to the Palestinians, we want to be able to recover that money because we do not intend to have American dollars spent by Hamas Government. And so we put the Palestinian Authority on notice.

We have also begun to review the whole wide range of our assistance programs.

We want to be able to be responsive to very basic humanitarian needs of the Palestinian people. I really don't want to see us not participate in programs for the immunization of Palestinian children. We have, I think, obligations to refugees who live in squalid conditions. And we do that through the United Nations agencies that we do this through, agencies like this, all around the world.

So I am quite certain that we would be segregating those funds. But I just want to note that there are certain humanitarian concerns that we want to be attentive to.

The third point that I would make is that we also are working very hard so that others will have similar policies because the Israelis have a right, I think, if they have good relations with a country, to expect that that country is not going to fund a government that is dedicated to the destruction of Israel. And so we have been working very hard with the international community.

But we are reviewing these policies. We are reviewing the program. We will update you as that review goes.

We are committed to continuing to fund the caretaker government until there is a Hamas Government. Israel also, as you know, has transferred tax revenues to that same government so I think there is also an international consensus about that.

I recognize that there are claims. We have not, as a general matter, frozen assets to pay those claims. But we will have to see what comes of this as we look at the changing and different circumstances in the Palestinian territories.

As to the immigration policies and the refugee policies and “wet-foot, dry-foot,” the goal here is to keep Fidel Castro from playing games with our refugee policy. And you know better than I, Congresswoman Ros-Lehtinen, that he has done it before and he will do it again. And so that is why we have had fairly restrictive policies of this kind.

We recognize that Cubans are fleeing a terrible government. We have tried to be compassionate and humanitarian. I don’t know the details of the specific case in your district. But we will get back to you on that.

Finally, on the Human Rights Council, absolutely, we want a human rights council that is not just a substitute for the old bad human rights commission where Sudan actually was a member at the time that it was committing genocide. It made no sense.

We focused very much on—the two-thirds we think will work. I recognize the danger that you mentioned. But we think that the two-thirds will work.

We also believe that we can look at the number, the total number, on the council. But what we must have are some criteria for who is on. And the criterion that we think is most appropriate—it is actually a fairly simple criterion—if you are under a UN Security Council resolution for human rights abuses or for terrorism, you shouldn’t be on the Human Rights Council. We think this is kind of self-evident.

But we are pressing this position with those who don’t think it is self-evident. We will see if we can come to some agreement. But I want to assure you that it is not the case that we want just any human rights council. We want one that is at least an improvement over the human rights commission.

Ms. ROS-LEHTINEN. That you very much.

Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman HYDE. Mr. Sherman of California.

Mr. SHERMAN. Thank you, Madam Secretary. I have several questions I hope you will respond to for the record, and I will end with a question that I hope you can respond to orally.

When you were last here last year, I asked you and your Department for suggestions on how to rationalize the reports that you have to furnish to Congress. I note that a couple of human rights

reports are due pretty much right after each other. I was seeking to reduce the work load of the State Department and its personnel by asking for you to outline how Congress can change the deadlines for these reports and eliminate unnecessary and duplicative reporting.

Surprisingly, over the last year, I haven't heard from you. I am ready and charged to try to make life easier for your Department.

Next, I hope that the United States will support Israel if it chooses not to support—turnover customs duties and taxes to a Hamas-led Government. You said that no country should be funding a government trying to destroy Israel. I think the one country that shouldn't, that especially should not fund such a government is Israel.

Next, the Administration has requested nearly 40 percent more military assistance for Azerbaijan than Armenia despite an informal agreement with Congress to maintain military aid parity between the two countries. This informal agreement was reached when we allowed the President to waive Section 907 of the Freedom Support Act which previously had prevented any military aid to Azerbaijan.

In light of Azerbaijan's President's recent threats to resume war and in light of this informal agreement with Congress, I would hope that you would provide for military parity between the two countries. I note also that your request for economic aid to Armenia represents a one-third cut from what Congress provided for 2006. I am confident that Congress will provide as much in 2007 as we did in 2006, and I hope that you will be supporting that effort.

Next, turning to a couple of organizations listed on the terrorist list that are not hostile to the United States or its allies. Congressman Tancredo and I wrote you on January 6th asking you to set forth a roadmap for the MEK to use in order to be taken off the foreign terrorist organizations list.

The response was, the State Department doesn't provide such roadmaps, and yet the State Department did in fact spell out the steps that should be taken by the IRA and the PLO when those organizations successfully got themselves off the terrorist list.

I would point out that the LTTE is part of the peace process in Sri Lanka and so I would hope that you would once again consider issuing a roadmap to those two organizations. What should they do to get off the list? And in doing so, I think you could improve their behaviors substantially and perhaps they could—and given the fact that neither is hostile to the United States, and one has been very helpful to the United States, I think that that is an appropriate policy.

As to Iran, I commend you for seeking to spend \$75 million to aid democracy in broadcasting. Your request only requests money for government broadcasting, bureaucrats. I would hope that Congress would have some money for the private broadcasters who have proven their ability to generate a Farsi listening and viewing audience.

Now, all this democracy effort is not a substitute for economic and diplomatic pressure. The Iranian people have to know that their government's nuclear policy is hurting the country. And that is why I would hope that you would support not only a reauthoriza-

tion of ILSA but making it more robust and the Administration enforcing it and action to prevent United States companies from doing business in Iran through their foreign subsidiaries.

I hope that tomorrow you have a chance to call the World Bank and suggest that they not disburse money to Tehran until such time as the Security Council has a chance to review the situation. I would hate to give them a concessionary loan disbursement in February and then get sanctions against them in March. I hope you would ban non-energy imports from Iran as it is your right and the Administration's right to do.

And finally, I hope that you would hint to the Chinese that their access to our markets cannot be guaranteed if they thwart our efforts on Iran and nuclear weapons, particularly in the Security Council.

The final question, the one I hope you can respond to orally, deals with the fact that one of the first acts taken by the Bush Administration upon taking office was to restore the so-called Global Gag Rule, which prohibits U.S. assistance to organizations which use their own money to provide abortion services or even to provide counseling about abortion. In his first interview after taking office as Secretary of State, your predecessor Colin Powell, said he opposed the Global Gag Rule. I wonder if you could tell us whether you are opposed personally to the Global Gag Rule or whether you are in favor of the current policy which, in effect, bans assistance to some of the world's most effective family planning organizations.

Secretary RICE. Thank you. I will, of course, respond to the questions that you put. We will get those to you, Congressman. Let me say on the one on rationalizing reports, though, we will get back to that rather quickly. That will make a lot of people in my building very happy. So we will work on that one with you.

I support our policy on family planning. I think it is the right policy for our country. It is the President's policy. It is not as if we don't spend a lot of money on family planning. It is not as if we don't spend a lot of effort on making available to people options for family planning.

Indeed, if you look at our budget for family planning, it is a significant portion of, I think, the second largest account, for instance, within our child and health safety accounts. And so, I think we are doing a good job of providing those services to women and discharging our duties. But I fully support the policy.

Mr. SHERMAN. I would point out that taxpayers—

Chairman HYDE. Gentleman's time has long since expired.

The gentleman from California, Mr. Rohrabacher.

Mr. ROHRABACHER. Thank you very much and welcome to Capitol Hill. You have done a great job, and we applaud you for that. We also applaud especially the President's democracy initiative which you were playing such a important role in. I would suggest, and you don't have to comment on this, but nothing would prove the sincerity of the President's democracy initiative more than if some time during your tenure in office as Secretary of State that the world could see you in Burma beside Aung San Suu Kyi, if nothing else, that would be incredibly symbolic to the sincerity of our pro-democracy pro-human rights efforts.

Second, another suggestion is Russia, of course, remains a pivotal country in charting the course for a more positive future, more stable future for that part of the world and for the entire world for that matter.

I was just dismayed early on after the collapse of communism that Russia was frozen out of many of the markets, and they had many things to offer to the United States. They have been frozen out of those markets as well as around the world, then the West insisted that the Russians pay for the debt that was left them from the communist dictatorship that they had left behind. Those two things have had a tremendously negative impact on the Russian people. Well, I think it is time we should be working with Russia. And I know the President is trying to do this as much as he can, in cooperation to try to give carrots rather than just sticks to the Russian people and the Russian Government to do the right thing.

One suggestion would be to—is General Atomics, a company in my State, California, has developed a new process for nuclear reactors that eats plutonium and will not produce anything that could help build a bomb. The Russian companies are in partnership with this American firm. We could offer to build a new nuclear plant for the Iranians with Russian help that could not in any way be used to create a bomb. And if the Iranians turned us down, they are exposed for exactly what their evil intentions are.

Now to some questions.

Opium production in Afghanistan. The two of us have spoken about this many times. Other people have spoken about it. It is reaching a crisis stage. It reached a crisis stage last year. And it still continues to grow. When will we be willing to use those tools that are available to us? They used to be classified. It no longer is classified, there is a potential micro herbicide that could destroy that crop in a very quick way. I understand that the State Department isn't even using the funds to do scientific research on that micro herbicide. We need to have some action on opium production in Afghanistan. And if that herbicide offers us a way to get rid of it, we should do so and then try to help the Afghans build their economy.

Finally, here we are in the middle of this struggle for democracy, and Iraq is straining our resources. Our troops are exhausted. They are spread too thin. But we have a noble goal in mind, which is building democracy in the Middle East as a shining example to the Muslim world, but we need to be responsible and do things in an appropriate way.

There is one thing that could add tremendously to our effort in the sense that we have our troops that are spread so thin. I think we still have 1,700 troops in Kosovo after a decade. There is no excuse for us not to have moved on that situation and corrected it. They have an elected system in Kosovo. It could be—they will never be ready for independence if they are not now.

We have with us today somewhere, even in this room or the next room, the foreign minister of Albania who has suggested that if we can end this situation in Kosovo, get these people the right to vote and have a democratic government, which is what they want, Albania will dramatically increase their troops, their troop level to Iraq, which they already have committed troops to Iraq. Thus we could

eliminate the troops we need to have in Kosovo and have more support.

And plus these are Muslim countries. So why aren't we taking advantage of this? Why are we sitting back afraid to take any action because something might go wrong in Kosovo while it has such a detrimental impact on our overall effort? And that is my question. Thank you very much.

Secretary RICE. Thank you. Well, on Kosovo, we are in fact now really stepping up our activities, our diplomatic efforts to try and resolve Kosovo. I think this would have been, Congressman, really the right criticism 6 or 7 months ago. I felt myself that we were not active enough on Kosovo.

And in fact, we had some discussions within NATO with our colleagues, and I had some discussions in the EU; we all agreed that this is an issue that has got to be resolved one way or another.

The UN has appointed a very experienced envoy, Mr. Albert Rohan, and we have, the United States, also, appointed an envoy, Frank Wisner, to really now go out and take on this issue and see if we can get it resolved.

It obviously has very important implications for the future of Serbian Montenegro. It has very important implications for the future of Albania. It is a big issue. And I don't mean to suggest that it can be resolved easily. But we are now, I think, on course. Nick Burns, the Under Secretary, and Dan Fried, the Assistant Secretary, spent a great deal of time on this over the summer months to try to put us in a position to really now launch a major diplomatic effort to see if we can resolve it.

I think it is in that context that we want to think about our troop contribution because we said that we would be a part of this KFOR, in together, out together. Obviously, we can even make some adjustments. The military committee of NATO has even suggested some adjustments to the posture as it is there now. And we, the United States, want to support that.

But there is a lot of activity now on Kosovo, and hopefully, we can bring it to some resolution.

Mr. ROHRABACHER. You don't have to answer about the opium, but you know we are concerned about it. Thank you very much.

Chairman HYDE. Mr. Engel of New York.

Mr. ENGEL. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

And Madam Secretary, thank you for yours and the President's principled and strong support for the state of Israel and strong stand on the Iranian nuclear issue. I think it is very important.

There is, in the 2007 budget, \$150 million for aid for the West Bank and Gaza. And I want to just identify myself with all the concerns that were raised before me about any money going to a Hamas-led Government.

I thank you for that.

I was the author of the Syria Accountability Act which you mentioned in your testimony. And it has been a useful tool, as you said, to go over after the Syrian bad guys. I am wondering if you could tell us, why hasn't the Administration implemented all of the act? There is still pieces of the act that still can be implemented.

And I want to call to your attention that there are a number of Lebanese who are apparently in Syrian prisons and who we are

trying to make an issue because the international community has not really made that any kind of an issue. And I want to highlight it. And so I am wondering if you can look into that as well.

I want to commend Mr. Rohrabacher for his excellent statement on Kosovo. And I want to commend you for your excellent answer on Kosovo. I just got back from President Rugova's funeral. I have been to Kosovo many times, and President Rugova was a personal friend of mine. And I agree with your analysis that, 6 or 7 or 8 months ago, that would have been a fair thing to say. I am glad that the Administration is finally engaged and engaged in the right way.

I think that there will not be progress in Kosovo unless the United States is very much engaged, and I know with Mr. Wisner and others, I hope that we can push the issue and have a timetable for final status negotiations and not let this drag on indefinitely. I am a strong supporter of independence for Kosovo because I believe that once the former Yugoslavia broke up and other components of it were allowed to become independent, I don't think the people of Kosovo can ever be governed by Belgrade again given the history. And so I think independence makes a lot of sense.

And as you know, the Albanians are very pro-American, the Kosovo Albanians and the Albanian Albanians, and I think they rely on us to look after their interests. And so I hope the Administration would take a pro-independence position as the only viable future for Kosovo and that we would push a final status and negotiations, and we need to be involved.

And finally, I, this morning, voted as the Ranking Member on the Western Hemisphere Subcommittee. And I just wanted to, since we are talking about budget, when we look at the proposed fiscal year 2007 budget for Latin America, the budget proposes slashing spending in Latin America and the Caribbean across the board with two exceptions. That is the HIV/AIDS program and funding for projects in three of the CAFTA countries. But given that 25 to 40 percent of the region's population still toils in grinding poverty, it is very difficult I think to justify a third consecutive year of drastic cuts in core developmental accounts for countries in Latin America and the Caribbean. We have seen the votes in Haiti, for instance. And it gives us hope. And you mentioned Haiti in terms of democracy. The budget proposes, decreasing core development assistance to Haiti by approximately 20 percent.

The true contributing countries to Haiti, of which we are not, depend on us, because they believe that we and other donors will provide the developmental assistance that is necessary to establish the foundations for democracy and a lasting peace in Haiti. So I would hope that, you know, we would honor our commitment to this peacekeeping mission, but it is hard to do it if we eviscerate our development programs in the country.

Same thing with Bolivia. We have this new fellow Morales there who spews anti-American rhetoric. Cutting developmental programs in the country, in Bolivia, along with counter narcotic and other assistance packages, seems to me, is going in the wrong direction. So I was wondering if you could comment on that as well and the other things as well as and the Syrian accountability and Hamas.

Secretary RICE. Thank you very much.

On Hamas, let me just underscore our determination on this issue. Because foreign—we had requested the money for the West Bank and Gaza in anticipation of being able to work with a Palestinian Authority that was dedicated to peace. If there is a Palestinian Government that is not dedicated to peace and not dedicated to the right of the partner in peace to exist, then foreign assistance makes no sense in that context.

And so our goal is to remain firm on that, recognizing the humanitarian needs, as I mentioned, but to remain firm and to try to get others to remain firm as well.

And let me say, you know, I have seen stories that it is punishment somehow. This is not the issue. The issue is that it is simply not practical to support a government that is dedicated to violence and dedicated to the destruction of one of our best allies. It simply isn't going to happen. And so I just want to underscore that.

The Syrian Accountability Act is a very important tool. And I have had a chance to thank you before, Congressman Engel, for your work in that. We have used a great deal of it. We have designated some other individuals just a little while ago. There are a couple of pieces that we think might actually be more effective if we can get some multilateral support.

And so, we have been working, in a sense holding our peace, to try to see if we can get some more multilateral support. But we intend to use the Syrian Accountability Act and use it to its fullest.

As to Western Hemisphere, it has indeed been a difficult budget year. And we have had to make some difficult decisions. But first of all, the commitment to the Western Hemisphere, it is our neighborhood. We have to be committed to it. And it is a neighborhood that is experiencing difficulty with many of the fragile democracies in the region. I had dinner just a couple of nights ago with the foreign ministers of Colombia, El Salvador, Mexico and Panama. They wanted to come and talk about their region and talk about how we might band together to support some of the fragile democracies since those are all stronger democracies. And so we are working in that way.

Some of the change in our request, indeed, while development assistance has been reduced, it reflects in part a refocus of that assistance to certain target countries; it reflects that there is a shift from some middle-income countries. It also reflects that we—while we do not substitute Millennium Challenge Assistance funding for development assistance, sometimes there is overlap. With Nicaragua and Honduras we have sizable Millennium Challenge compacts now that we have signed. We anticipate probably being able to do the same with El Salvador in the near future.

If you look only at development assistance, I think it is possible to miss that we also have increased the economic support funding for El Salvador and Guatemala and the Dominican Republic in this same period of time.

So I am not taking issue, Congressman, with the fact that we have had to make some cuts in development assistance, but I think that we are balancing these programs in a way to maintain a commitment to the needs of these countries, to fund through ESF, which provides for the more flexible budget support, for instance,

funding that they can use and to begin to work on these Millennium Challenge compacts which are sizable and transformational efforts in these countries.

The final point on Haiti, we had a commitment of \$400 million to Haiti. This budget allows us to make that commitment. But as I said when I was asked this in another Committee, we do now have a newly elected government in Haiti that will hopefully bring a period of stability to Haiti. We are very supportive and supporting the peacekeeping mission. The core groups meets frequently of which we are a member, and we are active in that. But as the government develops now, I think we will want to look at what we need to do to support Haiti. This is a chance for a country that has had too few chances, and I think you will see that we will be looking at what resource needs we have for Haiti as this new government gets up and running.

Mr. ENGEL. Thank you.

Chairman HYDE. Mr. Royce of California.

Mr. ROYCE. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Madam Secretary, as you know, there are a number of Members of Congress that have been quite concerned about the actions taken by the former President of Liberia Charles Taylor and, of course, the Special Court in Sierra Leone. He faces trial there for crimes against humanity. I think all of us remember the testimony we have seen here before this Committee of young children without ears, without arms, all victims of Taylor.

I think that trying Charles Taylor is not only an issue of justice, it is also really about ending an era of unaccountability in international relations where a head of state can undertake these acts. But in addition to that, it is also practical because while he is harbored in Nigeria, Mr. Taylor continues, frankly, to make phone calls and to conspire, and I believe that if he is not tried, he will eventually, as he has said he is going to do, return to Liberia to knock down everything the international community and you have done to try to rebuild that country.

My concern is this: The Court's mandate is soon to expire, so time is going to run out on bringing him to justice. I have asked Liberia's new President that we expect her to turn over Taylor. This is certainly what civil society has asked her to do. We are waiting for her words and then for their President to act.

Frankly, there hasn't always been a unified message on this. I know you represented our country at the inauguration in January, an event Americans should be very, very proud of given the role Americans have played in helping Liberia and in stabilizing Liberia. But Taylor is looming, so I would like to ask your thoughts on bringing him to justice.

Secretary RICE. Well, as you know, Congressman, we believe very strongly that he ought to be brought to justice, and that he ought to be brought to justice as soon as possible. We will work with all parties concerned to see that happen. He is a danger. He needs to be brought to justice, as you said, not just for reasons of reconciliation and justice, but because we don't want him in a capacity or capability to come back. And so I think there is a very strong interest, and there should be a very strong interest, in the Liberian Government, also the African States that helped to ar-

range his ouster to see this resolved. And so you can be sure that it is the policy of the United States to pursue that.

Mr. ROYCE. Thank you, Madam Secretary.

I will also mention we had \$13 million mandated for the Special Court. We do not want to see some of that money reprogrammed. I will make that point again.

And I am going to ask the Chairman, I have got a question on a program designed to keep terrorists from acquiring shoulder-fired missiles. I would like to submit that for the record if I could, and then close with my thoughts on Sudan.

Because the President and you have made it clear that you intend to use the UN Security Council meeting that the United States has this month, and I am going to commend you for this, with the intent and purpose of passing a resolution to transfer security and peacekeeping responsibilities in Darfur from the African Union forces there to a UN force likely with a proactive chapter 7 mandate, and I wanted to share with you I think that increased mandate is going to do a lot for deterrence.

I, along with Congressman Diane Watson, made a trip to Darfur, Sudan. We had an opportunity to meet with AU forces, which told us about their limited size and mandate. They took us through a village that had been attacked. They observed that, frankly, the plan that you are orchestrating is the right one. If the Security Council acts, an additional 10,000 troops may be put under UN command, and 5,000 troops may become active in southern Sudan to bring up the force level there. All of that will not only deter attacks, but also deter the Sudanese Army, which often participates in those attacks. We saw direct evidence of that from children who drew us accounts of bombings and military personnel that have participated on the ground along with being attacked.

I would also close with the concern we had. The hotelier who saved so many people was with us on that trip. As you know, he's become quite an outspoken voice for human rights. And one of the things that lately happened, there was an attempt on his life in Belgium, and recently I talked with him and he shared with me about—concerns about some comments that I have seen on the wire, comments made by the Government of Rwanda in which they have threatened him. Anything we can do in the United States to convince the Rwandan Government to back off and just allow this man to speak his mind would be very much in the interest—

Chairman HYDE. The gentleman's time has expired.

Mr. ROYCE. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman HYDE. Mr. Meeks of New York.

Mr. MEEKS. Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Great to see you.

Let me ask you a few quick questions, if you will, first dealing with the Western Hemisphere. I know in your statement you talked about democracies moving in the great divide that we have here and how people came to vote for the first time in large numbers. Having been one who listened to your testimony in regards to Venezuela, but being at the recall election and seeing the long lines of individuals there waiting to vote and get elected, and then looking at a number of elections in the Western Hemisphere the next few years, Brazil, Mexico, Colombia, Nicaragua, it seems to me with few exceptions it is likely the voters across the region will

elect progressive governments that are apt to challenge and more readily disagree with the Washington consensus.

My question then is what will and how does the Administration intend to deal with that trend that seems to be moving rapidly in the Western Hemisphere; more particularly Bolivia and dealing with Evo Morales?

There are various questions whether or not he has talked about, for example, eliminating cocaine, but the legal cultivation of coca, how are we going to deal with that? Do we think he is being honest with that and continue to work with them on cocaine interdiction, that whole piece, or are we going to let the same kind of isolation, I guess, that we have or tried to have with Venezuela to also happen with some of these other countries that are being developed?

Lastly I am concerned in dealing with Colombia. When I look at Colombia and the paramilitary demobilization of Colombia, there have been many come to my office that have been concerned, saying that—many are concerned the demobilization process is failing to dismantle the paramilitaries, and argue that less than one weapon has been turned in for every two paramilitaries who demobilize. And they point out that the current process does little to ensure that these groups cease drug trafficking, violence against political opponents and other crimes. I want to know does the State Department share that concern?

Finally, in Colombia the other piece that I observed, there is over 3 million people who have lost their land from political violence. Many were forced off by these same paramilitaries. And part of what the agreement was, was for them to have virtually no jail time or repercussion was that they were to turn back over some of this land.

I want to know if the State Department and the United States is going to help to ensure that there is return of the land so the people who have been displaced have an opportunity to get back.

Lastly, my concern is also the plight of Afro descendants and the indigenous people. They are the poorest of the poor. Many places, no potable water. There is a strong need for support for capacity building, infrastructure building, and what, if anything, is the State Department doing with regard to the plight of African Colombians throughout the region?

Secretary RICE. Thank you. First of all, on the governments that are coming to power, I think we have to be very clear that a freely elected government, we are not going to say that if it is from the left, the United States can't deal with it. And so the issue is not whether a government is left or right, it is whether it governs democratically once it is in power.

We have reached out to Mr. Morales. In fact, the President called him to congratulate him upon his election. And so we have tried to leave an opening there to work with Bolivia, and we will hope to be able to work with Bolivia.

Statements about coca and coca production are problematic because we believe trying to wipe out the drug trade in the Andean region has been one of the strongest and most important elements of our policy for a long time, dating back a couple of Administrations now, and we want to see that continue.

But I can assure you that we are not failing to reach out to new governments as they come into power in Latin America. It does mean that we recognize that—one of the things that we talked about when we were recently at a meeting in Monterrey is that perhaps the need to speak more forcefully about governments' responsibility not just to macroeconomic stability, which tends to be the way that the Washington consensus is viewed, but also to social welfare, to health for the people, education for the people, that that needs to be a part of our dialog with these countries as well. And I think you would see that, for instance, through the work that we are doing in the Millennium Challenge Compact, in places like Nicaragua and Honduras. There is a very strong emphasis on the antipoverty measures as well as progrowth, really trying to give people a way out of poverty.

We have teaching centers of excellence to train teachers. We are going to have to make clear to people that this has been a very important part of our policy, but perhaps has gotten lost in the rhetoric about macroeconomic stabilization.

In terms of the Colombians, they have made an awful lot of progress in a real short period of time. If you think about just 4 or 5 years ago, this was a country where bombs went off all the time in Bogota; where people were afraid to leave their homes; where paramilitary forces were growing, not being demobilized. And, yes, it is not perfect, Congressman Meeke. I would be the first to say there are things about the demobilization law we would prefer to see somewhat tougher. But when countries are trying to come out of what in effect was, if not a civil war, a very, very tough insurgency and trying to fight terrorism and trying to find a point of reconciliation between the various parts of the country, I think we owe them some leeway to do that.

What we can do is to be vigilant about how this is being carried out, and in that way I think we are being vigilant. Our Ambassador Wood works very hard on these demobilization issues. We said to the Colombians they have got more work to do on the human rights side with the paramilitaries.

So it is something we are very vigilant about, but I think they have done a remarkable job about finding a point at which reconciliation can begin.

Finally, as to Afro descendants, I agree with you, I think this also has to be a part of our discourse with these countries. It should not be left to populists who might be irresponsible with the issue, especially as a country that ourselves is made up of diverse peoples. When I was in Brazil, I was sharing with my Brazilian counterparts the fact that Brazil's makeup is more like the makeup of the United States than any other country in the world. I have said to my counterpart, who wants me the next time to go to the Afro-Brazilian parts of Brazil, I would love to do that because I think these are connections that we have with Latin America as a multicultural society to encourage them to support and to admire their own multicultural heritage and to do something for Afro descendants.

I will tell you one of the things I have said to our folks as we are doing exchange programs and students visitor programs, we need to reach out beyond the normal channels that might produce

exchange students to the United States that would not have indigenous or Afro descendant populations represented. I think the United States can do a lot to reach out to these people, too, and we are trying to do that. We just recently had a group of Brazilian students who were going to go all over the country, live in Iowa and Nebraska and Texas and Louisiana, and I was pleased to see that a number of them were Afro descendants in Brazil.

Chairman HYDE. Mr. Chabot of Ohio.

Mr. CHABOT. Madam Secretary, we appreciate the outstanding job that you have been doing representing our Nation around the world at this very critical time in our Nation's history, so thank you.

I want to begin by addressing an issue that I have been involved in for many years now, that of international parental child abduction. We have discussed this in the past. We have discussed one of the most egregious cases involving an American citizen, Corrina Sylvester, who, when barely a year old, was kidnapped by her mother and taken to Austria where she remains today. That was more than 10 years ago.

Since that time her long-suffering father Tom has played by all the rules. He sought and won orders in the Austrian courts for return of his daughter, including an affirmation by the Austrian Supreme Court. He has won a judgment in the European Court of Human Rights, which determined the government violated the human rights of both Tom and his daughter when it failed to enforce an Austrian court order that she be returned to the United States. That same court determined Tom Sylvester's human rights were violated when Austria failed to provide a fair and speedy trial.

He has met with and gained the support of two of your predecessors, Secretary Albright and Secretary Powell. You were made aware of the case, and you were very helpful in getting our message to the Austrian officials. Attorney General Ashcroft raised the case in Vienna. I have gone to the Hague to discuss the case with the Austrian Central Authority there and recently discussed it with the Austrian Chancellor. Even the President of the United States has addressed the case with the Austrian Ambassador. But today he remains in Cincinnati, hoping and praying the phone will ring and that he is finally going to be reunited with his daughter.

We appreciate the work done by the State Department officials there. Ambassador Maura Hardy has been a great advocate for Tom and regularly in touch with me and my office. We very much appreciate the help we have received from you and your predecessors. But it seems to me that we have got to take a new look at this case. However sincere, our efforts have failed. Tom Sylvester spends every day of his life trying to figure out how he can make a life with his daughter while the Austrian Government arrogantly thumbs its nose on international law.

I am at a loss, Madam Secretary. It is clear that the Austrian Government isn't fazed by Tom Sylvester's suffering or our frustration and anger. So perhaps it is time for Congress to address this case specifically, not a general resolution on parental child abduction as we have done in the past, but a resolution that addresses this particular case. I am quite certain that I would find a pretty

receptive committee and a pretty receptive House. I would be happy to hear any suggestions or guidance you might want to offer, and I hope we are able to get together soon with Mr. Sylvester to discuss this further.

In the time I have got left, let me address one other issue, the cross-strait relations in the Taiwan Straits and our Government's role. I happen to be one of the Co-Chairman of the Congressional Taiwan Caucus.

I have got a cartoon which I believe came from the *Taipei Times*. I am sorry, I don't have a better production or larger. It shows a haggard-looking fellow labeled Taiwan who is trying to extricate himself from a body of water because he is being approached by a shark, which is labeled China, and he has being greeted by a large and menacing Uncle Sam, who appears to be holding a baseball bat, and Uncle Sam is saying, "Get back in there, we don't want to alter the status quo."

I use this cartoon as an illustration of the frustration that I am sure Taiwan's leaders must be feeling, and, frankly, the same frustration I am feeling. It seems that every time the democratically elected President opens his mouth, we read reports about consternation at the State Department and ominous quotes about their attempt to change the status quo with its neighbor the People's Republic of China.

Most recently, I understand, the State Department was concerned about their President's decision to abolish the National Unification Council, which is a relic of the days which unification with China was advocated by the Taiwanese Government. They spend about US\$31.00 a year.

What I do think is dangerous is the ever-growing arms buildup at the PRC. They have 784 missiles directed at Taiwan, and they increase that by about 100 per year, and they recently passed an antisecession law. Those, I think, are threats to the status quo.

I will admit I am not a fan of the One China policy, and I think it is dangerous to pursue a policy that favors a dictatorship that continues to threaten war with Taiwan and has gained a reputation as one of the world's leading weapons proliferators.

I know the State Department's position on the One China policy, but I wonder if the signals our diplomats are sending out to the world could be a little more balanced, and I would seek your comments.

Secretary RICE. Thank you.

On the case that you mentioned, the abduction case that you mentioned, of course we have worked very, very hard, we continue to work hard, with the Austrian Government. It is in their courts. But, of course, we are always open to discussing the case with you further, and if at some point it makes sense for me to meet with the gentleman, I am also happy to do that.

Mr. CHABOT. Thank you very much.

Secretary RICE. The question of Taiwan, of course, does arise in the context of the policy that we have pursued now for many Administrations, a policy that does recognize that there is one China, but has tried also to make space for Taiwan in international organizations and international groupings. We have been very strong advocates of having Taiwan in the World Health Organization. We

have insisted that Taiwan continue to be a part of the economic parts of APEC. I think we have tried to give Taiwan space to be active in international politics.

We have also been very clear that we have obligations under the Taiwan Relations Act to help Taiwan defend itself, and therefore I have proposed that there are things that could be done for modernization of Taiwanese forces with the help of the United States. We haven't always gotten, Congressman, a particularly satisfactory response on the Taiwanese side to issues about defense modernization, but we have been prepared to discharge our duties in that regard.

The fact is that we believe that the best course is to have a situation in which neither side tries to change the status quo unilaterally. We also believe that the Chinese should not provoke Taiwan, and we have been very clear to them on the same count. And so while I understand that you have differences with the policy, I think the United States Government is carrying out the policy in a way that is, we believe, consistent with our interests, but also consistent with our values in trying to support Taiwan's democracy, to give it room and space within the international community, to give it a way to engage the international community, and to do that within the context of this policy.

Chairman HYDE. Ms. Lee of California.

Ms. LEE. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Good to see you, Madam Secretary. Thank you for being so generous with your time today.

Let me first talk about Haiti and ask a question. Once again the Haitian people have elected a President, and they have once again demonstrated their true commitment to democracy. Now, as the *New York Times* reported on January 29th, this article revealed what many of us have believed all along, that there have been actually external forces destabilizing Haiti.

Mr. Chairman, I would like to ask for unanimous consent to place this article into the record.

Chairman HYDE. Without objection, so ordered.

Ms. LEE. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

This report described how the United States Ambassador at that time was consistently undercut by the International Republican Institute, the IRI, which receives funding from not only the State Department and USAID, but corporations like Halliburton and others. It also talked about the closeness of the White House and how it attempted to undercut the Ambassador in carrying out a fairer policy toward Haiti in terms of a policy of engagement.

So I just wanted to ask you, and I know we disagree on this, but what and how do you see now our relationship with Haiti? Do you intend to have two separate channels of engagement, one an official one, another what I consider a covert one? Again, I hope we don't do this, but I am concerned that the United States might once again try to undermine democracy in Haiti, and I think, again, this article really reveals quite factually what took place.

The second question I would like to ask is about Cuba. Again, I know we disagree on the long-term blockade and its benefits, but I have been contacted by a variety of religious institutions, and we have written you a letter about this, and they had previously re-

ceived licenses to allow them just to travel to Cuba to develop and maintain relations with their church counterparts there. Now they are suddenly being denied their licenses for reasons that I quite simply don't understand. These groups include mainstream religious organizations. Let me just list some of these: The Alliance for Baptists, the United Methodist Church, Evangelical Lutheran Church in America, Church World Service, Presbyterian Church of America, and the United Council of Churches of Christ in the United States of America.

To me this is quite reminiscent of the 2004 crackdown on the American educational exchange program. The collective impact of the denial of these licenses is to really interfere with and impede the establishment of long-term relationships, between national churches and their local congregations, as well as to significantly limit the scope of church-to-church relations between churches in the United States and churches in Cuba.

These are serious restrictions, I believe, on the work of these churches. Whatever the relations—and, again, as I said, I don't agree with United States policies toward Cuba, but that is not an issue here, I don't think. Whatever our relations are with Cuba, we shouldn't be taking measures that redefine denominational structures and interactions between the United States and which also restrict religious freedom and harm relationships between churches in both countries.

So I would like to know why the United States religious organizations are being attacked really by the State Department in terms of preventing the historical ties that they have heretofore benefited from, really.

Finally, I just want to find out, given some of the most recent statements in terms of Darfur, what is happening in terms of our position that genocide is occurring in Darfur. Are we still moving forward on everything that it takes to implement all of the actions that need to be implemented as a result of the declaration of genocide, or have we actually backed off of that declaration now?

Thank you again, Madam Secretary.

Secretary RICE. Thank you, Congresswoman Lee.

It is our view that genocide was committed and, in fact, continues in Darfur, and we are doing everything that we can to deal with the impact of this government on—of the situation in Darfur on the helpless people of Darfur, whether it is humanitarian work, to the crisis with the rebels, or trying to get a more active international security presence there through a UN security force. So we are extremely active, but our policy on this has not changed.

On Cuba, I will have to look at the specific case. I have to say that I have not—did not know about specific cases of licensing. I will say that I don't think that there is anything that passes for religious freedom in Cuba, and so the notion that somehow our churches going there are contributing to religious freedom in a place where religious freedom is so clearly denied, I think I would question the premise.

But I am happy to look into the premise of what we are not licensing now that we were licensing in the past. It is true that we are trying, through tighter restrictions on licensing of travel, to make it more difficult for the regime to skim sources which it can

then use to continue to oppress its people, which is precisely what happens. But I am happy to get back to you with the specific answer on this case.

As to Haiti, Congresswoman Lee, I simply have to say that I don't agree with the premise that the United States was somehow trying to undermine democracy in Haiti, because the United States Government was demanding of the Aristide Government to do the things that he agreed to do when the last Administration went out of its way and took great risks to return him to power. There were eight points that he was supposed to follow, and he wasn't following any of them.

It was the obligation of the United States to worry then about the fate of the Cuban people. The kind of nongovernmental organizations, IRI, or NDI or others, they work worldwide, and around the world they are known to be organizations that work in political party—helping political parties to be built not with regards to specific parties, but the process of building political parties; that carry out seminars on the education of people in democratic processes, that help train election workers. I mean, they build the foundation to—sort of the infrastructure of democracy. That is what they do.

Now, I do know that in some places when they do that, there are governments that say the that they are interfering with their governments. And it wouldn't be the first place that a Haitian Government might say that because we have heard that in a lot of other places. Congressman Lantos was just talking about the nongovernmental organization law in Russia. I don't think we ever want to get to the place that we brand our own nongovernmental institutions that are really trying just to build the infrastructure of democracy as somehow undermining democracy because they are helping to build opposition and helping to build institutions that are not in the pocket of the government. And sometimes that is the charge.

Now, I can't speak to Ambassador Curren. I don't think I ever met him, but I can tell you that at the time the United States Government worked with the international community to give the Haitian people a chance after the Aristide regime had sent thugs into the street to burn down police stations and Port-au-Prince was in flames, a good thing was done for the Haitian people, and it came out that a good thing was done for the Haitian people when they just conducted the elections they had.

We are going to work with this new government. We want this government to succeed. We have—as I said earlier, we are going to work to see what other resources we may need to support this government, because its in our interest that there be a democratic Haiti and a Haiti that is stable and starting finally to move toward prosperity.

So I think the United States over the last several years, and I would count here not just this Administration, but the Clinton Administration as well, has had a good record of trying to help the people of Haiti get out of the desperate circumstances in which they live.

Chairman HYDE. Mr. Paul of Texas.

Mr. PAUL. Thank you, Mr. Chairman, and welcome, Madam Secretary.

I want to make one quick comment about the question asked you by the gentleman from New York regarding Israel. And he seemed not to be happy with your answer, that there was a slight qualification, which certainly I thought was justifiable.

I think the problem with a question like that is it is misdirected. It is assumed that this is a question that should be asked the Administration or one individual, but there was a time in our history where traditionally that question should be asked the Congress. I know that has been a long time ago, but I would like to remind individuals that the whole idea of militarily being involved in the defense of another country is a congressional function, and it was never meant to be done by the Executive Branch nor decided by one individual.

The other thing I would like to make a comment about were your remarks about the political conditions in Iran. I know they are far from perfect, but sometimes we should think about compared to what. If we compare what is happening in Iran to Saudi Arabia, I mean, they are looking pretty good. Saudi Arabia doesn't elect their President. They don't have a legislative branch elected by the people. They don't allow women to vote.

And so I would just suggest that we should compare things rather than easily condemning a country for the process and not recognize some of the progress that they made. So we talk about democracy, but when they have it, and we don't like it, we come down pretty hard on them, and I think we should be cautious about that.

I have just two brief questions, and the first one is has Iran ever been explicitly found by the IAEA to be in any violation of its nuclear nonproliferation obligations? And the second question is rather brief as well. In light of the fact that we have a rather aggressive policy of spreading democracy around the world, and in particular in the Middle East, why don't we call for immediate free and fair elections in Pakistan?

Secretary RICE. Thank you.

On Iran, part of the issue is always, is the country going forward or backwards? Again, Congressman Lantos talked about Russia. That has to be one of your considerations. And Iran is going backwards. There was a time when Iran had independent voices in it that were willing to challenge not just the government, but the mullahs. Those days are gone, and the reason that they are gone is when they held the election, and I would put that word in quotes, the candidates who could stand were selected by the Guardian Council. I think that is not really an election.

And so I think we have to be careful to not confuse what is going on in Iran with the practice of democracy. Yes, they go to the polls, and, yes, they choose between candidates, but they choose between candidates who have been selected for them, which I think is not the practice of democracy as we know it.

In fact, Iran was found to be in noncompliance with its obligations in the September resolution of the IAEA Board of Governors last fall. That resolution was then tabled, awaiting further discussion, further action, and that resolution is one of the resolutions that was then forwarded to the Security Council in the action that was taken.

Mr. PAUL. So it has been tabled.

Secretary RICE. Yes. They have been found in noncompliance.

Finally, Pakistan is to have elections in December 2007. We have pressed the Pakistanis that those should be free and fair elections. As a matter of fact, I think, Congressman, if you look back, I gave a press conference when I was in Pakistan with the Foreign Minister and said that we expect those to be free and fair elections.

Pakistan is a country coming out of a period of extraordinary extremism, because of, I think, bad policies on the part of a lot of people, including us, frankly, where we kind of abandoned that region after the Soviets were defeated in Afghanistan.

Pakistan, which had been a transit point for the freedom fighters going into Afghanistan to resist the Soviets, a lot of those people came back and became extremists within Pakistan. Those are the people who spawned al Qaeda, who tried twice to assassinate Musharraf and so on.

So this is a country that has come a long way in terms of enlightenment. Musharraf has said extremism and modernity cannot exist in the same body. But, yes, we want them to have free and fair elections, and it is one of the issues that we raise consistently.

Mr. PAUL. Thank you, ma'am.

Chairman HYDE. Mr. Crowley of New York.

Mr. CROWLEY. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Madam Secretary, welcome back again before the Committee. Let me first thank you. You don't know about this, but there was an incident. A constituent of mine, one Kelly Fitzpatrick, was murdered in the Dominican Republic, and her family was going through a very, very difficult time in finding who was responsible for it and getting any justice there.

Because of the efforts of Brian Nichols and all those at the Caribbean desk, justice was brought to the perpetrators who committed that heinous act of murder against my constituent. On behalf of her family I want to thank you and your offices for seeing that through. It really meant a great deal to that family and didn't get widespread publicity. There were other incidents around the world that got tremendous amount more publicity than this. But I want to let you know how appreciative the family is, and if you could relay it to the parties, I would appreciate that.

Secretary RICE. Thank you.

Mr. CROWLEY. For several years now the Administration has used the fact that the UNFPA has a small pilot program in China as justification for withholding all United States support in China. A recent report makes clear that the UNFPA has worked to move China away from target, quota and birth limits as having an impact on that country. In Chang-hwa County, one of 30 rural counties the organization works, the lifting of birth limits has resulted in a dramatic reduction in the number of abortions and a more balanced sex ratio amongst newborns. In short, the program has resulted in fewer abortions and more baby girls being born.

More than 800 counties have voluntarily developed the model as their own. The small pilot program is beginning to have a national impact and is leading to more choice, more freedom, and less coercion.

Why would the Administration continually refuse to support such effective work in expanding human rights in China, and will this

information have any impact on the Administration's determination on funding for the UNFPA in the upcoming fiscal year?

Secretary RICE. We will certainly take a look at the information, Congressman. I think that our view is that the programs that are run in China are programs that are coercive programs, that support the Chinese Government's coercive policies on—

Mr. CROWLEY. Do you believe UNFPA is involved in that?

Secretary RICE. We believe it has funded organizations that are involved in that, and we want to maintain that separation. We are using—let me just say, we are using the money well that is not going to those programs. We are using it in other family planning and issues for women's health. And so I think the money is being used well, but we are very concerned about what that organization is doing, and I think we would want to be very careful not to fund the coercive policies of the Chinese Government.

Mr. CROWLEY. Do you support the work of the UNFPA?

Secretary RICE. As a general matter, yes.

Mr. CROWLEY. Thank you, Madam Secretary.

On another issue, I was able to include an amendment in the foreign relations authorization to open an additional consulate in southern India to help deal with the excessive amount of time it takes to process visas in India. I didn't see additional funds for a new consulate in this year's budget. Does the State Department plan on building a new consulate in southern India to help alleviate that problem?

Secretary RICE. We are looking at where we need to build new consulates, but obviously the budgetary resources, given all of the security concerns we have with existing Embassies and consulates, is also a question.

What we are doing through work I am doing with Mike Chertoff, we are trying to see if there are other ways we might be able to process visas in places that do not have easy access to our consular services. We are even looking to see if we can safely, through experimentation with the so-called paperless process for visa application, use technology. We are exploring every option. I can't promise that we are going to be able to afford to build a consulate in southern India.

I did mention when we talked about transformational diplomacy that we are trying to get our diplomats out to parts of these countries where we can't have full presences, but we recognize very much the fact that it is very hard for people to get visas out in some of these places, and we are seeing if we can use other methods other than building full-fledged consulates, because I frankly don't think we can afford it.

Mr. CROWLEY. Madam Secretary, I head to India this evening. Since the inspection of the President's PEPFAR program, I have been calling for the inclusion of India in that program. Most of the response I got from the Administration is while India is not one of the 15 nations receiving PEPFAR funding, they are the 16th largest recipient of HIV/AIDS. While it sounds like a good response, India has the second most HIV cases at 5.1 million, and receives the lowest dollar-per-person ratio, \$5.70 per person. For example, Guyana, 11,000 cases, \$1,272 per person. What does the Adminis-

tration plan to do to assist India before they surpass South Africa in numbers?

Secretary RICE. We have an extensive HIV/AIDS program in India. We decided that PEPFAR needed to concentrate on the 15 most vulnerable states, and it is an integrated program for those states. Not only are we continuing to provide funding to the Indian Government for HIV/AIDS, but we would hope also that the Indian Government would step up its own funding for it, and that is a conversation we have.

We have to remember that India is an odd case because while there is still great pockets of poverty, this is an economy that is growing rapidly and where resources need to be put to some of these uses. India is not like some of the African countries that we fund under PEPFAR that, frankly, have no resources.

Chairman HYDE. Mr. Flake of Arizona.

Mr. FLAKE. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

And, Secretary Rice, I agree with your assessment of Cuban democracy. It is kind of an oxymoron. The question becomes how do we best foster change there. I think after 47 years it is reasonable maybe to question our policy.

I would ask you specifically about an incident that happened, I believe, last week in Mexico, or recently in Mexico, where there was a Cuban delegation meeting with a United States delegation in a United States-owned hotel in Mexico City. The Cubans were expelled, and the hotel, the United States-owned hotel, now faces a possible Mexican fine of nearly a half million dollars. They are in a Catch-22. If they house the Cubans, supposedly they would be subject to a million-dollar fine from the United States Government.

If we continue with what seems to be a new policy of enforcing a decades-old policy, we are going to put U.S. franchises all over the world in this same predicament. What are we planning to do in that regard?

Secretary RICE. I know this case quite well. As you might imagine, it came to my attention. I think that we are trying to enforce the policies more effectively because, frankly, the Cuban regime is in perhaps the last years of transition, and we want to make certain the Cuban regime—that Fidel's regime is not capable of replicating itself later on. And so we have toughened the policies on travel and the like. Where there are dysfunctions or dislocations, of course, we have to go and look to see what some of the actual impact is, but I think as a general matter it is only appropriate that we enforce these requirements.

I talked with the Mexican Foreign Minister about this just the other night, and I said we will look into this, we will try to work with you so that there are not undue consequences for American or Mexican concerns, but I think we have to try to enforce the policies. We are not going to get anywhere if we don't enforce the policy.

Mr. FLAKE. That means any United States hotel chain in the world has to worry about fines now if they house any Cuban, any Syrian, any Iranian. It is going to be applied across the board; is that what you are telling me?

Secretary RICE. I think we have to look at dysfunctions. But when you put a country under sanctions, it is under sanctions. And

in some cases we are dealing with very serious, very serious matters, whether it is Cuban democracy or Iranian nuclear weapons or destabilization of the Middle East.

Mr. FLAKE. We straddle, and you have very well, myself and some others, and have written about the “wet-foot, dry-foot” policy. That is an acrobatic straddle that works fairly well; otherwise we might provoke an immigration crisis. But if we were to take the position, as we sometimes take when it is convenient, that Cuba is an exporter of terrorism, they are on the terrorism list, then how in the world could you countenance a “wet-foot, dry-foot” policy? If Fidel is in charge of everything, surely he can put a Cuban on United States shores with both feet dry that we then accept with virtually no questions asked.

So we really don’t believe that policy, or we do. We straddle it well.

Secretary RICE. It is actually not the history of how he has done it. I think we have some evidence of how he operates when he wants to cause a migration crisis in the United States.

I take your point, Congressman. I understand that there are consequences for American concerns because we are enforcing the policies more tightly. And, of course, we will look to see if there are dysfunctions that cause particular hardships. But we do have to try and enforce our policies or we shouldn’t have them.

Mr. FLAKE. What I would ask is we do so consistently or not at all instead of selectively saying this group may or may not agree with our policy with regard to Cuba, and therefore we are going to enforce it against them and not others.

Secretary RICE. I don’t think that is what is happening, Congressman, but we will look at the case.

Chairman HYDE. The Secretary has to leave at 4:30, and so we are going to curtail the questions down to 3 minutes from the former 5 and let us see how far we go.

Mr. Weller for 3 minutes.

Mr. Weller, I am sorry. Ambassador Watson and then Mr. Weller.

Ms. WATSON. I was just getting ready to give the Secretary a compliment.

Thank you so much.

I wanted to say to the Secretary, thank you. When Ed Royce and myself came back from Darfur, we met with the President and you in that meeting, and I suggested that you focus in on Darfur, and you did, and I would put in writing some follow-up questions on your meeting.

There is a group leaving in the morning, as you know. They will go there, and then I will seek information from them as well. I am particularly interested in an effective multilateral civilian protection policy, how we work with the AU and the UN. So thank you.

As you might know, I represent the 33rd District in California, which includes Korea Town, and it is a large segment in my community of Los Angeles, and I am proud to say it is home to the single largest number of Korean American voters and taxpayers in the United States.

As you might expect, given the interests of my constituents, Korea’s effort to join the visa waiver program is very important to me.

There are currently more than 2 million Korean Americans, and, in addition to my own district, there are 236 other congressional districts where at least 1,000 Korean Americans reside. The visa waiver program is available to 27 other countries, including some such as Andorra, and do little business with the United States and send few visitors here.

South Korea's entry into the visa waiver program would automatically affect the lives of every single Korean American living in the United States because that would permit relatives, friends and business associates to visit them without having to undergo the cumbersome process that is required of a visa application.

And I have heard from my constituents that Korea business people have been discouraged from coming to the United States to attend conventions and trade shows because of the time-consuming process of applying for a visa. This means that business opportunities, trade and investment opportunities and job creation opportunities are being missed.

I understand that after his meeting last November with President Rho, President Bush asked that you put together a roadmap that would eventually bring Korea into the visa waiver program. So my two-part question. First, what is the status of that roadmap process; and, second, what can Congress do to assist, to effect their entry? Thank you.

And the other questions about the protective plan, I will take it in writing. In fact, I will write you, and you can respond.

Secretary RICE. Thank you very much. I will be happy to respond.

On the visa waiver program we are working with the Koreans. Our Ambassador is working with the Koreans. The problem is that you have to have a certain denial rate or below a certain denial rate in order to be eligible for the visa waiver program. South Korea is actually very, very close, to be honest. We believe that we can get South Korea there with just a little bit of hard work. But we do have in statute the requirements for the visa waiver program, and we can't just waive the statutes for the visa waiver program for specific countries. We have to have a worldwide standard.

So what we have been trying to do with countries—it is an issue with Poland, an issue with a number of other countries—what we have been trying to do is get those countries to that standard by helping to work through those processes and roadmap to get there. The Ambassador is working very hard on it, and he believes he is making progress, but you can be sure it is something we are working very hard, but we do have a worldwide standard that we have to maintain.

Chairman HYDE. Mr. Weller.

Mr. WELLER. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Madam Secretary, thank you for being here and your patience today.

Like several of my colleagues, before I ask a question, I do want to draw your attention to a constituent issue. We had a terrible tragedy 3 years ago that affected a family in Joliet, Illinois. Brett Midlock was tragically killed in a swimming pool accident in Playa del Carmen, Mexico. By all appearances it was a result of negligence and improper safety by the hotel.

I am going to be giving a letter to you and your staff after the hearing which I ask you to look into, but clearly the family feels the Mexican justice system has not responded as they should in this case.

I do want to congratulate you. Tom Shannon was a great appointment as your Assistant Secretary for this hemisphere. As I travel and talk with leaders, they appreciate his conscientious voice on behalf of the United States. I commend you on that appointment.

Second, I want to commend you for the progress that has been made in establishing the International Law Enforcement Academy in this hemisphere. Finally, after a decade of work and trying to get it done, we now have the first class going through the class. It has worked to professionalize law enforcement and encourage cooperation across borders.

The issue I want to focus on is narcotics. Drugs enslave millions. Trafficking of narcotics funds terrorism around the world and including our own hemisphere. I have three concerns. One is our counternarcotics programs. We have made progress particularly in Colombia in the antidrug initiative, however, we recently saw a candidate opposing our programs campaign on that and win. I would like your thoughts on that.

Two, Europe's role. Forty percent of the cocaine that has shipped outside of Colombia, for example, goes to Europe. We spend hundreds of millions of dollars, but by appearances it appears Europe does very little. What can we do to convince our European friends?

Third is recognizing about 70, 80, maybe even 90 percent of the narcotics that come up to the United States through Latin America come through Mexico, and I am interested in hearing from you how we are working with the Mexican Government to stem that tide, but also what we should be doing from a border measure here in the Congress to help prevent those narcotics from crossing the Mexican border into ours.

Secretary RICE. On the last part about Mexico, the State Department along with DHS has been working to improve as a part of our Western Hemisphere initiatives—to improve border security, and, in fact, we have a significant increase in budgetary resources to border security because we recognize that, frankly, the same problem that causes your problem with drugs causes your problem with terrorism, causes your problem with arms running, corrupt border guards and the like. It is all a part of the same piece. So we definitely are trying to improve our border security, and we have increased funding for it.

The Mexican Government, I think, has been—this Mexican Government has been more cooperative than any other Mexican Government in trying to help in border enforcement. It is not perfect. We have a lot of work to do. There are often very great frustrations in terms of specific cases. But we have improved the coordination, particularly on issues of drug trade.

Now there are areas—and I am sure if Congressman Flake were still here, he would note that there are areas particularly in the Southwest where we continue to have problems with violence and the drug trade. But we—not just DHS, not just State, but also Jus-

stice has had very extensive work with the Mexicans to try and improve our ability to deal with the drug trade.

It is a very good point about the Europeans and the Colombians. I do think that this is an issue that we can bring up. There needs to be more of a sense of a kind of worldwide approach to the funding of some of these efforts on the drug trade. We have borne a lot of the responsibility, most of the responsibility, for, I think, a very successful Andean counterdrug initiative.

As you rightly say, we aren't the only recipients of this, and I think as the world looks, we are seeing also in Afghanistan where most of it ends up in Europe we are still playing a major role.

I think there is a growing understanding that the counter-narcotics problem has to be understood as a kind of global problem into which everyone contributes, because the drugs can end up anywhere.

Finally, I would just note that I do think that we are having an effect, but one thing that occurred to me, in the Bolivian case, is we are doing a major public education campaign in Afghanistan. That was the first thing the Afghans said. We have to have a public campaign that delegitimizes opium and poppy growing and that says, good Afghans don't do that.

And it occurred to me that, I don't know how aggressive we have been in recent years, maybe we take it a bit too much for granted that people know that coca growing is not a legitimate thing to do. But it is something we need to look at. As I said, we are going to have problems with the Morales Government if that remains their policy. But we are reaching out to them to see if we can get them to adopt more responsible policies in that regard.

Chairman HYDE. We have time for one more. I am sorry to have to—you guys waited all day.

But it is just impossible to add more hours to our Secretary's time.

Mr. Carnahan.

Mr. CARNAHAN. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

And thank you, Madam Secretary. I will be brief because I know this has been long. But I want to ask two questions. First, about Iran, I want to congratulate you for your successful diplomatic efforts and getting the IAEA board of directors to report Iran's nuclear activities to the UN Security Council. And as you know, the House today overwhelmingly passed a resolution to support in those efforts. My question is, really, what now? And what sanctions are appropriate for the U.S. to propose if we get down that road, and what do you believe the Security Council would support?

Secretary RICE. Well, thank you. And again, let me thank the Congress for the Iran resolution. I think it will help us.

The course now, now that we are in the Security Council, we have a whole set of tools that we would not have had outside the Security Council, which is why we spent so much energy trying to get there. But I will not want to underestimate for you the difficulty of deciding what the next steps should be and particularly trying to maintain a coalition around a set of robust steps.

Now, if Iranians continue to defy the international community in the way that they are doing, enrichment and reprocessing on 1 day,

introducing—they are introducing the UF6 into the centrifuges—a lot more people are going to be prepared to take robust measures.

But I think we have to look carefully, and we are beginning the diplomacy, or we have been doing the diplomacy with our colleagues around the world to look at what steps ought to be taken.

I wouldn't jump to the conclusion that any particular kinds of sanctions are going to be either effective or would be wise. But obviously, there are going to have to be consequences for the Iranians' continued defiance. And we are going to look at the full range. We are going to look at anything particularly that might have an effect on the Iranian regime's ability to do business.

I think we want to be careful to try and stay away from sanctions that really do target the Iranian people. I have heard, for instance, well, maybe we should deny the Iranian soccer team to go to the World Cup. I think that is the kind of thing you don't want to do. It just angers the population and drives them closer to the regime. But the regime has financial assets. The regime has activities it has to engage in.

Already, there are people who are leaving Iran because of reputational risks. There are companies that don't want to deal with Iran. I think the more that there is clearly a unified position that Iran will have to suffer consequences if it doesn't come back to the international consensus, you're going to see that, whatever we do, you will start to see more, even voluntary activity of people unwilling to deal with Iran.

But we—I don't want to get out ahead of the diplomacy. We are beginning to discuss what specific measures might be appropriate and at what time.

Mr. CARNAHAN. And one last thing with regard to a report last year about—a GAO on the rising anti-Americanism sentiment around the world, can you tell us what kind of progress has been made in this past year since that report came out?

Secretary RICE. Yes. We have put a lot of effort into revamping our public diplomacy efforts. I think we have to recognize that the United States has had to do some hard things. We have had to get rid of a couple of really bad regimes. We have had to tell people that this terrorist threat is a long-term threat. We have had to say that there are people who are hijacking Islam on behalf of this terrorist cause. And those are not always popular positions.

We have had to defend Israel's right to defend itself. We have had to say that Yasser Arafat was corrupt and not worthy of our support in leading the Palestinian people. And these are things that have in some ways been unpopular.

We have had to be tough in the war on terrorism. I went to Europe. I explained why the United States has had to be tough with terrorists within the law. I have explained why we have had to keep open certain practices, like rendition, again, things that have not made us very popular.

But that doesn't mean that we should be subject to bad information being out about us. So one of the things that Karen Hughes has spent a lot of time on is simply being able to counter what sometimes comes out as stories that are simply not true.

The story that we desecrated the Koran is still out there, even though everybody knows that that story was not true. People put

out things about Guantanamo that are simply not true. We have to do a better job of countering the propaganda against us.

We have to do a better job of getting our people out on Arab language television. And we are seeking Arabic speakers, people who can really go out and address populations.

We have to do a better job of getting people here on exchanges, students and business people, and, intellectuals here on exchanges and our people out to those countries. Because the best way to get to know America is to know Americans and to come to America. And there, the work that I am doing with Mike Chertoff to make our visa policies still safe and secure but able to allow for more freedom of movement of peoples, I think, is very important.

And, finally, I think, over time, as we speak more and more to the aspirations of people for liberty and freedom, recognizing that, particularly in the Middle East, for 60 years, we really didn't speak to those aspirations—we were willing to tolerate a kind of blind eye toward those aspirations—I think you will start to see people change.

I saw a rather desultory report this morning on some of the attitudes about Americans, but then I heard that in Afghanistan, 70 percent of Afghans have a favorable opinion of the United States. Now why do you think that is? I don't think it is because we are fighting in Afghanistan. I think it is because these people know that we gave them a chance for liberty, that we gave them a chance for a free life, that we are committed to Afghanistan. And I think you will start to see that happen around the world.

Under Secretary Hughes is, as we speak, on her way to the Middle East to engage in the conference with Muslim scholars and others about crossing these civilizations and dialogue between them.

So we have got a lot of activities under way. And it is going to be incumbent on us to do more to reach out, to have a conversation not a monologue. It is going to require us to know these cultures better.

When I was a graduate student in the Soviet studies, I studied on fellowships that were funded in part with government funding and in part with foundation funding because people wanted to have young people who would study the Soviet Union and know the language and know the culture because it was important to our national security.

Well, nothing is more important to our national security than knowing the cultures of the Middle East and knowing Farsi and knowing Arabic and knowing Chinese. And we therefore are trying to rebuild some of our capability in those ways.

In brief, as we get to know people better, and they get to know us better by a variety of means, as we counter the negative stereotypes against the United States, as we counter the propaganda against us, I think we will do better. But it is going to take some time. This is not something that is going to change overnight, but I do think it will change.

Mr. CARNAHAN. Thank you.

Secretary RICE. Thank you.

Chairman HYDE. Madam Secretary, as we close, Mr. Lantos has a short statement.

Secretary RICE. Thank you.

Mr. LANTOS. Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Mr. Chairman, if we had been in Torino, Italy, you would have the task of awarding a gold medal to our witness, which she richly deserves. I respectfully request that all Members, if the Secretary is willing, have 2 weeks to submit questions for the record.

Chairman HYDE. Without objection, and as we close, Madam Secretary, I would like to echo what Ms. Ros-Lehtinen stated regarding the importance of continuing to apply pressure on the Castro dictatorship, the need to do more to hasten a transition to democracy in Cuba, and to that end, I hope you will provide full funding of ESF resources for the USAID section 109 programs that have a proven track record in getting assistance to the growing dissident movement in Cuba.

And after that commercial, I want to say, you did a brilliant job, very instructive. And we look forward to hearing from you again. Thank you.

Secretary RICE. Thank you. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Thank you Congressman Lantos.

Chairman HYDE. The Committee stands adjourned.

[Whereupon, at 4:44 p.m., the Committee was adjourned.]

A P P E N D I X

MATERIAL SUBMITTED FOR THE HEARING RECORD

PREPARED STATEMENT OF THE HONORABLE TED POE, A REPRESENTATIVE IN
CONGRESS FROM THE STATE OF TEXAS

The United States government is responsible for the integrity of its borders and the safety of the American people. There is no debating this. However, thousands of immigrants from many nations are illegally crossing into the United States. Certain governments in the Americas have full knowledge that vast sums of their citizens are knowingly violating our laws. Yet these governments don't seem to show any desire to stem the tide of lawlessness that is originating from within their own borders. It is imperative that the Administration works with these nations to uphold the integrity of our northern and southern borders. While Congress works to find ways to secure our homeland against unlawful invasions, I am eager to see what steps will be taken to resolve this situation diplomatically.

PREPARED STATEMENT OF THE HONORABLE DAN BURTON, A REPRESENTATIVE IN CONGRESS FROM THE STATE OF INDIANA, AND CHAIRMAN, SUBCOMMITTEE ON THE WESTERN HEMISPHERE

Mr. Chairman, thank you for holding this important hearing. I want to welcome Secretary Rice and salute her courage and steadfast leadership over the course of the past year, in her capacity as Secretary of State. Thank you for being here today, to discuss with us the Administration's foreign policy budget for fiscal year 2007 (FY07).

I look forward to hearing your vision for the coming year, more about the Department's Transformation Diplomacy Reorganization, and other inter-Agency initiatives to strengthen our nation's security through international engagement and cooperation.

The year 2005 witnessed some incredible, historic events. Steps toward greater democracy were demonstrated with the elections in places like Iraq, Afghanistan, Haiti, Liberia, Egypt, and amongst the Palestinian people. The outpouring of aid from our nation's government and individual citizens helped to ease the pain and suffering of the hundreds of thousands of victims of the Pakistani earthquake, letting them know that they have a friend in the United States. I traveled to Islamabad and Muzafarabad in December and feel deeply proud of the men and women in uniform from the Task Force Eagle Aviation Brigade, the Army hospital team, naval mobile reconstruction battalion, and all the personnel delivering humanitarian aid, providing logistic support, and medical treatment. Their efforts are appreciated. I also know you share my optimism and support for the steps President Musharraf and PM Singh are taking to resolve tensions over Kashmir.

US Armed Forces are fighting the war on terror in Iraq, Afghanistan, and many other fronts alongside our allies, confronting insurgents and suicide bombers. The terrorists no longer have a base in Afghanistan and they are making futile attempts with help from Syria and Iran, to overturn Iraq's democratic government and return that country to the rule of tyrants. Their ultimate goal is to establish a radical, Pan-Islamic empire across North Africa, through the Middle East and South Asia, all the way to Indonesia. They want to acquire weapons of mass destruction, to destroy Israel, and cause massive casualties in Europe and the United States.

Our first priority remains the War on Terror. Our progress in Iraq is remarkable—despite what is reported in the papers—and we need to remember that Iraq can't transition from being under a dictatorship to a thriving democracy overnight. It takes time, just as it took time here in the US. And the Iraqi people moved one step closer to democracy when parliamentary elections were held without issue at

the end of 2005. Those election results showed a larger number of seats going to the Sunnis than in the prior election, which is great news—it shows the progress we've made in engaging all the entities that make up the Iraqi people.

We must continue to pave the way to a free, democratic Iraq—one that can spread the message of freedom to its neighbors throughout the Middle East—and not capitulate to the terrorists who are resolved to bring tyranny back to Iraq.

But Iraq is only one piece of the puzzle. Wahhabism—the dangerous interpretation of Islam to which Osama bin Laden and his cohorts prescribe—is still the law of the land in Saudi Arabia, and despite its promises to make Saudi Arabia a more tolerant place, the Kingdom continues to propagate the violent strain of Islam. They teach it, they fund it, and they adhere to it strictly. These fanatical policies lay the foundation for the creation of more terrorists, increased money to support them, and inevitably, more violent deaths of innocent people across the world, as we saw on July 7th in London.

Neighboring Iran continues to defy the international community and each day moves closer to developing weapons-grade material that can be used in a nuclear weapon against the United States or its allies. Even worse is the prospect that Iran could provide any terrorist entity or rogue state with easy access to these weapons of mass destruction. I applaud the efforts you have made and know you will continue to work with our allies to deny Iran the capabilities it is pursuing to bolster its weapons program.

Madam Secretary, as you know, we need a robust foreign policy which is able to deal with these threats and which is geared towards enabling the forces that have the potential to transform many countries in the Middle East from places of repression, to places of hope, as we are doing in Iraq.

But as the Iraqi people are fighting—and dying—for their freedom, there are dark spots across the globe where basic freedoms of human rights are eroded more and more each day. The military government of Burma, for instance, uses internationally outlawed practices such as child labor, rape and torture on its own citizens to accomplish its objectives, causing thousands of Burmese to flee their homeland. Cuba continues its long-standing practice of forbidding any political dissent whatsoever, imprisoning those who are found guilty in overcrowded facilities where they are likely to suffer malnutrition, and physical and sexual abuse. Women in Saudi Arabia are still not permitted to show their faces in public, and when they are beaten by their husbands, which happens far too frequently, they can't escape their plight because they still need written permission from a male relative in order to travel.

President Bush has reminded us that “freedom enables men and women to live lives of dignity. And freedom gives the citizens of a nation confidence in a future of peace for their children and grandchildren.” If the citizens of a country are not given their basic human rights, they are not free. We need to help those people, wherever they may be.

But these egregious violations of human rights don't just happen abroad—the practice of human trafficking in women and children, especially from Latin American countries, has landed right here in our own backyard. Women are brought here with alarming frequency and forced into prostitution, which has led to an increase in brothels right here, in the Washington DC Area, and all around the country. With the establishment of these brothels comes an increase in violence and presence of criminals and gangs in our residential areas looking to profit from them, most notably, members of the violent gang, MS-13. This is an exceptionally violent group made up primarily of illegal aliens whose initiation tactics often includes arming children with machetes to maim and murder innocent civilians or their rivals.

It is often said, “weak states pose *as great a threat* to our national security as strong states.” States in Latin America that do not overcome their “cultures of lawlessness” pose a risk to our national security and we need to provide help where we can. Mexico and Guatemala's problems with gangs are OUR problems. Haiti's problems with crime, poverty and HIV/AIDS are OUR problems. Colombia's problems with drug trafficking are OUR problems. Bolivia's problems with poverty are OUR problems. The region's problems are OUR problems.

We need to help the people of Latin America, and make conditions at home better for them. Last year we took some important steps when we passed CAFTA. This agreement will bring greater prosperity to the countries of Central America, enhancing the quality of life for its people, and creating more incentive for the people of those countries to stay and work there, with their families.

One of the cornerstones of the President's foreign policy strategy is to use trade as an engine of economic growth, to alleviate poverty and promote economic freedom. In the Andean countries like Peru and Colombia, U.S. strategic interests are

advanced when trade and investment follow the steps those governments are taking to free markets, the rule of law, and to sound macroeconomic policies.

We need to continue working to stop narco-traffickers. Drugs continue to pour into our country from Latin America everyday, affecting millions of US citizens nationwide. In fact, my home state of Indiana saw a dramatic rise in the use of methamphetamines among youngsters, many of whom have suffered overdoses and will never be the same again. We must change the conditions in Latin America which enable and empower drug smugglers and their political allies to conduct business.

Moreover, the political climate in Latin America is cause for concern. Venezuela's Hugo Chavez solidified his sharp turn to the left and during the past year he has continued to seize private property, steadily eroded the democratic principles of free speech and free press, and has worked aggressively to forge an anti-American alliance, extending from his own neighbors, like Cuba, all the way to the Middle East, with Iran. Yesterday the Vice President of Venezuela extended an invitation to Hamas, though a visit has not been confirmed.

A Leftist bloc has started to take shape in Latin America. There has been a resurgence of left-leaning movements, some of which seek open conflict with the United States. Others, like the Sandinista comeback in Nicaragua, have yet to solidify their power. Our foreign policy needs to be able to deal effectively and productively with the difficult situation we face in Latin America, and also to be able to encourage and remind countries like Nicaragua that freedom and liberty are always better than repression and tyranny.

Secretary Rice, you have demonstrated your commitment to democracy. You have handled impossible situations with grace and ease, and I believe your mastery of statecraft will enable you to help us address all these issues I have outlined today. I look forward to further collaboration with you and your colleagues on the tough challenges that lie ahead.

Mr. Chairman, once again thank you for convening this hearing.

PREPARED STATEMENT OF THE HONORABLE JOSEPH CROWLEY, A REPRESENTATIVE IN CONGRESS FROM THE STATE OF NEW YORK

Chairman Hyde and Ranking Member Lantos—thank you for conducting this important hearing on the President's international affairs budget request.

I also would like to thank Secretary Rice for coming in this afternoon to brief the Committee and answer our questions. I look forward to hearing your remarks.

Before you begin I would like to make as brief of remarks a member of Congress can regarding my views on the changes in the world since the President took office.

The world was transformed on September 11, 2001—the events of this day set into motion a battle that continues to rage on, a battle against extremists who wish to make the world into Afghanistan under the Taliban's control.

We must not allow the freedom and democracy we cherish to expire into the backward world that was once Afghanistan.

The way to ensure we don't repeat our past mistakes is by using our foreign aid to uplift those who are less fortunate and I am sad to say I do not see this budget doing that.

Our foreign affairs budget should be used to change the hearts and minds of those who wish to destroy us, not just as handouts to the countries that are supporting this struggle.

As I looked through the fiscal year 2007 budget I am troubled by the priorities the President has set out.

I represent one of the most diverse districts in the country and I know my constituents whether they are from Asia or Latin America are concerned about how we provide aid to the world.

Normally, I would see a proposed 14% increase as a positive step but not when the increase comes at the expense of existing programs that have continually been successes.

The cuts focused on what should remain our countries core development programs.

We have been a country that has always paid special attention to humanitarian issues and I believe this budget goes against the precedent we have set in helping the worlds neediest.

I support the ideal of the Millennium Challenge Account (MCA) but this program is still in its infancy.

I cannot support the MCA at the expense of programs that provide basic education, child survival and maternal health care.

These are not the only accounts that are taking hits—I am troubled that I have yet to see an all accounts number for international family planning and I urge you to provide that number today.

I trust this is not a stall tactic because of the President's pledge not to let international family planning fall below the \$425 million level.

This budget also cuts substantial funding from Latin America and the Caribbean at a time when we should be focusing more attention on our neighbor to the South not less.

The 21% cut to development assistance is unacceptable at a time when it is in our national security interest to ensure a stability and security of our neighbors to the South.

We must also concentrate on other areas of the globe that are important to our strategic interests and I'll be headed to one such region later tonight.

South Asia is an important region to the U.S. not only because of its large population but because we must do all we can to support our fellow democracies.

Since the inception of the President's Emergency Plan for HIV/AIDS Relief (PEPFAR), I have been calling for the inclusion of India.

Most of the responses I have gotten from the Administration revolve around the fact that while India is not one of the 15 nations receiving PEPFAR funding they are the 16th largest recipient of HIV/AIDS funding.

While this sounds like a good response, India has the second most HIV/AIDS cases at 5.1 million and receives the lowest dollar per person ration at \$5.70 compared with say Guyana with a reported 11,000 case at \$1272.73.

We need to be doing more to assist India before they surpass South Africa and the situation gets beyond all of our control.

As you know, I hold a special place in my heart for Bangladesh, not just because I represent the largest population of Bangladeshi's in the country but because I deeply care about the future of the second most populous Muslim nation.

Bangladesh has been having problems over the past few years, which is why I decided to make my third visit next week.

It is not in the interest of the world to see Bangladesh continue down its current path and I hope the message I carry and the friendship and trust I have built with the people and the parties of Bangladesh will put them on the right path toward an open and transparent society.

I'll end my remarks here but we must push the issue of democracy forward but not just by holding elections but building the transparent institutions that will sustain a democracy.

Thank you.

PREPARED STATEMENT OF THE HONORABLE CONNIE MACK, A REPRESENTATIVE IN
CONGRESS FROM THE STATE OF FLORIDA

I want to thank Chairman Hyde for having this important hearing today.

I also want to thank Secretary Rice for coming before the committee this afternoon. I appreciate your sharing your insight and candor today.

Twenty years ago, President Ronald Reagan and the United States were very active in encouraging the adoption of democracy and free markets as political and economic models to promote freedom, security, and prosperity throughout Latin America.

These ideals helped defeat the insurgencies and the communist influence advanced by the former Soviet Union and Cuba.

However, in the decades that have passed, the United States has witnessed a growing and gathering storm that is brewing in our own backyard in Latin America. Governing power is growing ever-more concentrated in just a few hands, while democratic institutions have been eroded.

For example, in Venezuela, with Hugo Chavez at the helm, he is using state-owned oil money to underwrite his iron-fisted control of the Venezuelan people, and to back his alliances with leftist leaders and causes throughout Latin America.

In a September interview with Newsweek, Chavez was clear in his motives: "I am a revolutionary. I have to support the left-wing movements in Latin America. We have to change Latin America."

Chavez is snuffing-out a free press and free speech with new laws that impose jail terms on journalists for "gravely offending" the president or government.

And, to ensure his unfettered ability to spread his anti-freedom messages throughout the region, Chavez last year launched his own television network, Telesur. In recent weeks, Telesur announced a formal alliance with Al-Jazeera, bol-

stering Chavez's socialist-based propaganda with the resources and reach of pro-terrorist programming.

PREPARED STATEMENT OF THE HONORABLE GREGORY W. MEEKS, A REPRESENTATIVE
IN CONGRESS FROM THE STATE OF NEW YORK

Madam Secretary:

It is always a pleasure to see you, thank you for your testimony this afternoon, I appreciate you sharing with us the goals of the Department and how you will promote democracy throughout the world.

Madam Secretary, you may not be aware of this but yesterday, I along with a bipartisan group of Members launched the Middle East Economic Partnership Caucus because we believe that through engagement, stability will develop and the best way to engage the region is for people to benefit economically. And, I look forward to working with you to build this global stability and bring about freedom to those being repressed.

In my work on the International Relations Committee, I have made it my mission to build diplomatic relations with democratically elected leaders throughout the world. I am hoping that your State Department will join me in engaging democratically elected leaders such as Hugo Chavez in Venezuela and will reach out to build bridges across Latin America by agreeing to work with the newly elected leader of Bolivia Evo Morales and the democratically elected leader of Chile, Michelle Bachelet and other democratic governments even if we don't necessarily agree with their politics.

I understand the need to reorganize the Dept. of State and I think the proposal you have put forward is ambitious. However, I would encourage you to do your best to ensure your State Department represents the ethnic diversity of the United States because a cookie cutter system of recruitment and promotion has not worked to spread democracy throughout the globe.

In addition, all post including hardship posts assignments should evenly represent the diversity of this country. It has been my experience that most post throughout the world does not reflect America and the more diverse our presence abroad is, the more we stand to gain. I would encourage you to share this message with the new Director of Foreign Assistance as well.

Madam Secretary, our relationship with the World must yield economic benefits to those most severely impacted from hundreds of years of oppression. As we engage our neighbors in the Western Hemisphere, I have notice a serious cut in our foreign assistance dollars therefore, leaving little money for infrastructure development particular in the Andean regions. These cuts are severely affecting African Latinos and indigenous communities. How can we promote democracy and the benefits thereof while people don't have potable water or working sewage systems?

I would caution you on the cuts currently being made in the region because it gives the impression that if we don't like you then we will not work with you and that is wrong. We are rapidly losing friends and influencing no one in Latin America.

RESPONSES FROM THE HONORABLE CONDOLEEZZA RICE, THE SECRETARY OF STATE,
U.S. DEPARTMENT OF STATE, TO QUESTIONS SUBMITTED FOR THE RECORD BY THE
HONORABLE J. GRESHAM BARRETT, A REPRESENTATIVE IN CONGRESS FROM THE
STATE OF SOUTH CAROLINA

Question:

As you know, last summer U.S. and Russian negotiators tentatively resolved the question of liability protections for important cooperative programs related to non-proliferation of weapons of mass destruction.

a) What steps are necessary for this issue to be permanently resolved?

Response:

Last July, U.S. and Russian negotiators completed the text of a protocol on liability protections for the 2000 U.S.-Russian plutonium disposition agreement. The Russian government has indicated that it recently approved that protocol for signature, but is re-examining what it claims is a minor issue related to conforming the Russian-language version to the English text. We hope that issue can be resolved quickly so that the protocol can be signed in early June. The United States and Russia both envision that the liability provisions in this protocol could also be used, as appropriate, in future cooperative nonproliferation and security-related agreements between the governments where such protections are required. Each such agreement

would have to specify certain parameters (such as duration) for applicability of those protections to its programs and activities.

Question:

As part of the President's Advanced Energy Initiative, the Administration has unveiled the Global Nuclear Energy Partnership or G-NEP. Under this program, the U.S. would work with its international partners to create a safe, orderly system of worldwide nuclear power generation without adding to the danger of weapons proliferation.

- a) What countries is the U.S. currently seeking to partner with on this important initiative and how has the message been received?*
- b) What is the size and scope of the program?*

Response:

a) The United States has completed initial consultations with China, France, Japan, Russia, the United Kingdom, and the International Atomic Energy Agency on the key objectives of GNEP. It is anticipated that future technology development and demonstration would be coordinated with nations having advanced civilian nuclear energy programs. In the course of meetings held since February 2006, France, Japan, and Russia have agreed in principle to substantial coordinated R&D collaboration with the U.S. in preparation for, and execution of, the GNEP technology demonstrations. The U.S. has also met directly with many other countries for detailed discussions, including Canada and South Korea. There has been general agreement on the vision for the GNEP technical strategies. Once the new technology is demonstrated, we would envision working with a much larger number of nations who are potential recipients for fuel supply and spent fuel management services.

b) GNEP establishes an integrated path forward for the expansion of nuclear energy in the United States and abroad in a manner that will meet nuclear non-proliferation goals, increase energy security, abate pollution and avoid greenhouse gas emissions. In partnership with other like-minded nations, the U.S. would work to establish a fuel leasing and advanced recycling program that would provide fuel services to nations who chose to operate reactors but not operate complete fuel cycles. Another GNEP goal is the design and deployment of exportable nuclear reactors that are well-suited to the infrastructure of developing countries and that incorporate improved safety and proliferation-resistant technologies. Through GNEP, the U.S. would accelerate the development of proliferation resistant fuel recycling technology that could reduce the amount of waste requiring geologic disposal, thus reducing the need for additional repositories as nuclear generating capacity increases in the future. The cost for the first three years of the program is estimated to be \$1.8 billion, to focus on the research and development needed to design and develop detailed cost and schedule estimates for the three demonstration facilities that are proposed under GNEP—an engineering scale demonstration of the Uranium Extraction-plus technology, the Advanced Burner Reactor technology, and the Advanced Fuel Cycle Facility. By mid-2008, the Department of Energy will have developed cost and schedule estimates of sufficient quality to inform a decision on proceeding to construction and demonstration.

Question:

I am concerned about the recent developments in Iran pertaining to their non-compliance with their non-proliferation obligations to the UN Security Council. If the Russian Federation does not terminate its arrangements with Iran to provide technical expertise in developing their nuclear technologies, then the FY07 budget includes language specifying 60% of the \$514 million requested as "Assistance for the Independent States of the Former Soviet Union" will be withheld from the Russian Federation.

- a) What criteria is the State Department using for this determination?*
- b) Is it the State Department's objective to put financial pressure on other countries to agree with our position on Iran?*

Response:

Iran's pursuit of a nuclear weapons capability in violation of its Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty (NPT) obligations, and its 20-year history of serious IAEA safeguards violations in hiding those efforts, are of serious concern to the Administration and to the international community. We are working diligently with others in the international community, including Russia, to raise pressure on Iran to come back into compliance with its obligations and to give the world confidence that it has abandoned its nuclear weapons efforts.

Section (e)(1) under the heading "Assistance for the Independent States of the Former Soviet Union" in the Foreign Operations, Export Financing, and Related

Programs Appropriations Act, 2006 (P.L. 109–102) states that of certain types of funds allocated for assistance for the Government of the Russian Federation, sixty percent shall be withheld from obligation until the President determines and certifies that the Government of Russia has (A) terminated implementation of arrangements to provide Iran with technical expertise, training, technology, or equipment necessary to develop a nuclear reactor, related nuclear research facilities or programs, or ballistic missile capability; and (B) is providing full access to international non-government organizations providing humanitarian relief to refugees and internally displaced persons in Chechnya.

This provision has appeared in appropriations legislation for the past several years. The President has never made this certification and, thus, sixty percent of such assistance to the Government of Russia has been withheld from obligation.

This provision is only one of the levers we could potentially wield in our ongoing efforts to bring Iran into compliance with the international community's requirements. Assuming the provision is included in Fiscal Year 2007 appropriations legislation, we will examine the situation and determine whether such a determination and certification should be made.

Russia agrees that Iran must not develop a nuclear weapons capability, and has been working closely with the U.S. at the IAEA Board of Governors, in the UN Security Council, and elsewhere, to address this issue. Russia joined at the IAEA Board of Governors meeting in February in reporting Iran to the UN Security Council, and is working with us at the UNSC to add the Council's weight to the steps called for in previous IAEA Board resolutions.

The President and many of the world's leaders have repeatedly made clear that a nuclear-armed Iran is unacceptable. A nuclear-armed Iran would have profoundly negative consequences for regional and international security, and could possibly shatter the international nonproliferation regime. We are working with many countries, including Russia, to prevent the transfer to Iran of equipment or expertise that it could use to advance its nuclear weapons and missile programs. Russia shares our strategic goal of persuading Iran to abandon its pursuit of a nuclear weapons capability, and we will continue to work closely with Russia, the EU-3 and others to persuade Iran to change its current course.

RESPONSES FROM THE HONORABLE CONDOLEEZZA RICE, THE SECRETARY OF STATE, U.S. DEPARTMENT OF STATE, TO QUESTIONS SUBMITTED FOR THE RECORD BY THE HONORABLE EARL BLUMENAUER, A REPRESENTATIVE IN CONGRESS FROM THE STATE OF OREGON

Question:

On December 1, 2005, President Bush signed the "Senator Paul Simon Water for the Poor Act" into law, making access to safe water and sanitation for developing countries a specific policy objective of United States foreign assistance programs and directing the State Department, in broad consultation, to develop a strategy to further this objective. I understand that the responsibility for developing this strategy has been delegated to the Bureau of Oceans and International Environmental and Scientific Affairs (OES). I am concerned, however, that OES does not yet have the support to overcome obstacles they identify in current foreign assistance practices to meeting the intent, scope, and requirements of the law, including directing assistance to the places with the greatest need, coordinating and integrating United States water and sanitation assistance programs with other United States development assistance programs, coordinating United States water and sanitation assistance programs with programs of other donor countries and entities, and meeting the goal of seeking to reduce by one-half from the baseline year 1990 the proportion of people who are unable to reach or afford safe drinking water and the proportion of people without access to basic sanitation by 2015. I am also concerned that the implementation of the Act will be constrained by OES' capacity, despite the best efforts of its skilled public servants.

Do the State Department officials to whom the development of this strategy has been designated have your support in making the necessary changes to current foreign assistance practices to fulfill the intent, scope, and requirements of the Senator Paul Simon Water for the Poor Act? How do you intend to ensure that these officials have the necessary capacity to do the same?

Response:

Our report in response to the legislation will be submitted to Congress on June 1. I have designated the OES Bureau as the lead for this effort. They have worked closely with the full range of functional and regional bureaus in the department,

USAID, and many other agencies, including the EPA, USACE, CDC, USGS, and NOAA, among others. Under Secretary Dobriansky has personally followed this process, meeting regularly with Assistant Secretary Claudia McMurray and the staff drafting the report, and keeping me informed of progress. Assistant Secretary McMurray chaired the April Town Hall meeting, an important part of our external consultation process, and has been in regular communication about the development of this report with Assistant Administrator Jackee Schafer, of USAID's EGAT Bureau.

The preparation of this report is taking place as we reexamine our development assistance priorities and approaches. Our new approach recognizes the role that provision of basic services, including water, can play in building and sustaining democratic, well-governed states that respond to the needs of their people. I have asked OES to work with the Director of Foreign Assistance to develop an approach that is fully consistent with our overall development assistance strategy.

Question:

Last month, the administration pledged \$52 million for the Asia-Pacific Partnership on Clean Development and Climate to spur a new generation in energy production technology to temper the future growth in projected carbon dioxide emissions. How much of this money is new and additional rather than a re-labeling of existing technology transfer funds? How much of this will be directed at nuclear and coal technologies? What role will proven, commercially-viable technologies such as wind power, solar power, and sustainable biomass play? Will the partnership include any market based incentives to encourage the deployment of clean energy technologies?

Response:

As part of the President's Fiscal Year 2007 Budget, the Administration has proposed \$52 million in new and additional funding to support the work of the Asia-Pacific Partnership on Clean Development and Climate.

The Partnership advances U.S. goals of enhancing energy security, reducing harmful air pollution, and reducing greenhouse gas emissions intensity in the context of sustained economic growth.

Partner countries are prioritizing the deployment of a range of cleaner energy technologies, including renewable energy technologies. The Partnership's Task Force on Renewable Energy and Distributed Generation is focusing on expanding the use of technologies to harness wind power, solar power, hydropower, geothermal energy, and bioenergy.

Partnership task forces will also work to expand the use of cleaner coal technologies, recognizing their potential for cost-effectively reducing emissions of air pollutants and greenhouse gases.

In addition, the Partnership will explore market based approaches to encourage the deployment of clean energy technologies.

The Partnership has no current plans to undertake activities related to nuclear technologies.

Question:

Hunger and food security continue to be critical humanitarian issues across much of sub-Saharan Africa and parts of Asia, as well as a major impediment to poverty reduction and economic productivity. I am pleased that the Fiscal Year 2007 budget request provides the flexibility to make 1/4 of emergency food aid funds available for local and regional purchase or as cash contributions. This will make food aid less expensive, more effective, and allow it to be more responsive to the impact on local markets. However, some have expressed concerns that these proposals for flexibility are an attempt to weaken the food aid program, reduce its size, and divide its supporters. Can you assure the Committee that your intent is to strengthen, rather than weaken, food aid programs?

Response:

It is our intent to strengthen the program by making it more effective. At the same time, the bulk of our program will continue to benefit American business as it has done in the past. We believe, however, that regardless of this, the groups who have historically supported food aid will continue to see the value of preventing famine and promoting food security abroad. Despite increasing pressure to reduce spending levels overall, the Administration's budget request to Congress did not cut food aid for humanitarian crises. However, in the face of mounting emergency food aid needs, the new flexibility to purchase food aid locally will enable the United States to more effectively carry out the primary purpose of this program which is to save lives.

Question:

As a strong supporter of foreign assistance, I share the goals behind recently announced efforts to reform foreign assistance and make programs at the State Department and USAID more effective. At the same time, a number of questions have been raised about whether the new “transformational diplomacy” framework and efforts to bring USAID programs more closely under the control of the State Department will weaken the critical poverty reduction mission in favor of a focus primarily on governance and well-governed countries and whether long-term development efforts will be overtaken by short-term political and geo-strategic considerations. These fears have been exacerbated by yet another round of deep cuts in the President’s budget to core development accounts such as Development Assistance and Child Survival and Health and by the recent release of the “Policy Framework for Bilateral Foreign Aid.” Will proven programs aimed at poverty reduction and promoting human productivity such as basic education, health, agricultural development, drinking water and sanitation, and microfinance become less of a focus in U.S. foreign assistance programs under this new policy?

Response:

The new Framework for Foreign Assistance defines five objectives that, if achieved, support the transformational diplomacy goal of “helping to build and sustain democratic, well-governed states that will respond to the needs of their people and conduct themselves responsibly in the international system”. These five objectives are: Peace and Security, Governing Justly and Democratically, Investing in People, Economic Growth and Humanitarian Assistance. Within the objective of Investing in People, you will find programs related to health, education, and the environment. Within the objective of economic growth you will find programs related to increasing agricultural productivity and the use of tools such as microfinance. Poverty reduction and improved human productivity will be achieved with USG support of well performing programs across the five objective areas that are building capacity at a local level.

Implementation of the new Framework does not imply less focus on any one particular area of foreign assistance programs. Rather, the Framework serves to align U.S. foreign assistance programs with U.S. foreign policy goals and illustrate the opportunity costs associated with investing in one objective over another. As the Framework is applied to fiscal year 2007 funds, we will better assess the programmatic changes associated with this new approach. We look forward to briefing Congress throughout this process.

Question:

At the 2002 Monterrey Conference on Financing for Development, the United States agreed to a commitment to provide 0.7% of gross national product (GNP) as official development assistance (ODA) to developing countries by 2015. Despite recent increases, in 2004 the United States provided only 0.16% GNP in ODA, ranking it 21 out of 22 major donor countries in terms of ODA as a percentage of GDP. Is it still the policy of the United States to meet its commitment to provide 0.7% by 2015? If so, how does the administration intend to make that happen? If not, have development finance needs changed, how does the administration intend to develop new resources to finance international development, and why does the United States appear to have a lesser commitment to international development?

Response:

The United States has never endorsed global aid volume targets. It sees the setting of targets as impractical (technically and legally) and timeframes for achievement as politically unacceptable. However, as stated in paragraph 42 of the Monterrey Consensus, the United States and the donor community will make efforts to move *towards* additional ODA (0.7%) but not as a binding commitment. Some other donors then and subsequently have specifically committed themselves to the 0.7% target.

At Monterrey in March 2002, the President announced an increase of 50 percent in U.S. foreign assistance by 2006, which translates into a \$5 billion increase in Official Development Assistance (ODA) by 2006 from the 2000 base year total of \$10.0 billion. The United States surpassed its Monterrey commitment in FY 2003, three years in advance, when we achieved an ODA level of \$16.3 billion. The United States continued to increase its ODA levels to \$19.7 billion in 2004 and \$27.5 billion in 2005—nearly tripled the 2000 level which raised the ODA/GDP ratio to 0.22 percent. The surge in U.S. ODA in 2000–2005 is the largest increase in U.S. foreign assistance since the Marshall Plan. The United States is the largest donor of ODA, more than double the ODA level for Japan in 2005.

The United States emphasizes the dynamic role of private flows and the responsibility of developing countries themselves in the attainment of sustainable development. The Monterrey Consensus highlights these positions and clearly states the complementary, not primary, role of ODA in promoting democracy and economic growth.

In terms of total economic engagement, the United States is the largest net importer of goods from developing countries as well as the largest source of private capital and private giving. The United States Official Development Assistance aims to leverage and expand these private flows which, in concert with domestic resources and good governance in the developing countries, represent the new resources for sustainable international development.

Question:

Similarly, in 2000 the United States joined the other members of the United Nations in unanimously adopting the Millennium Declaration, containing the Millennium Development Goals. However, in advance of the 2005 Millennium Summit, media reports indicate that Ambassador John Bolton attempted to remove every reference to the Millennium Development Goals from the Summit's draft outcome document. Does the administration support achieving of the Millennium Development Goals? If so, was Ambassador Bolton acting on his own authority in contravention of administration policy?

Response:

As President Bush has made clear, the Administration strongly supports the Millennium Development Goals (also called the MDGs).

In 2000, countries, including the United States, endorsed a set of time-bound goals related to poverty, hunger, health, education, and HIV/AIDS in the Millennium Declaration.

Subsequent to the adoption of the Millennium Declaration, the UN Secretariat assigned indicators to the goals. These indicators were not endorsed by governments. Some of them violate U.S. policy, for example, the official development assistance (ODA) target of 0.7% of donors' GNP.

Over time there developed an ambiguity as to the meaning of MDGs; some parties used them to refer to the agreed-to goals; some used them to refer to the indicators.

In the negotiations of the 2005 Summit Outcome Document, we successfully negotiated a definition of the Millennium Development Goals in the Outcome Document, defining the term to refer to the goals adopted in the Millennium Declaration of 2000.

Question:

I understand that the State Department's Architectural Design Branch is currently pushing all new office buildings to achieve LEED™ Certification and that three new U.S. embassies in Cote d'Ivoire, Armenia, and Bulgaria all feature recycled materials, daylighting, and landscape plant selections that don't require irrigation systems. What are the State Department's plans to promote the use of green building techniques and standards and what Congress can do to help the Department in this effort?

Response:

The building industry has an internationally recognized system to measure sustainable design and construction that is promulgated by the U.S. Green Building Council (USGBC). This system is the Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design (LEED) Green Building Rating System. LEED focuses on the following categories:

1. Sustainable Sites
2. Water Efficiency
3. Energy & Atmosphere
4. Materials & Resources, and
5. Indoor Environmental Quality

The Bureau of Overseas Buildings Operations (OBO) began using the system in 1999 as a yardstick to benchmark achievements in sustainable design and construction. OBO's Design and Engineering Division (DE) requires new embassy and consulate compounds to earn 26 (out of 69) points defined by the LEED Green Building Rating System. The Architectural Design Branch of DE is currently finalizing the LEED certification for the new embassy compound in Sofia, Bulgaria. Two other pilot projects used LEED: Abidjan, Cote d'Ivoire, and Yerevan, Armenia. These two

projects included many environmental features and represent best practice in green building technology.

The embassy compound in Sofia earned points for site selection, brownfield redevelopment, reduced site disturbance, alternative transportation, heat island effect, water efficient irrigation, building water conservation, optimizing energy performance, chlorofluorocarbons reduction, commissioning, low emitting materials, thermal comfort, indoor chemical pollutant control, enhanced indoor air quality, enhanced life safety and security, and non-chemical water treatment of cooling tower water. The overall success of these three pilot projects was the catalyst for the present requirements to earn LEED certification.

In January 2006, the Department of State joined 18 other Federal Agencies in signing the Federal Leadership in High Performance and Sustainable Buildings Memorandum of Understanding (MOU), which defined and galvanized Federal commitment to sustainable design and construction. OBO's Sustainability Program:

1. Refines Policy & Contract Requirements
2. Pilots Emerging Technology
3. Collaborates with USGBC, Federal Agencies, and the Office of the Federal Environmental Executive
4. Continues Education & Training, and
5. Formally Recognizes Outstanding Performance by Design-Build Contractors

OBO is working to earn formal LEED certification for several other new embassy compounds including Panama City, Panama and Athens, Greece. At the time when security is of paramount importance to Americans overseas, OBO continues to produce high-performing buildings that are successful models of sustainable design and construction. OBO has recently submitted its Standard Embassy Design (SED) for evaluation and LEED certification so that green building features are embedded in the prototype design given to its Design/Build contractors. USGBC has partially approved the SED application.

The successful implementation of sustainable technologies and strategies is challenged by budget decisions that focus on the initial outlays without consideration of the long-term savings and environmental benefits that will accrue through efficient operation over the life of the facility. We appreciate Congressional support of our programs, as well as interest in our LEED and sustainable building initiatives.

Two more of OBO's recent energy conservation projects are discussed in the attachment to this response.

ATTACHMENT—NOTABLE OBO ENERGY CONSERVATION PROJECT

OBO has undertaken two projects to achieve sustainability in our building program through energy conservation: "Mag lev" chillers at Embassy Tokyo and a photovoltaic system at the U.S. Mission to the UN at Geneva.

Tokyo

At Embassy Tokyo, OBO is installing Magnetic Levitation (mag lev) Bearing Air Conditioning Technology that the Multistack Corporation of West Salem, WI manufactures. "TurboCor" breakthrough "mag lev" chiller technology fulfills an engineering promise to reduce motor and compressor bearing friction and heat, therefore, wasted energy. The benefits include:

- Unlike conventional oil lubricated compressors, the friction reduction promises sustainability in the form of peak efficiency over the life of the compressor.
- Oil-less compressors increase refrigeration cycle efficiency.
- Reduced friction and improved refrigeration efficiency lower the Embassy's electrical energy cost.
- The "TurboCor" eliminates lubrication cost entirely and reduces maintenance costs.
- There is no need for a cooling tower and associate systems and maintenance. The system is tiny in comparison with the chiller and cooling tower system it replaces.
- The "TurboCor" chiller consists of modules that can be lifted to the roof in the Embassy elevator eliminating the need for a costly crane hoist.
- The six "TurboCor" modules significantly reduce the mass on the roof in this earthquake prone city, which improves safety.

Geneva

Another OBO effort was the Geneva Photo Voltaic Project. It is the largest solar energy project (118 kWh peak) ever installed at a U.S. Government building overseas and was inaugurated at the U.S. Mission to the UN in Geneva on August 31, 2005—a joint Swiss-American public-private partnership in Renewable Energy Technologies.

- The payback period of 9.04 years includes: Capital costs; Swiss subsidy; electric revenue; and cooling and façade costs avoided.
- This “High Performance and Sustainable Building project supports the President’s National Energy Policy.
- General Charles E. Williams, OBO director, described it as OBO’s flagship projects for the State Department’s efforts to make U.S. embassies worldwide “greener” and more self-sufficient.
- The progressive energy policies of Geneva’s Service Cantonale de L’Energie (ScanE) and the local power utility Services Industriels de Geneva (SIG) are central to the project.

RESPONSES FROM THE HONORABLE CONDOLEEZZA RICE, THE SECRETARY OF STATE, U.S. DEPARTMENT OF STATE, TO QUESTIONS SUBMITTED FOR THE RECORD BY THE HONORABLE DAN BURTON, A REPRESENTATIVE IN CONGRESS FROM THE STATE OF INDIANA

Question:

I understand that the consular affairs office at the U.S. Embassy in Seoul has not been able to meet the growing demand for non-immigrant visas to the U.S. due to lack of space and personnel, resulting in unnecessary delays and frustration for our Korean friends, not to mention substantial loss of economic opportunity to the United States, particularly in the travel and tourism sectors.

In light of this situation and considering that Korea has long been one of our closest allies, is there something we can do to help put more resources into our Consulate in Seoul? Or, alternatively, in your efforts to reorganize and reallocate the State Department’s diplomatic assets, is it possible to open up one or more additional consular offices in other Korean cities, perhaps first by reopening the U.S. Consulate in Pusan? I appreciate your thoughts on this matter.

Response:

Prior to August 1, 2003, the date the law mandating that a consular officer personally interview almost all applicants came into effect, the U.S. Embassy in Seoul interviewed about 35 percent of Koreans desiring U.S. visas. Today, almost all visa applicants must appear for personal interviews, putting significant demands on our staffing and physical space.

In the past 24 months, the Department of State has assigned five additional Korean-speaking consular officers to assist with the added workload, bringing the total number of officers adjudicating visas to 37, one of the largest such complements worldwide. In addition, the consular section has been renovated and 13 more interviewing windows added. As a result of these improvements, as of May 15, 2006, the wait for a tourist or student visa appointment was only three days. Visa demand in Korea continues to increase, however, and there is simply no more room in the present facility for more staff or windows. The planned construction of a new Embassy (and larger consular section) is still several years away, delayed by the discovery of historically significant artifacts on several sites under consideration.

Opening another Consulate in Korea would require significant investment of new financial and personnel resources. We have no plans to expand at the current time but continue to look at ways in which the visa process can be made even less burdensome.

Question:

What is your view on the recent Broadcasting Board of Governors vote to eliminate the Voice of America (VOA) Turkish Service? Turkey, a predominantly Muslim country with a secular population, has been a steadfast ally of the United States and I strongly believe Turkey should continue to play a prominent role in U.S.-EU and U.S.-Middle East relations. With the growth of alternative media sources in Turkey, such as Al Jazeera, shouldn’t the United States continue to broadcast its message to the people of Turkey via VOA as an important part of President Bush’s Middle East Peace Initiative?

Response:

The Administration's FY 07 budget focuses on U.S. foreign policy priorities and the struggle against extremism. In order to fund high priority enhancements, difficult choices had to be made.

One of the factors taken into consideration in considering language service cuts was audience reach. In the case of VOA Turkish radio, audience share appears to be quite low (less than 2 percent for radio). Another factor was the presence of a vibrant, competitive local media environment. In Turkey, audiences have access to hundreds of private TV and satellite channels, local radio stations, and print publications.

VOA Turkish television continues to broadcast a weekly 30-minute program that initial surveys indicate has higher audience reach than radio, but BBG is validating these results.

Question:

The Administration's request for international basic education for Fiscal Year 2007 is \$256 million. The President highlighted the importance of basic education, especially the unmet educational needs of girls throughout the world, in the State of the Union. I applaud you in joining the President by including education among the elements critical to transformational diplomacy. Why then has the Administration decided to cut funding drastically to programs that support the transformational change that is the stated goal of our foreign assistance?

Response:

The new Strategic Framework for Foreign Assistance describes five objectives that, if achieved, will support the transformational diplomacy goal of "helping to build and sustain democratic, well-governed states that will respond to the needs of their people and conduct themselves responsibly in the international system". One of the key programs in the Investing in People objective is basic education for women and girls. The importance of these programs is also reflected in the \$70million increase in the FY07 request over the FY06 requested level for basic education.

RESPONSES FROM THE HONORABLE CONDOLEEZZA RICE, THE SECRETARY OF STATE, U.S. DEPARTMENT OF STATE, TO QUESTIONS SUBMITTED FOR THE RECORD BY THE HONORABLE JOSEPH CROWLEY, A REPRESENTATIVE IN CONGRESS FROM THE STATE OF NEW YORK

Question:

In addition, given the funding cuts to basic education from the Development Assistance Account (DA) and that funding for basic education from other accounts, such as the Economic Support Fund (ESF), is focused on only a few countries that are strategically important to the U.S., such as Afghanistan, Iraq and Sudan:

- a) How will the funding cuts to DA impact the overall U.S. assistance for basic education?*
- b) Will the number of countries receiving basic education assistance be reduced?*
- c) What countries will be affected?*
- d) What are the Administration's priorities for basic education funding?*
- e) How many fewer children will be educated because of this dramatic cut in funding?*

Response:

The decline in DA funding for education reflects a decline in the overall level of DA funding. The proportion of basic education within the DA request remains unchanged from FY 2006. At the same time, the ESF request has increased and will partially offset the lower levels of DA. Please see accompanying chart.

Basic Education: US Dollars (Millions)*

Fiscal Year	Account	Africa	Asia and Near East	Europe and Eurasia	Latin America and Caribbean	Democracy, Conflict & Humanitarian Assistance	Economic Growth, Agriculture & Trade	Office of Global Development Alliances	Grand Total
2005 Enacted	DA	144.892	94.300	-	47.090	1.529	9.278	-	297.089
	ESF	1.200	108.016	-	-	-	-	-	109.216
	2005 Enacted Total	146.092	202.316	-	47.090	1.529	9.278	-	406.305
2006 Enacted	DA	185.412	108.332	-	57.090	-	10.692	-	361.526
	ESF	4.000	145.734	-	-	-	-	-	149.734
	2006 Enacted Total	189.412	254.066	-	57.090	-	10.692	-	511.260
2007 Request	DA	127.304	81.125	-	40.387	-	7.587	1.000	257.403
	ESF	1.780	188.354	-	1.000	-	-	-	191.134
	2007 Request Total	129.084	269.479	-	41.387	-	7.587	1.000	448.537

* amounts are post-rescission

Forty-seven out of 49 countries that are receiving basic education assistance in FY 2006 will continue to receive assistance in basic education in FY 2007. Of the original 49, 45 of these countries will receive DA and/or ESF funds.

- In Madagascar and Rwanda, specific basic education interventions are coming to successful completion in FY 2006, e.g., by fulfilling our commitment to provide basic education to genocide orphans in Rwanda.
- The elimination of basic education funding for Benin in the FY 2007 request was a result of the decision to better focus and concentrate DA resources in Africa. With the exception of a small amount of democracy governance funding targeted at fighting corruption, the Benin program in the FY 07 request now addresses only child survival and health issues.
- Malawi's DA program was also reduced in size and scope in order to better concentrate scarce DA resources where the greatest results could be achieved. As a result, funding for basic education was eliminated.

The FY 2007 budget request provides for increases in Basic Education funding for: Kenya, Liberia, Mali, Namibia, Nigeria, Somalia, Uganda, Afghanistan, Cambodia, Jordan, Morocco, Yemen, Bolivia, and the Dominican Republic.

The Administration's priorities for basic education funding adapted to individual countries' needs are to improve early childhood development, primary education and secondary education, delivered in formal and non-formal settings. It includes literacy, numeracy, and other basic skills programs for youth and adults.

Many factors besides USAID programming levels affect school enrollment. Effective assistance for basic education demonstrates results and complements other forms of assistance in integrated country strategies. Our objective is to increase access to a quality education, through both formal and informal channels, for all, in the developing world in the context of rapidly expanding school enrollments.

Question:

Given the strong support from key leaders like Bishop Tutu, the support of the United States and 9 other countries on the Council, and the support of the Secretary General, isn't the next logical step that we press for a binding UN Security Council resolution on Burma in the coming months?

Response:

The U.S. has led the way in pressing for United Nations action on Burma, and we are engaged on many levels.

As we have said consistently, we believe the situation in Burma is so dire—and the threats emanating from the country so clear—that the UN Security Council has a critical role to play in addressing the tragedy unfolding there. There is clearly growing concern among Council members about the deplorable situation in Burma. We look forward to Under Secretary General for Political Affairs Gambari's report to the Security Council on his recent trip there.

We will work with other Council members to find a way to support Under Secretary General Gambari's efforts to press for the release of political detainees, including Aung San Suu Kyi, and to promote inclusive and genuine political dialogue in Burma that empowers Burma's people to decide their own future. We are not ruling out any Council action, up to and including a possible resolution. At the same time, we also continue to coordinate our bilateral diplomatic efforts with partners and key players in the region.

As President Bush said in Kyoto, "The people of Burma live in the darkness of tyranny—but the light of freedom shines in their hearts. They want their liberty—and one day, they will have it."

Question:

In his FY07 budget, the president proposes deleting important condom non-disparagement language, which Congress included in the FY06 spending bill. This language ensures that the information overseas health clinics provide to clients about condoms, in the context of global AIDS work, be medically accurate and include the public-health benefits and failure rates of condom use. May I assume that you agree that groups receiving U.S. funds to provide information about the role of condoms in preventing HIV/AIDS should provide information that is complete and medically accurate?

Response:

The President's Emergency Plan for AIDS Relief (PEPFAR) programs support the provision of full and accurate information about correct and consistent condom use

reducing, but not eliminating, the risk of HIV infection; and support access to condoms for those most at risk for transmitting or becoming infected with HIV.

The ABC (Abstinence, Be Faithful, and Correct and Consistent Condom Use) approach recognizes that comprehensive services, including risk reduction and risk avoidance counseling, linkages to HIV counseling and testing, treatment of sexually transmitted infections (STIs), and promotion of correct and consistent condom use, are essential means of reducing the risk of HIV infection for individuals who engage in high-risk activity.

Question:

Can you explain why administration would want to strike this assurance? Are there any other instances in which we pay overseas health clinics to omit or censor medically accurate information?

Response:

There are no instances in which PEPFAR funds overseas health clinics to intentionally omit or censor medically accurate information.

Question:

In your January 2005 remarks about transformational diplomacy and foreign assistance reform, you talked about the Administration's goal of increasing the effectiveness of U.S. international assistance and putting taxpayer money to the best use possible. One of the clearest lessons from the past three decades of development experience is that in order to be effective, development efforts must take into account the different roles that women and men play in societies when designing interventions.

If we are truly committed to increasing the effectiveness of our assistance, institutional reform efforts must look at how U.S. assistance can finally fully integrate gender systematically across all programs so that both women and men benefit. How will you address the lack of consistent gender integration in U.S. international assistance initiatives?

Response:

I intend to hold those who implement foreign assistance accountable for integrating gender into their programs and for showing results. The Office of Women in Development is developing an analysis of how USAID has performed in integrating gender into the previous country strategy system and into procurement decisions. These efforts will form a basis for strengthening the integration of gender in all areas of U.S. foreign assistance.

Question:

I want to target this question specifically to the Administration's Fiscal Year 2007 request for funding for peacekeeping in Sudan. Last year, the total Administration request for Sudan peacekeeping was \$375 million, which supported the roughly 5,000-strong UNMIS force in southern Sudan. This year, the request for Sudan Peacekeeping includes a healthy increase of \$67 million—about 18% more than 2006.

If all goes well at the Security Council, an additional 10,000 troops may be put under UN command in Darfur, and 5,000 more troops may become active in southern Sudan to bring that force up to its planned level. Can you outline for the Committee how the funds requested for peacekeeping in Sudan will be apportioned between Darfur and southern Sudan and how the possible tripling of the forces in Sudan can be sustained by this request level?

Response:

The Administration request of \$442 million for FY 2007 for UNMIS Sudan operations reflects the annualized costs of expanding the mission into the Darfur region in FY 2006.

In the absence of detailed specific UN plans for a full year of Sudan operations in FY 2007 including a Southern element and a Darfur element, we estimate that the United States will be assessed \$282 million for the basic UNMIS operations mission for the South and that Darfur operations would add \$160 million to that amount.

Question:

After the historic events in 2004, there is a new priority on Europe—a democratic Ukraine. I know the support the Administration has for this young democracy. Stating that, do you think that support has been adequately reflected in this year's budget?

Response:

The Administration is committed to supporting Ukraine's democratic transition. In worldwide assistance, the Administration has placed a priority on the Millennium Challenge and Global HIV/AIDS Initiative (GHAI) assistance accounts. Ukraine has qualified for FY06 Millennium Challenge Account Threshold status and has submitted a two-year, \$45.6 million Threshold Plan to the Millennium Challenge Corporation for funding consideration. The Administration has also requested a FREEDOM Support Act country assistance budget for Ukraine of \$85 million for FY 07. Funding needs in Ukraine need to be carefully prioritized given the decline in the Administration's overall FY 07 FREEDOM Support Act funding request to \$441 million (down from the \$508 million FY06 appropriation), as well as the ever larger percentage of the Ukraine FSA budget needed to meet the U.S. pledge for the Chernobyl shelter (approximately \$20 million of the requested \$85 million). That said, based on current assessments and a Ukrainian MCA Threshold Program (if approved), our proposed FY07 Ukraine budget will cover the funding needs we anticipate for Fiscal Year 2007.

Question:

The administration has requested nearly 40% more military assistance (FMF, IMET, NADR) for Azerbaijan than Armenia (\$10,180,000 for Azerbaijan and only \$6,290,000 for Armenia), despite an agreement with Congress to maintain military aid parity between the countries when Congress authorized the President to waive Section 907 of the Freedom Support Act which prevents military assistance to Azerbaijan.

Why has the Administration violated this understanding concerning military aid parity?

Response:

As a Co-Chair of the OSCE Minsk Group, our goal is to help Armenia and Azerbaijan achieve a peaceful resolution of the Nagorno-Karabakh conflict. Military assistance to both countries in light of that ongoing conflict is carefully considered and calibrated to ensure that it does not hamper ongoing efforts to negotiate a peaceful settlement between Armenia and Azerbaijan. Although the Rambouillet summit between the two presidents marked a temporary stall in negotiations, the process has gained momentum again with a series of individual visits by Minsk Group Co-Chairs to the region. We continue to view 2006 as the necessary window for the sides to reach an agreement. At the same time, we are strongly urging the presidents to prepare their publics for peace, not for war.

While we do not have a policy that security assistance funding levels for Armenia and Azerbaijan should be identical, we work to ensure that assistance does not adversely affect the military balance between the two states. We do not believe that the differences in security assistance in the FY 2007 budget requests undermine prospects for peace or send the wrong message.

The waiver of Section 907 of the FREEDOM Support Act every year since 2002 has allowed us to provide military assistance that enhances Azerbaijan's interoperability with NATO and U.S. forces and furthers U.S. peacekeeping objectives. These funds also allow us to assist Azerbaijan in developing capabilities to promote Caspian security and indigenous humanitarian demining capabilities. We provide assistance to Armenia for similar purposes.

Question:

United States policy in the South Caucasus seeks to foster regional cooperation and economic integration and includes open borders and transport and communication corridors. In a move that undermines U.S. efforts to end Turkey's blockade of Armenia, the President of Azerbaijan Ilham Aliyev has initiated a project to construct a new rail line linking Turkey, Georgia, and Azerbaijan while bypassing Armenia. The proposal is estimated to cost up to \$800 million and would take three years to complete.

The aim of this costly approach is to isolate Armenia by enhancing the ongoing Turkish and Azerbaijani blockades and to keep the existing Turkey-Armenia-Georgia rail link shut down. This ill-conceived project runs counter to U.S. policy, ignores the standing Kars-Gymri route, is politically and economically flawed and serves to destabilize the region.

As reported in August by Azertag—Azerbaijan's official news agency, President Aliyev declared, "We are currently working on a new project—a new rail road Kars-Akhalkalaki-Tbilisi-Baku . . . If we succeed with this project, the Armenians will end in complete isolation, which would create an additional problem for their future, their already bleak future. . . ."

This proposed rail link would not only undermine U.S. policy goals for the region, but would also specifically isolate Armenia as evidenced by President Aliyev's recent remarks. Does the Administration support the rail line that would bypass Armenia as an alternative to the Kars-Gymri route?

Response:

The U.S. Government strongly encourages regional integration in the Caucasus. Removing trade barriers would improve regional integration and enhance economic cooperation and development.

Regional integration should, of course, include all countries of the region. We have long believed that opening the border between Turkey and Armenia would contribute to the economies of both countries.

The proposed railway would bypass Armenia, and thus, not facilitate integration of all three South Caucasus countries. We have no plans to support such a railway financially.

Question:

Has the Administration allocated or expended any federal agency funds or otherwise provided financial support for the intended project?

Response:

No, the Administration has not allocated or expended any federal agency funds or otherwise provided financial support for the intended project.

Question:

What steps is the Administration taking to urge the government of Azerbaijan to reject this counterproductive proposal?

Response:

We consider this proposal to be a commercial matter between sovereign governments. None of these governments have specifically asked the United States to support the project politically or financially.

The U.S. Government strongly encourages regional integration in the Caucasus. Removing trade barriers would improve regional integration and enhance economic cooperation and development.

The proposed railway would bypass Armenia and thus not be beneficial to regional integration. We have no plans to support such a railway financially.

RESPONSES FROM THE HONORABLE CONDOLEEZZA RICE, THE SECRETARY OF STATE, U.S. DEPARTMENT OF STATE, TO QUESTIONS SUBMITTED FOR THE RECORD BY THE HONORABLE CONNIE MACK, A REPRESENTATIVE IN CONGRESS FROM THE STATE OF FLORIDA

VENEZUELA

Question:

Secretary Rice, would you comment on the situation in Venezuela and discuss what other areas where we should concentrate resources in Venezuela?

Response:

The Administration repeatedly has expressed our concern about the deterioration of democracy in Venezuela and the government's increasingly authoritarian direction.

Over the past year, we have witnessed greater concentration of power in the executive, elimination of checks and balances, persecution of the democratic opposition and civil society, restrictions on press freedom, erosion of property rights, and increased militarization. Venezuela's cooperation on counter-narcotics and counter-terrorism has deteriorated significantly. The amount of illicit drugs transiting through Venezuela is on the rise, and the government has continued to deepen its relationship with state sponsors of terrorism such as Cuba and Iran.

Strengthening democracy in the Hemisphere is an important part of the President's Global Freedom Agenda. It is a core goal of the Hemisphere's democracies themselves, as expressed in the Inter-American Democratic Charter. To help preserve democratic space for civil society, the Administration is providing funding to a variety of human rights, civic, and other NGOs. We are also supporting political party building efforts on a bi-partisan basis through the International Republican Institute (IRI) and the National Democratic Institute (NDI). At the same time, we are closely monitoring draft legislation in the Venezuelan Congress which would severely restrict the right of Venezuelan NGO's to accept assistance from abroad.

The international community can play a key role by providing political and financial support for civil society groups who need resources to carry out their work. The Administration is reaching out to our European and Hemispheric friends to fill this need, and we are encouraged by their positive response.

In our public diplomacy efforts, we are reaching out to traditionally marginalized communities in Venezuela by providing opportunities to learn English; opening information resource centers to the public; bringing high school baseball players and coaches to the U.S.; offering public service and leadership training seminars in the U.S. for young Venezuelans; and offering grants to child care and youth centers in poor communities.

As a signatory to the Inter-American Democratic Charter, Venezuela has a responsibility to uphold democracy, human rights and rule of law. We will continue to work with our international partners, the Organization of American States and civil society to help all Venezuelans realize their democratic aspirations.

Question:

In your opinion, how serious are the threats posed by President Chávez to the region?

Response:

The Administration is deeply concerned about the Venezuelan government's effort to undermine the Hemispheric consensus on democracy, economic integration, and security by subverting democratic institutions at home, promoting statist economic policies, and meddling in the affairs of neighboring countries.

The Venezuelan government is harming the country's democratic institutions and its economic future. Venezuela's poor cooperation on counter-narcotics and failure to work to interdict the increased movement of illicit drugs and narco-traffickers through its territory last year resulted in its decertification, pursuant to Section 706 of 2002–2003 the Foreign Relations Authorization Act (p.l. 107–228), for having "failed demonstrably" to adhere to its counter-narcotics obligations. The government's counter-terrorism cooperation has been equally deficient. Its growing ties to Iran, close relationship and intelligence cooperation with Cuba, and failure to deny safe-haven to Colombian FARC and ELN terrorists are not conducive to the peace and stability.

The Venezuelan government's overt efforts to influence presidential elections in Peru, its intervention in Bolivia, bullying tactics in regional fora and use of petrodiplomacy to try to win loyalty are generating a backlash. Mexico and Peru both have publicly expressed their concern. In November of last year, Mexico expelled the Venezuelan Ambassador for participating in partisan political activities.

We are reaching out to our friends in the region and Europe to try to steer Venezuela in a more democratic and cooperative direction and looking for ways to engage Venezuela on counter-narcotics and counter-terrorism. We are bringing these concerns to the attention of arms suppliers as Venezuela continues its arms build-up program.

The Administration is committed to working with responsible, democratic governments across the political spectrum to increase freedom and opportunity and reduce poverty by strengthening democratic institutions, promoting free trade and development, and investing in people. The ten elections (both presidential and legislative) in the region in 2006 are providing an opportunity for citizens to decide their future. We are confident that most governments and the majority of the Hemisphere's citizens will choose a genuine democratic path.

Question:

For the last nine months, I have been working with the State Department and the United States Embassy in the Bahamas on the behalf of two Cuban doctors, Dr. David Gonzalez-Mejias and Dr. Marialis Darias-Mesa, who are being held in a prison camp in Nassau, Bahamas. However, despite numerous official requests for their release and meetings between our governments, the Bahamian government continues to deliberate and drag its feet about releasing these doctors to our custody. I want to thank Ambassador John Rood for all of his help in the case. And, I want to ask for your continued assistance on fighting for the release of these doctors to US custody so they can start a new life in freedom.

Any ideas on how we can get the two Cuban doctors being held in the Bahamas released?

Response:

On March 14, The Bahamas released two Cuban dentists, Marialis Darias Mesa and David Gonzalez Mesa, thus allowing them to be reunited with their families in

the United States. We are pleased that The Bahamas arrived at this decision, which was based on humanitarian grounds.

RESPONSES FROM THE HONORABLE CONDOLEEZZA RICE, THE SECRETARY OF STATE, U.S. DEPARTMENT OF STATE, TO QUESTIONS SUBMITTED FOR THE RECORD BY THE HONORABLE MICHAEL MCCAUL, A REPRESENTATIVE IN CONGRESS FROM THE STATE OF TEXAS

Question:

In the 20 plus years since Hezbollah was founded by Iranian revolutionaries, they have spread their agents and their influence as far around the globe as they could. Beneath our noses they have established a vast network of sleeper agents and fundraisers across the Western Hemisphere, including within the United States itself.

For several years the Justice Department investigated a group of Hezbollah terrorists who ran among other things cigarette smuggling operations out of Charlotte, North Carolina. The funds raised from these and other illegal activities were shipped back to Lebanon to help finance Hezbollah's global operations. Each member of this cell had received training in weapons and explosives prior to coming to the U.S. They were able to enter the U.S. by flying from the Middle East to various locations in South America, and use fake South American passports to enter the U.S.

We concentrate a lot of effort cleaning terrorists out of Iraq, and with good reason, however the terrorists have been able to build a vast network in our own backyard. What diplomatic efforts have we attempted, or can we attempt in the future to address the problem of Hemispheric Security? What diplomatic efforts can the U.S. use to work with the countries in our hemisphere to find and remove these terrorist agents?

Response:

The Administration shares Congress' concern about Hezbollah's global reach and its efforts to spread its influence in our hemisphere. Hezbollah and its sponsor state Iran have been implicated in the only terrorist attacks perpetrated by Islamic radicals in Latin America—the bombings of the Israeli Embassy in Buenos Aires in 1992, and of the Argentina-Israel Mutual Association in 1994 that killed over 100 people.

While there is no credible evidence of the existence currently of operational Hezbollah cells in Latin America, Hezbollah has numerous supporters and sympathizers throughout Arab and Muslim communities in the region who are involved primarily in raising funds for the terrorist group, by licit and illicit means.

We are working with all our partners in the Americas to heighten awareness of this threat and to take the necessary measures to contain and eventually dismantle their activities in this hemisphere. Our focus has been on thwarting terror financing, improving border controls, strengthening our friends' intelligence capabilities, and urging adoption of stricter counterterrorism legislation. Together, we have made important progress in all areas.

Since 9/11, governments in the Americas have adopted myriad legislation and regulatory frameworks to deny the use of the formal international financial and payments system to would-be terrorists. During this process, the United States has provided technical assistance to various allies, and established information-sharing mechanisms between our financial transaction oversight body (FINCEN) and those of our friends. Progress on this front, for example, has allowed Panama, a nation which just six years ago was named a non-cooperating jurisdiction with regard to money laundering by the multinational Financial Action Task Force, to become a leader in anti-money laundering and anti-terror financing legislation that today lends its expertise to the region and around the world.

As regards, border controls, the United States has provided, through the Organization of American States' Interamerican Committee Against Terrorism (CICTE in Spanish), over \$5 million for training to improve airport and maritime port security and to strengthen our allies' capabilities to regulate who is moving into and through their countries. We are also working on a bilateral basis with selected countries to upgrade their terrorist lookout systems at ports of entry.

On the critical component of intelligence, U.S. bilateral cooperation with our hemispheric partners is, with only a few notable exceptions, excellent. Perhaps more importantly, intelligence and information sharing *among* our neighbors is at an unprecedented high. We are particularly encouraged by the growing collaboration among Brazil, Argentina and Paraguay to address smuggling, drug and arm trafficking, money laundering, fraud, intellectual property piracy, and other transnational crime in the region where the three meet, the Tri Border Area. This

is a region where persons we suspect of supporting Hezbollah previously ran criminal enterprises virtually unmolested. No longer. Through formal dialogue with the U.S., the three have begun to institutionalize what were once ad-hoc cooperative or coordinated activities among local officials. And a number of these suspects have been prosecuted by our three partners for a variety of crimes.

Equally important, almost all the nations of the hemisphere have adopted legislation codifying the obligations imposed on UN Member States by UN Security Council Resolutions 1267, 1373 and 1540. These are the foundations of international law in the fight against terrorism.

Challenges remain. Most of our neighbors in the hemisphere have high competing priorities for scarce public resources, making it politically difficult to invest even modestly in CT capabilities when basic social services such as education and healthcare remain under-funded. Official corruption is another serious problem that can undermine the most advanced training and the most sophisticated detection systems.

We have more to do in the legislative arena—no Latin American country has in place, or is seriously considering adopting, Terrorist Designation regimes that would make membership in and support for a designated terrorism organization a crime. In the case of Hezbollah, this is an especially high hill to climb, particularly as a some of our neighbors consider Hezbollah a legitimate political party.

Last, we must contend with Cuba and Venezuela. The former has been a state sponsor of terrorism for many years, although we have no credible information of Cuban involvement with Hezbollah. The latter was recently designated by Secretary Rice, under the Arms Export Control Act, as a state that is “not cooperating fully” with U.S. efforts against terrorism. This determination was based on Venezuela’s overall actions against terrorism, the Venezuelan government’s public statements in international fora addressing terrorism, Venezuela’s conduct toward terrorist organizations, and the Venezuelan government’s relations with state sponsors of terror. On all fronts, the behavior of the Venezuelan government was found, and remains, wanting.

As regards ties to Hezbollah, the Chavez government is pursuing closer relations with Hezbollah’s principal sponsor Iran. Venezuela has concluded a plethora of agreements with Iran, ranging from investment pacts, to pledges of support against military aggression (ostensibly from the United States), to defending Iran’s nuclear ambitions and voting, along with Syria and Cuba only, against referring Iran to the UN Security Council to answer for its attempts to develop nuclear energy without any UN or International Atomic Energy Agency oversight.

Question:

A very under noticed aspect of the situation in the Palestinian territories is the oppression of Palestinian Christians. This group is an ever shrinking minority whose situation has worsened with the election of Hamas, a group whose tolerance towards minorities is not only less than stellar but downright appalling. Many traditionally Christian towns and cities including Bethlehem, the birthplace of Jesus, have been systematically cleansed of Christian population and influence. This was as true under Fatah leadership as it will be under Hamas.

Why has this issue not been brought to the forefront of our dealings with the Palestinians? What good is a Palestinian Democracy if there is no tolerance towards minorities? What can we do to improve the situation of Palestinian Christians?

Response:

We share your concerns about the dwindling presence of Palestinian Christians and the election of Hamas, an organization that is on the State Department’s list of Foreign Terrorist Organizations. Our Office of International Religious Freedom closely monitors the situation of all religious minorities in Israel and the Occupied Territories. The U.S. Consulate General in Jerusalem discusses religious freedom issues with the Palestinians, and the U.S. Embassy in Tel Aviv discusses religious freedom issues with the Government of Israel as part of its overall policy to promote human rights in the Occupied Territories.

Although, President Mahmud Abbas has taken steps to eliminate religious incitement, there have been reports that Palestinian Authority (PA) security forces and judicial officials have colluded with criminal elements to extort property illegally from Christian landowners in the Bethlehem area. While we are unaware of any recent reports of Christians being targeted for extortion or abuse, the PA has not taken action to investigate past injustices allegedly perpetrated by PA officials.

According to Christian leaders, most of the Christians in the Bethlehem area left their homes not due to religious discrimination, but for economic and security reasons associated with the violence of the Second Intifada, the restrictions resulting

from Israeli closure policies, and the construction of the Israeli separation barrier, and the negative impact of both on the local economy. However, with the election of the Hamas government, we will watch closely for any movement toward restrictions on religious freedom for the Palestinian people and discrimination against religious minorities.

RESPONSES FROM THE HONORABLE CONDOLEEZZA RICE, THE SECRETARY OF STATE, U.S. DEPARTMENT OF STATE, TO QUESTIONS SUBMITTED FOR THE RECORD BY THE HONORABLE GREGORY W. MEEKS, A REPRESENTATIVE IN CONGRESS FROM THE STATE OF NEW YORK

Question:

The 2007 foreign aid request foresees a sharp decline in badly needed development aid to Latin America through USAID's core accounts (DA, CSH and ESF). The region-wide request of \$462 million through these accounts represents a 10 percent drop from 2006 levels and a 17 percent drop from 2005. The budget also includes cuts in alternative developments for the Andean region, outside of Colombia. Given that between 25–40 percent of the region's population still toils in grinding poverty, how do you justify a third consecutive year of drastic cuts in core development accounts for the countries in Latin America and the Caribbean? The Western Hemisphere Subcommittee of this committee held hearings on development needs in Latin America, and subcommittee members, including both the chair and the ranking member, expressed great concern at the drop in U.S. assistance to Latin America. Now we see a proposal that cuts assistance even further, in the face of real needs in the region. Please tell us where Latin America fits in the Administration's foreign policy priorities, and how this budget reflects that?

Response:

Latin America is an important priority for the Administration. Foreign assistance for the region has nearly doubled since the start of this Administration, from \$862,452,000 in FY 2001 to \$1,696,841,000 in FY 2007. Although the FY 2007 request for Latin America represents an overall decrease of one percent from the FY 2006 request, it does not reflect a reduced commitment to Latin America. The President's request will provide sufficient funds to maintain key programs. In addition to FY 2007 foreign assistance, the Millennium Challenge Corporation (MCC) has approved compacts for Nicaragua (\$175 million) and Honduras (\$215 million). On February 8, MCC's Board approved a \$35 million program for Paraguay as a Threshold Country. MCC funding has actually increased the total resources available to the region.

Question:

As of February 15, 26,000 Colombian paramilitaries are to have turned themselves in to the government in exchange for light (or no) penalties, and entered programs for their "reinsertion" into society.

a) Some 3 million people in Colombia have lost their land from political violence, one million just in the last few years. Many African-Colombians and indigenous people were forced off their land by paramilitary threats and brutal violence. Yet the paramilitaries who have demobilized have turned in remarkably little in the way of land. When the Colombian government talks about reparations to victims, it seems to be largely symbolic, and does not include land. What will the United States do to ensure that paramilitary groups reveal their illicit land holdings as they are supposed to do in order to receive judicial benefits? How will the United States help to ensure that returns are possible for at least some of Colombia's 3 million displaced? How will the United States ensure that our programs do not support projects on land obtained by violence?

b) The African Colombian community is being ravaged by violence and there has been an increase in violence over recent months. The affect on the population is devastating and as a result, the next generation cannot develop intellectually to solve there (sic) problems. As an alternative, we should extend full scholarships to African Colombians so they get the opportunity to acquire the educational skills to solve their own problems. In return, they will be great Ambassadors of U.S. democracy and way of life. How much money and what scholarships opportunities exist for African Colombians? How does this amount compare to dollar amounts from previous years? What programs are in the pipeline to increase the outreach and recruiting of African Colombians?

c) Descendants of Africa are the poorest of the poor in Latin America ranking alongside indigenous communities, what is being done to address the needs of these

communities particularly in the area of access to resources, education, healthcare, running water, etc. . . . and what is being done to make certain the voices of these communities are heard during trade talks?

Response (a):

The Justice and Peace Law requires individuals to confess involvement in all past crimes, turn over any proceeds of illegal activity or facilitate the turning over of illegal assets by his/her group, provide knowledge that could lead to the dismantling of illegal armed groups or facilitate the dismantlement of his/her own group, facilitate the release of or knowledge of the location of kidnap victims, and other acts that would demonstrate effective contribution to the national peace process. An individual can obtain the benefits provided by the law only after meeting these requirements. In addition, individuals who do not meet all the requirements of the Colombian demobilization program, including disclosure requirements, will not be eligible for any programs that receive U.S. assistance.

To date, over 30,000 members of the Self-Defense Forces of Colombia (AUC) have collectively demobilized under the Justice and Peace Law. The AUC was required to concentrate its forces for demobilization, present lists of members, commit all members to the sign statements renouncing membership in the group, surrender all arms and munitions, release any kidnap victims or minors recruited into the group and turn over group proceeds of illegal activity. Between 2003 and 2006, the AUC turned over 59 urban properties, over 10,000 acres of rural properties, 149 vehicles and 3 airplanes. Surrender of these assets clearly represents only the beginning of the process.

U.S. programs to assist the Colombian Government are intended to strengthen the legal framework for stricter implementation of the demobilization program. To do this, \$1.7 million for strengthening the legal framework has been reprogrammed from FY 2005 funds. Additional funding will be the subject of further consultations with Congress.

We believe procedures in place for providing support to development projects in Colombia are adequate to ensure that no projects will be undertaken with U.S. funds on land that may have been obtained by former paramilitaries through violence.

Depending on circumstances, such safeguards include a vetting of all organizations selected to implement projects as well as investigations and assurances of property title. U.S. funds will not be used for economic development activities on stolen lands because the project reviews (conducted by both the technical assistance team and the local banks that provide loan funds) require proof that borrowers have legal titles to the land where development projects will be implemented.

Additionally, we routinely vet all groups that apply for assistance to ensure that persons and groups to be assisted are not criminals, narcotics traffickers or terrorists, including through contacts with local police and with the Prosecutor General's Office.

Response (b):

In 2005 the U.S. Embassy in Bogotá launched the Martin Luther King (MLK) English Language Fellows Program. This pilot program provides two years of English language and leadership training to economically disadvantaged Afro-Colombian university students who demonstrate leadership potential and a strong interest in U.S. post-graduate study. Prior to this program, there were no Department of State sponsored higher education programs that specifically targeted Afro-Colombians.

The Department of State provided \$15,000 in 2005 to fund 12 MLK Fellows from Bogotá. In 2006 an additional \$15,000 was provided to support 12 more MLK Fellows. Our Embassy in Bogotá has worked with private sources to secure an additional \$30,000 to replicate the program with 24 Fellows in Cali, Colombia's third city.

We plan to provide \$350,000 in 2006 to support a new regional English teaching initiative targeted at marginalized communities throughout the Hemisphere. This program will provide Afro-Latino, indigenous, and other economically disadvantaged high school students in the region with English language training, as well as mentoring, and academic advising. The goal is to increase students' access to higher education and prepare them for scholarship opportunities in Latin America and the U.S. including Fulbright, Humphrey, and other U.S. programs. There are plans for inclusion of at least nine Afro-Colombians in this new initiative.

Response (c):

In the specific case of Colombia, the United States has helped Afro-Colombian and indigenous communities find employment through alternative development pro-

grams, worked with communities to complete small infrastructure projects, provided support for several Afro-Colombian conferences aimed at formulating a development agenda, worked with communities to develop national, regional and local human rights action plans, provided food security assistance to vulnerable areas, supported internally displaced persons, and created a program to help prevent recruitment of Afro-Colombian youth into the armed conflict.

All Latin American countries where the U.S. provides trade development assistance have committed to developing strategies for national trade capacity building. These strategies emphasize the establishment of processes and mechanisms for including input from the private sector and broader civil society. This broader effort by host-country governments to organize outreach events in both urban and rural venues provides objective information on the benefits of free trade and the scope of the treaties under negotiation. This in turn expands opportunities for the voices of all of a country's citizens, including Afro-Latinos, to be heard during trade talks.

While it is not known how widely host country governments vetted national Trade Capacity Building (TCB) strategies with Afro-Latino communities, these TCB strategies highlighted the need to help the poor (e.g., Afro-Latinos and/or indigenous communities) who may not or likely would not be able to compete in the face of cheaper imports coming in from the United States. In addition, particular attention was paid to arranging sessions for lead negotiators to meet with representatives of small- and medium-sized enterprises, with this opportunity being open to all such representatives, including any Afro-Latino or Indigenous representatives participating in a given round.

Question:

As of February 15, 2006, 26,000 Colombian paramilitaries are to have turned themselves into the government in exchange for light (or no) penalties, and entered programs for their "reinsertion" into society.

(b) The African Colombian community is being ravaged by violence and there has been an increase in violence over recent months. The effect on the population is devastating and as a result, the next generation cannot develop intellectually to solve their problems. As an alternative, we should extend full scholarships to African Colombians so they get the opportunity to acquire the educational skills to solve their own problems. In return, they will be great Ambassadors of U.S. democracy and way of life. How much money and what scholarships opportunities exist for African Colombians? How does this amount compare to dollar amounts from previous years? What programs are in the pipeline to increase the outreach and recruiting of African Colombians?

c) Descendants of Africa are the poorest of the poor in Latin America ranking alongside indigenous communities, what is being done to address the needs of these communities particularly in the area of access to resources, education, healthcare, running water, etc...and what is being done to make certain the voices of these communities are heard during trade talks?

Response:

The Fulbright Program strives to reflect the societies of the partner countries. The binational Fulbright Commission in Colombia, which provides scholarships for graduate study in the U.S., is actively working to attract African-Colombians to participate in the Fulbright Program. Despite their large representation in the population, African-Colombians are not widely represented in Colombian universities and most have little to no English, so there have been few Fulbright applicants from this sector to date. We are actively recruiting candidates outside Bogota and providing enhanced opportunities for Fulbright candidates to improve their English ability. The U.S. Embassy has established an initiative to offer English language scholarships for in-country study to African-Colombian undergraduates, thus allowing them to compete better in Fulbright's merit-based open competition. In 2005/06, the first African-Colombian participated in the Fulbright Student Program. Funding provided by the Bureau of Educational and Cultural Affairs was approximately \$35,000.

The State Department's Fulbright Teacher Exchange Program, which supports classroom exchanges between U.S. and foreign teachers, is also working with the Fulbright Commission to reach public school teachers and gain broader access to the Colombian population. In academic year 2004/05, the first African-Colombian teacher, from Bogota, participated in the program. Funding provided by the Bureau of Educational and Cultural Affairs was approximately \$25,000.

Question:

Bolivia's new president, Evo Morales, is promising to crack down on cocaine production in his country, but he also wants to expand the legal cultivation of coca, which has a centuries-old tradition of use in Bolivia. His slogan is "zero cocaine, but

not zero coca.” Is the United States willing to test the genuineness of his offer to increase cocaine interdiction and work with him on this effort? Is the State Department getting the sense that the Morales government has the political will to crack down on cocaine production and transshipment? The Morales government expressed concern that alternative development funding for Bolivia declined in the FY07 budget (a 26% cut in overall economic assistance to Bolivia from FY05 to FY07), and our Ambassador was cited in the press explaining this was a general budget cut rather than one directed at his government. Bolivia is the poorest country in South America. Yet, the President proposes to cut development programs in the country, along with counter-narcotic and other assistance packages. Why is the Administration trimming economic aid and alternative development funds for Bolivia at this moment? What concrete steps will your Department take to help ensure from the U.S. perspective that the relationship between our two countries remains cooperative and productive?

Response:

We remain committed to Bolivia and the important development work that we have begun. Although total foreign assistance to Bolivia decreased by 11% from \$138.5 million in FY 2005 to \$123.8 million in FY 2007 (requested), development funding to Bolivia (CSH, DA, ESF, PL-480, and soft-side ACI) has actually increased from \$84.9 million in FY 2005 to \$85.7 million in FY 2007 (requested). The requested level of funds for Bolivia in FY 2007 will be sufficient to maintain current programs. The reduction reflects U.S. Government efforts to realign interdiction activities, which continue to successfully interdict cocaine and precursor chemicals with Bolivia's cooperation, without impacting development.

In addition, security assistance programs funded through IMET and FMF have been suspended due to American Servicemembers' Protection Act (ASPA) restrictions on countries party to the Rome Statute that have not signed an Article 98 agreement with the U.S. Thus, our core development programs and food assistance have increased while our security assistance programs have ended.

The Millennium Challenge Corporation (MCC) also continues to work with the Government of Bolivia on its five-year, US\$598 million compact proposal, submitted by the Rodriguez administration last December. Bolivia is aware that maintaining eligibility for an MCC Compact requires continued commitment to good governance as measured by the indicators MCC tracks. These include the rule of law as well as economic policies that strengthen market forces in the economy.

While Bolivia has seen some reduction in its ACI funding for eradication and interdiction due to competing priorities, at \$35 million for FY 07 (a decrease from FY06 estimates), Bolivia will have sufficient funds to maintain current program levels. We are very concerned about the increase in coca cultivation in Bolivia and the corresponding anticipated increase in cocaine production by criminal traffickers. Bolivia has 15,000 more hectares under cultivation than what is currently allowed by Bolivian law (12,000 hectares). History has shown us that when coca cultivation increases, it is always accompanied by a corresponding increase in cocaine production. The interdiction of cocaine and precursor chemicals, however, continues with Bolivia's cooperation.

The United States seeks a constructive dialogue with the Bolivian government on key issues, including support for Bolivia's political and economic development, and cooperation against the illegal drug trade. We have expressed our willingness to work with President Morales's government on all levels. President Bush called President Morales February 1 to congratulate him on his electoral victory and express our support for the aspirations of the Bolivian people. I met personally with President Morales on March 11 and expressed our hope for a continued strong relationship, as did Assistant Secretary Tom Shannon on January 21 and INL Assistant Secretary Anne Patterson on April 25. The nature of our relations with the Morales government in the longer term will depend on the policies it adopts on a range of issues, including counternarcotics.

Question:

In recent weeks, we have heard Administration officials say a variety of things about Venezuelan president Hugo Chávez. For instance, on February 2nd Thomas Shannon, the Assistant Secretary of State for Western Hemisphere Affairs, said “We aren't interested in isolating Venezuela. Venezuela has isolated itself from us.” That same day, Defense Secretary Rumsfeld compared Chávez to Hitler. Can you please provide us with an explanation of the Bush Administration's current policy toward Venezuela? In particular, how does the Administration plan on addressing the gain in public appeal and executive power in Venezuela? At the same time, what are the Administration's plans to avoid getting drawn into escalating rhetoric that does not

serve our interests or the interest of the Hemisphere? How does the Administration differentiate between Chávez and other elected leftist leaders in Latin America?

Response:

The United States and Venezuela traditionally enjoyed friendly relations based on a shared commitment to democracy. We would like to continue this relationship, but the Venezuelan government's actions and discourse make this extremely difficult. We have not sought to confront Venezuela; on the contrary, through actions and words, it is the Government of Venezuela that has sought to isolate itself from a normal relationship with the United States.

It is our intent to pursue positive relations with all governments in the region, regardless of ideological differences, as long as they are committed—in principle and in practice—to govern democratically, advance economic freedom, and invest in their people. We will continue to work with our allies in the region to pursue a positive agenda for Latin America, aimed at reducing poverty and increasing economic opportunity for the region's marginalized majority.

There are many reasons that cause us—and many others in Venezuela and in the Hemisphere—to be concerned about the state of democracy in Venezuela. These include a concentration of power in the executive, a politicized judiciary, a flawed and distrusted electoral authority, and the erosion of basic civil rights and rule of law. President Chávez has undermined Venezuela's system of checks and balances by politicizing formerly independent democratic institutions. The Supreme Court is packed with Chávez's allies and pro-Chávez political parties now hold every seat in the National Assembly. The Chávez administration has used its control of these institutions to harass and intimidate civil society groups, including opposition and NGO leaders, human rights organizations, religious groups and the media.

To address these problems, we are reaching out to help foster political expression and support democratic institutions. The U.S. Government is funding projects by NGOs that work with civil society and political parties on a bi-partisan basis to support human rights, political party building, and democratic institutions. We are also working with our international partners, the Organization of American States and civil society to help all Venezuelans realize their democratic aspirations.

Question:

Last week, Haitians poured onto the streets of their country to cast their votes. Regardless of the eventual political outcome of the election, the incoming government and National Assembly will have to address the emaciated economy and desperately poor population of the country. Economic aid from the U.S. and other donors will continue to be sorely needed to get Haiti on its feet. Do you believe that now is the time to propose decreasing core development assistance to Haiti by approximately 20 percent? Troop-contributing countries to the UN peace-keeping mission place their countrymen in the line of fire with the understanding that the U.S. and other donors will provide the development assistance that is necessary to establish the foundations for a lasting peace in Haiti. How will the Administration honor its commitment to this UN peacekeeping mission if the President eviscerates our development programs in the country? What is the comprehensive development program for Haiti, truncated programs that are not coordinated does not seem to be helping the country improve its position so is there a comprehensive development plan for Haiti?

Response:

Since early 2004, we have closely coordinated our efforts in Haiti with the international community and reinforced the internationalization of the response to the crisis. We also continue to work to ensure that the troop and police contributors to the UN Stabilization Mission (MINUSTAH) stay engaged in Haiti for the long-term.

The Interim Cooperation Framework (ICF) is the coordination mechanism for international assistance to Haiti. It identifies critical needs during Haiti's transition period (July 2004–September 2006) against which donors pledged \$1.1 billion at the July 2004 World Bank Donors' Conference in Washington. Over \$950 million has been disbursed, of which over one third was disbursed by the United States. Donors recently decided to extend the ICF until the end of 2007, to conduct an evaluation of its strengths and weaknesses, and to organize a new pledging session in Port au Prince in July 2006 to cover under-funded priorities that will be addressed by the new government.

The United States is committed to improving the lives of average Haitians, and we are Haiti's largest bilateral donor. Our assistance program to Haiti funds jobs, environment and natural resource management, vocational training, food assistance and medical care, as well as technical advice and budget support to the government. We provide healthcare services to over a third of the Haitian population, and over 2.2 million vaccination doses for children. We are fighting AIDS by reinforcing pre-

vention efforts, expanding testing, and providing anti-retroviral treatment throughout the country. We support civil society organizations and the media, and provide credit to small and micro entrepreneurs. In addition, the USG was a major contributor to the 2006 elections in Haiti.

While the requested FY 2007 DA and CSH request are reduced from FY 2006 levels, requests for other accounts, including ESF, PL-480, IMET, and Global HIV/AIDS Initiative Account (GHAI) are increased. In total, the FY 2007 request of \$193 million is only a 0.7% reduction from \$194 million in FY 2006.

We believe the requested levels will enable us to carry out a robust program of assistance to Haitian government and the people of Haiti.

Question:

Eighteen months ago, the Administration went on record declaring the crisis in Darfur "genocide," yet the President has not developed an effective multilateral civilian protection policy to stop the blood-shedding in that part of Sudan. The African Union monitoring force presently deployed was never a civilian protection force and, now even its monitoring capacities have run their limit. What is the President's policy towards ending the genocide? And, how long before we actively and aggressively insert ourselves in the dialogue to use NATO forces as a transitional force to bridge between the African Union and United Nations peacekeeping operation to stop the genocide?

Response:

The United States, under the strong leadership of President Bush, has led the international response to the crisis in Darfur from the very beginning. Secretary Powell's statement to the Senate Foreign Relations Committee on September 9, 2004 that genocide had occurred and may still be occurring in Darfur helped the United States galvanize the international community to make Darfur a priority. Subsequently, the UN Security Council (UNSC) adopted several resolutions on Sudan, including UNSC Resolution 1591 calling for targeted sanctions of those who commit violence or impede the peace process in Darfur.

The key to a long-lasting solution to Darfur is a political settlement. The United States is actively participating in talks in Abuja, Nigeria under the mediation of the African Union (AU) and is confident that we will achieve a peace agreement soon, which would be an excellent first step towards peace in Darfur. Once this political framework is in hand, we will work closely with the Parties to fully implement its provisions.

The Bush Administration also strongly supported the deployment of the 7,200 strong African Union peacekeeping force, which has the mandate to monitor the ceasefire and actively protect civilians in imminent danger. Its presence in Darfur has reduced large-scaled organized violence on the ground, and helped create conditions conducive for the peace negotiations in Abuja. In addition, NATO is providing airlift and training support to the African Union Mission in Sudan (AMIS). The U.S. strongly supports expanding NATO assistance to AMIS. A precisely targeted assistance mission focusing on capacity building and mentoring of AMIS headquarters elements in Darfur could help increase the capability of AU forces already on the ground. The AU has neither requested nor has NATO offered to provide troops to participate directly in peacekeeping operations. The African Union has taken the lead in this crisis and NATO looks to play an appropriate supporting role.

Question:

Food security continues to elude Africa and keeps millions of children and families in a permanent state of nutritional deprivation. According to the World Food Program (WFP), nearly \$2 billion in food aid will be required in 2006 to ward off widespread hunger and starvation, a goal not likely to be met. Donor fatigue often is cited as an explanation for the declining response to this hunger pandemic. Eliminating hunger in Africa will also require a major revolution in Africa's food production to increase crop performance. Is the Administration prepared to make food security a top priority for Africa and how should that be achieved? What specifically will our relevant agencies do to help reduce hunger in Africa? Will the Administration move now to encourage our European partners to match efforts and work to assist in the efforts in the Horn of Africa before the situation gets worst?

Response:

Food security has long been a priority for this Administration. While the Administration's commitment to food aid is an important component of our commitment to food security, food aid alone will not solve the underlying problems that result in chronic food insecurity. At Gleneagles last summer, the U.S. Government and its G-8 partners reaffirmed our support to the African Union-led initiative aimed at

rationalizing national government and donor investments to assist those countries that are willing to make a political commitment to develop comprehensive food security and famine prevention programs. In East Africa, support for the African Union's Comprehensive African Agricultural Development Program (CAADP) is coordinated and implemented regionally, and this year CAADP has committed to intensifying efforts with donors and member governments in Kenya, Uganda and Ethiopia. Specifically, beyond humanitarian aid to the Horn of Africa, in FY 2006 the U.S. is providing over \$288 million in development assistance to the region to support programs that address improved governance, mother-child health, HIV/AIDS, sustainable economic growth and natural resource management.

Question:

Many African entrepreneurs feel left behind in the global trade regime because they lack access to capital, knowledge of international markets, and small business development support. The Africa Growth and Opportunity Act (AGOA) opened the U.S. for African exports and created thousands of jobs, particularly in the apparel industry. However, it has not created African wealth. With the removal of apparel quotas internationally, African jobs created by AGOA have declined precipitously.

What do you foresee as the Administration's next step to encourage wealth creation in these AGOA countries? Will you undertake an initiative to increase Africa's entrepreneurial capacities to trade with the U.S.? Other than MCA, how does the U.S. plan on competing with China for Africa's market and what type of infrastructure and capacity building initiatives outside of MCA resources are being considered?

Response:

The African Growth and Opportunity Act has been and continues to be a success, increasing our two-way trade with Africa and diversifying the range of products being traded. In 2005, AGOA exports to the U.S. (including GSP) increased by 44 percent to \$38.1 billion, and total exports to the U.S. from sub-Saharan Africa (AGOA and non-AGOA) increased by 40 percent to \$50.3 billion. U.S. exports to sub-Saharan Africa have also risen: by 20 percent in 2005 to \$10.3 billion. Two-way total trade (exports plus imports) between the U.S. and sub-Saharan Africa increased 37 percent in 2005, to just over \$60 billion.

It is true that in some categories, AGOA exports to the U.S. have fallen. AGOA exports of apparel declined by 12 percent in 2005, to \$1.4 billion, as did exports in other sectors including minerals and metals, and transportation equipment. But exports from other sectors have continued to grow, including non-oil-related goods such as chemical products, agricultural products, machinery, and electronics. And despite the overall decline in apparel exports, some countries (including Botswana, Uganda, Ethiopia, Tanzania and Mozambique) increased their exports of apparel, demonstrating their ability to compete in global markets after the end of textile quotas.

Due in part to this growing trade relationship with the U.S., sub-Saharan Africa has shown an impressive growth performance. Between 1997 and 2001, real GDP growth in sub-Saharan Africa averaged 3% per year. In 2005, real GDP grew by 5.3% and is projected to grow at the same rate this year, according to the IMF. Even if the oil sector is excluded, the picture remains almost the same: real non-oil GDP grew by 5.2% in 2004 and in 2005.

We agree, however, that more can be done to increase Africa's entrepreneurial capacities, and in partnership with African nations themselves, we are doing more. The Administration is working on several fronts to help African nations improve their investment climate and undertake reforms which will allow the private sector to flourish. One such effort, the African Global Competitiveness Initiative, is providing \$200 million of additional resources over five years to promote the export competitiveness of African countries and to expand African trade with the U.S., with other international trading partners, and regionally within Africa. USAID will also be working in partnership with USDA to implement a joint program to build sanitary and phytosanitary (SPS) capacity in AGOA-eligible nations, to better enable these nations to export agricultural products to world markets. In addition, the U.S. Trade and Development Agency will be announcing and signing several new grants at the upcoming AGOA Forum here in Washington June 6 and 7. These grants will support feasibility studies for infrastructure projects in southern and West Africa, and for technical assistance to African regional organizations in the areas of financial market integration and regional aviation integration. These programs are but a few examples of a comprehensive approach to working in partnership with African countries to help them improve their investment climates and generate broad-based, private sector-led economic growth.

RESPONSES FROM THE HONORABLE CONDOLEEZZA RICE, THE SECRETARY OF STATE,
U.S. DEPARTMENT OF STATE, TO QUESTIONS SUBMITTED FOR THE RECORD BY THE
HONORABLE GRACE F. NAPOLITANO, A REPRESENTATIVE IN CONGRESS FROM THE
STATE OF CALIFORNIA

Question:

In mid-December 2005, Azerbaijani forces were caught on videotape demolishing yet again a medieval Armenian cemetery and historic carved stone crosses (khatchkars) that are over a 1,000 years old in the southern Nakhichevan region of Djulfa. A videotape of the demolition can be viewed at http://www.hairenik.com/Haireniktv/HA_TV_Clip04B.htm. The European Parliament recently passed a resolution condemning the desecration of the ancient religious site. What steps has the State Department taken to condemn this destruction of the cemetery? Has the State Department sent any officials to the site to investigate?

Response:

The United States is a strong proponent of preserving world cultural heritage, and we are aware that concerns have been raised that historic Armenian gravesites in Julfa, located in the Azerbaijani exclave of Nakhichevan, have been desecrated by Azerbaijani forces.

We are urging the relevant Azerbaijani authorities to investigate the allegations of desecration of cultural monuments in Nakhichevan and take appropriate measures to prevent any desecration of cultural monuments. Armenia and Azerbaijan are both members of UNESCO (and OSCE), and Azerbaijan has raised these issues in those organizations. We have encouraged Armenia and Azerbaijan to work with UNESCO to investigate this incident.

Question:

Temporary Protected Status is due to expire this year for Salvadorans, Hondurans, and Nicaraguans, and the Guatemalan government has requested TPS for Guatemalans in the wake of Hurricane Stan. TPS provides an important contribution to Central America by ensuring flows of remittances that are a major revenue source for Central American economies; and the sudden deportation of Central Americans if the region does not have the capacity to absorb them could also have an effect on crime and social stability. Is the State Department recommending extension of TPS for those countries expiring and is it possible for Guatemalans to receive TPS? If not, is the State Department concerned with the effect on Central America?

Response:

On February 23, 2006, the Department of Homeland Security announced a 12-month extension of Temporary Protected Status (TPS) for El Salvador, Honduras, and Nicaragua. This extension applies to nationals of those three countries who are currently living in the United States under TPS. With this 12-month extension, the TPS designation for El Salvador is currently set to expire on September 9, 2007. TPS for Honduras and Nicaragua is now set to expire on July 5, 2007.

To date, Guatemala has not been granted TPS. After Hurricane Stan hit in October 2005, the U.S. Government sought to help the Guatemalan people directly by providing over \$22 million to assist with recovery and reconstruction. The ongoing private sector initiative to help reconstruction has raised more than \$2 million.

The Department of Homeland Security makes TPS determinations, in consultation with the Department of State. The Department of State continues to monitor the situation in Guatemala closely as it relates to the statutory requirements of TPS.

The State Department is very aware that Central America's fragile economies are heavily dependent on remittances sent by Central Americans living in the U.S. and is cognizant of the direct connection between achieving economic progress in Central America and the successful consolidation of democracy in the region. In fact, the consolidation of democracy, the expansion of free markets and economic development are at the center of U.S. policy throughout the region.

Question:

Last year the House passed H.R. 2601, the Foreign Relations Authorization Act for FY06 and FY07. An amendment was included to authorize the Secretary of State to provide training and assistance to identify unknown victims who were murdered in the Mexican city of Ciudad Juarez. What will the State Department do to continue addressing this issue?

Response:

Since June 2005, the U.S. Government has supported the work of an Argentine Forensic Team to identify the remains of women murdered in Ciudad Juarez. We are funding the DNA analysis required by this team at a laboratory in Virginia. The work has already resulted in five matches. This project will last through approximately August of this year. We have also procured a DNA database system for use by the forensic laboratory of the Office of the Attorney General of Mexico to attempt to identify remains of murder victims in Mexico, particularly women murdered in Ciudad Juarez.

We have also provided training and capacity building on forensic investigations for investigative agents of the Attorney General's Office of the State of Chihuahua, in which Ciudad Juarez is located, and expanded this assistance in 2006 to include six other states.

Since 2003, the FBI El Paso Field Office has helped facilitate investigative training for the State of Chihuahua Special Unit for the Prosecution of Female Homicides. On a case-by-case basis and upon request, the FBI is helping investigations by processing evidence and conducting DNA testing.

Question:

My office has received worrisome accounts of the human rights situation in El Salvador. What is the administration doing to ensure protection of human rights and the rule of law in El Salvador? More specifically, what is the administration's perception of the safety and working conditions of the Procuradora para la Defensa de los Derechos Humanos or Human Rights Ombudswoman, Dr. Beatrice Alamanni de Carillo? Has the State Department issued public support for Dr. Carillo and her office?

Response:

The human rights environment in El Salvador today has improved from years past but we continue to monitor problem areas, particularly the efficiency and fairness of the judicial system. The U.S. Embassy in El Salvador cooperates closely with a broad array of human rights organizations, including the Office of the Human Rights (PDDH) Ombudswoman Beatrice Carrillo. The Department of State recognizes the PDDH's important constitutional role as an independent advocate for human rights, and its watchdog role in preventing human rights abuses.

Much remains to be done to advance the rule of law in El Salvador. The Department of State helped the Government of El Salvador to draft and secure passage of a Witness Protection law, as well as a comprehensive Ethics in Government law. The Department also worked closely with the Government of El Salvador to professionalize the Salvadoran Supreme Court and make it less politically partisan. This effort paid dividends when five new Supreme Court justices were selected and confirmed by El Salvador's Legislative Assembly. We believe the new justices possess better legal qualifications than their predecessors and were selected on the basis of professional expertise rather than political affiliation.

In late 2005, the Salvadoran Legislative Assembly approved the location of a new International Law Enforcement Academy (ILEA) in El Salvador. The ILEA will train police officers from all over Latin America, making them more competent technically but also more knowledgeable about legal procedures and respect for human rights.

The safety of the Human Rights Ombudswoman Beatrice Carrillo and all Salvadorans is an important issue for the Department of State. We understand the Civilian National Police (PNC) has investigated various reports of threats made against her, and has posted additional police protection and surveillance to ensure her safety.

RESPONSES FROM THE HONORABLE CONDOLEEZZA RICE, THE SECRETARY OF STATE, U.S. DEPARTMENT OF STATE, TO QUESTIONS SUBMITTED FOR THE RECORD BY THE HONORABLE TED POE, A REPRESENTATIVE IN CONGRESS FROM THE STATE OF TEXAS

Question:

I can say without reservation that the issue of border security is of the utmost importance to the people of my home-state. This is an issue that is critical to the safety of U.S. citizens, and I would like to hear your thoughts on how we can further work with our neighbors to the South to maintain the integrity of our borders. In Maverick County, Texas, Mexicans account for only 23% of illegal border crossings. How can we work with Central and South American governments to stem the tide of illegal

crossings into the United States? Are there any diplomatic measures being taken to gain their assistance in this matter?

Response:

The U.S. has an active dialogue with our neighbors regarding illegal immigration. The U.S. is seeking hemispheric support for cooperation on the facilitation of deportations, strengthened related counterterrorism efforts, and increased border security.

Expedited removal is key to reducing the illegal border crossings by Central and South Americans. To implement expedited removal, DHS and the Department of State are working with governments in Central and South America to secure their cooperation in accepting the return of their citizens who are detained while trying to enter the United States illegally. As a result of our effort with the Central Americans, we have reduced the time needed to issue travel documents to deportees and increased the number of repatriation flights to Central America.

Mexico, our southern neighbor, recognizes its responsibility to control illegal access to its southern border. In recent years, Mexico has apprehended increasing numbers of illegal migrants from Central America: 135,000 in 2002, 178,000 in 2003, and 215,000 in 2004. Mexico has reinstated visa requirements for Brazil, Ecuador, and South Africa, requiring travelers from those countries to be screened by consular officers before being admitted. The Government of Mexico has established checkpoints along some highways leading to the United States via Sonora to deter non-Mexicans who would transit through Mexico en route to illegal entry into the United States. In 2005, Mexico constructed two detention facilities for use in processing illegal immigrants for deportation from Mexico.

Question:

I have introduced the Passport for All Act, which would make a passport the only acceptable form of identification when entering the United States. This expands upon the State Department's Western Hemisphere Travel Initiative, which requires travelers to have a passport or other secure, accepted document to enter or re-enter the United States. Why does the administration desire to develop another secure, accepted document when a passport already meets the criteria? Can you speak to the administration's thoughts on how the Western Hemisphere Travel Initiative, and the requirement of a passport for entry into the United States, would impact national security?

Response:

The Department of State believes that the U.S. passport is one of the world's most secure and sought-after identity and nationality documents. At the same time, as we develop our plans to implement section 7209 of the Intelligence Reform and Terrorism Prevention Act, we have noted that the traditional, book-style passport may not be the ideal format for a travel and identity document used by frequent crossers of our land borders.

Thus, the Department of State has proposed to develop a card-format passport that will be adjudicated to the exact same standards as a traditional passport. This passport card, however, will be valid only at land border crossings. This passport card, we believe, addresses the requests of frequent crossers of our borders for a more convenient format while retaining the integrity and value of the passport as the document of choice (whether it be in book format or card format) as proof of citizenship and identity. In other words, the passport card proposed by the Department of State would not be an alternative document; it would be an alternative-format document.

The second part of your question asks our opinion on how the elimination of the passport exemption under the Western Hemisphere Travel Initiative (WHTI) would enhance national security. The 9/11 Commission Report identified the Western Hemisphere passport exemption as a national security vulnerability. This exemption permits purported U.S., Canadian, and Bermudan citizens to enter the United States on any one of a number or combination of unspecified documents, or even on a verbal declaration.

The exemption places an enormous burden on border inspectors, who have to make very rapid decisions on the admissibility of individuals who present themselves at U.S. ports of entry. Customs and Border Protection (CBP) officers evaluate passengers with passports for U.S. citizens and foreign travelers coming from Europe, Asia, Africa, and other international destinations. But those same people, arriving from Mexico, Canada, or the Caribbean, could today present a driver's license, shopping club card, library card, baptismal certificate, birth certificate, or simply make a verbal declaration as to their citizenship. No matter how highly trained, or how experienced, the CBP officers do not have the same tools at their disposal for

making critical decisions regarding admissibility for the individuals arriving with non-passport documents.

Passports and passport cards are highly secure documents issued to applicants after they undergo a thorough adjudication process by well-trained specialists. Moreover, this adjudication takes place before the passport is issued and, of course, long before the passport is presented to a border inspector. This adjudication process, when combined with the sophisticated physical security features of a passport, make passports difficult to alter or counterfeit. Furthermore, a passport can be authenticated through robust, secure database systems.

Acceptable travel documents today include a host of documents, including sometimes illegible birth certificates (more than 8,000 entities in the United States produce birth certificates), 50 state driver's licenses, and driver's licenses from U.S. territories and the Canadian provinces and territories. CBP intercepts thousands of fraudulent documents annually from people seeking entry to the United States under the passport exemption. Requiring passports or the previously discussed passport card would allow CBP officers to process travelers more efficiently while also making U.S. borders more secure. A passport or passport card requirement would also enable CBP to focus its inspections on those of most concern.

RESPONSE FROM THE HONORABLE CONDOLEEZZA RICE, THE SECRETARY OF STATE, U.S. DEPARTMENT OF STATE, TO QUESTION SUBMITTED FOR THE RECORD BY THE HONORABLE EDWARD R. ROYCE, A REPRESENTATIVE IN CONGRESS FROM THE STATE OF CALIFORNIA

Question:

I was pleased to see in your written testimony the mention of the threat for terrorists acquiring MANPADS, or shoulder-fired missiles. As you know, I chair the Terrorism and Nonproliferation Subcommittee, so I share your concern about this threat—we know from past instances that it is very real.

However, I was disappointed to see the Administration come in flat (\$8.6 million) for its request for the Small Arms/Light Weapons Destruction account. I worry about the signal this sends. Can you lay out for the Committee the work of the Small Arms and Light Weapons Destruction Account and the Department's plans for this \$8.6 million?

Response:

The Department of State's small arms/light weapons (SA/LW) destruction program was created in 2001. Its purpose is to destroy surplus, unstable, loosely secured, or otherwise at-risk stocks of military SA/LW and associated munitions as well as to assist states to properly secure remaining stocks required for legitimate defense needs so that they will not leak into the illicit arms market. Since the program's creation, approximately 900,000 pieces of SA/LW and over 80 million pieces of ammunition have been destroyed in 25 countries. Since 2003, much of the program's focus has been on man-portable air defense systems (MANPADS)—destroying over 18,600 missiles in 18 countries. Countries that have received assistance include: Afghanistan, Albania, Angola, Azerbaijan, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Bulgaria, Cambodia, El Salvador, Guinea, Hungary, Kazakhstan, Liberia, Mozambique, Nicaragua, the Philippines, Romania, Sao Tome and Principe, Senegal, Serbia and Montenegro, Sudan, Tajikistan, and Ukraine.

Approximately half of the \$8.6 million requested for FY 2007 would be expended in Europe and Eurasia, primarily to support continued reduction of large and aging stocks in the Balkans, Eastern Europe, and the former Soviet Union. Another significant portion would fund destruction of weapons caches and weapons collected through Disarmament, Demobilization, and Reintegration projects in Africa and South and Central Asia. Remaining funds will be used in the Near East and worldwide as opportunities for new programs arise. In all of these programs, special attention will be given to opportunities to destroy at-risk MANPADS.

RESPONSES FROM THE HONORABLE CONDOLEEZZA RICE, THE SECRETARY OF STATE, U.S. DEPARTMENT OF STATE, TO QUESTIONS SUBMITTED FOR THE RECORD BY THE HONORABLE ADAM B. SCHIFF, A REPRESENTATIVE IN CONGRESS FROM THE STATE OF CALIFORNIA

Question:

The Administration's push for Democratic change in the Muslim Middle East has focused on pressing Arab regimes to hold elections. While I applaud the President's

efforts to expand the circle of democracy, I am concerned that we are neglecting essential steps that will help democracy to flourish and to take root in the Arab world. The atomization of secular political opposition and the lack of an independent civil society in most of the Arab world have forced political opposition to coalesce around Islamist movements. Many of the press accounts of the recent legislative elections in Egypt and in the Palestinian Authority described Islamist candidates who were able to use their opposition to the incumbent government as a way to reach out to more secular voters.

It would seem to me that we ought to be putting more effort into helping Arab civil society to flourish as a necessary precursor to the growth of real democracy in the region. I also think that it is vital that we highlight the importance of an independent press as necessary to true political evolution.

I'd be interested to hear your thoughts on this and I would also like to hear what the Department has been doing in this regard and what you plan to do in the coming fiscal year and beyond.

Response:

Thank you for raising this very important issue. I strongly agree that while civil society is still developing in much of the Middle East, it is and will continue to be the essential engine of democratic and economic growth. From closed and repressive regimes to emerging or struggling democracies, non-governmental organizations (NGOs) and media in the Middle East are beginning to take root and, in some cases, have a solid footing. The United States is working hard to strengthen the capacity of these organizations and support their work, including through assistance to address injustice and past abuses, promote rule of law, support women's empowerment and build up the role of an independent press. We must also however, work with local governments to create a better legal environment for NGOs, foster partnerships for progress between NGOs and governments, and bolster the efforts of reformists within those governments. We are active on all these fronts across the Middle East.

Although the precise number of Middle Eastern NGOs is not clear, given the unregistered status of many political and human rights groups, it is generally believed their numbers continue to increase. At last count, for example, there were roughly 14,000 registered NGOs in Egypt alone. Most provide social and humanitarian services, often with the assistance of the international community, with a smaller group dedicated to the promotion of democracy and human rights protections.

Empowered by internal political reforms, quiet U.S. support and increased assistance under this Administration, and networking with international democracy and human rights movements, these democracy defenders and independent journalists still often face significant hurdles from their own governments and from conservative factions in their society. Authoritarian regimes in Iran and Syria view any independent organization or information outlet as a threat to their monopoly on power and information, allowing only licensed and monitored organizations that offer a dutiful echo to the single voice of the State. In emerging or struggling democracies such as Egypt or Lebanon, civil society is often weak and split along sectarian or tribal lines. Laws throughout the region place significant restrictions on membership, fund-raising, contacts with foreign organizations or individuals, and licensing. These restrictions are often rationalized as a means to contain or counter Islamic fundamentalism and terrorism. However, since radical or religious groups often find informal ways to organize, these laws often serve only to weaken the same moderate and secular organizations and movements that could best counter violent extremist ideologies.

In a restrictive environment, those courageous men and women who voice their concerns with official corruption, impunity, or misuse of power may face retaliation, vilification or even imprisonment, charged with defamation or treason. Efforts to peacefully assemble and present the government with legitimate grievances can meet with violent repression. Here the United States is using both the carrot and stick to support positive change, tying assistance to democratic progress and working to strengthen public awareness and internal support for key initiatives.

In some nations, we have seen the public support of leaders for reform and increased public participation sabotaged by financial constraints, endemic corruption, social traditions, or weaknesses in government institutions and civil society. To address these problems, the United States is helping build partnerships between progressive governments and their citizens, providing through our own NGO partners the technical assistance and counsel needed to restructure and strengthen key institutions, reform legislation, and provide the tools for a new social contract.

The United States will continue to use a variety of innovative tools in the Middle East to reach and sustain grassroots democrats and independent voices, whether it

is through helping those individuals gain increased access to uncensored information, supporting training and networking with peers in the international community, or “naming and shaming” in international fora and the international media those who seek to impede the growth of civil society. We will continue to coordinate our diplomatic and programmatic efforts with those of like-minded countries throughout the world, working to build the strength and capacity of human rights and democracy defenders and to seek voluntary internal reform and progress.

In FY06, our Democracy, Human Rights and Labor Bureau will dedicate \$12.4 million to this effort and the support of indigenous democrats in the region, including \$6.5 million to support the growth of democracy in Syria and Iran. This will include programs to strengthen rule of law, judicial and electoral reforms, political pluralism, independent media, freedom of association and expression, and protections for fundamental human rights. Our FY07 request for \$15 million includes \$7 million for Iran and \$3 million for Syrian democracy. In addition, the Middle East Partnership (MEPI) is directing the majority of its \$99 million budget in FY06 to the development of vibrant and politically active NGOs, democratic and moderate political parties, and independent media. USAID will invest over \$200 million in FY06 to promote political reform in the areas of rule of law and human rights; good governance, including avenues for meaningful public participation and oversight; peaceful political competition and consensus-building; and support for civil society, including media.

On November 12, 2005, 40 representatives of civil society were seated at the table with Ministers from their countries at the Forum for the Future Ministerial in Manama. For the first time in this region, these civil society leaders were empowered to sit down with their leaders, to report on their issues and challenge their own governments to move forward with critical reforms. These NGO representatives called for dialogue rather than confrontation to resolve issues, but pointed out that their organizations need freedom to operate and a legal framework that does not prohibit or restrict their independence or function. We strongly support and welcome the robust participation of civil society at the December Forum for the Future in Amman, and are confident that the new Foundation for the Future will further strengthen the capacity and positive role of NGOs in the region.

Question:

I was unsettled by your comment in the wake of the Hamas victory that “nobody saw it coming.” My understanding is that Mahmoud Abbas, Israeli experts in and out of government and other regional players were all concerned about a Hamas victory and were actively preparing for it. Four and a half years after the 9/11 attacks, I would have expected that we would have better insight into political developments in the Muslim world.

What do you think is contributing to this continued failure to understand the Arab world? What is the Department doing to increase its ability to predict political events in the region? Are other players in the interagency giving the Department adequate support in terms of assessing events in the Arab world?

Response:

Predicting elections is often a challenge, especially so in regions with rapidly evolving political and social forces. For this reason, it is important for the United States to evaluate and adjust our foreign policy tools.

On January 16, 2006, I announced plans for global repositioning to restructure both the Department of State’s overseas and domestic staffing, and my vision for the future of the department. To meet current diplomatic challenges, I began a major repositioning of U.S. diplomatic personnel across the world. In a multiyear process, hundreds of positions will be moved to critical emerging areas in the Middle East, South Asia, East Asia, and elsewhere. Beginning this year, 100 current positions largely from Europe and Washington will be moved; 25 of these positions have been redirected to our Middle East posts, where additional staffing will make an essential difference. Currently, record numbers of diplomats are being trained in critical languages including Arabic, Urdu and Farsi. We are forward deploying our best Arabic-speaking diplomats, broadly coordinating our public diplomacy strategy both for the region and from the region, and acting in coordination and with the support of other concerned agencies.

Question:

The 9–11 Public Discourse Project, the follow-on to the 9–11 Commission, issued a follow-up report in November 2005 that gave a D grade to our efforts to prevent terrorists from acquiring weapons of mass destruction (WMD). Do you agree with this assessment? It seems to me that we are in a situation that is roughly analogous

to that which existed before Katrina disaster in that the threat is well known, the consequences are understood, but insufficient action is being taken.

Is there a comprehensive plan for securing weapons-usable nuclear material around the world? Are we proceeding at the fastest pace possible and meeting our targets? Is there an approximate date by which you expect the job to be completed? What can the Congress do to assist you in this effort? Is there sufficient coordination at the highest levels of the government or do we need to consider consolidating our nonproliferation efforts in one department?

Response:

We do not agree with the grade of “D” that was given for “Maximum effort by U.S. government to secure WMD” nor do we agree with the statement by the Public Discourse Project that countering the threat posed by WMD is “still not the top national security priority of the President and the Congress.” There is no greater priority by the President than keeping WMD out of the hands of terrorists. The State Department has adopted a comprehensive strategy for combating the threat of WMD terrorism. We have tailored our resources to suit this new comprehensive strategy, creating a new WMD Terrorism Office to establish a layered defense—in depth against WMD terrorism and combining the Arms Control Bureau and the Nonproliferation Bureau to create one single bureau, the International Security and Nonproliferation Bureau. This restructuring has resulted in a broader, more integrated understanding of the complex threat of WMD terrorism.

One of the most crucial lessons learned from the events of 9/11 is the importance of interagency communication. Today, the State Department works closely with partners such as the National Counterterrorism Center and the National Counterproliferation Center to combat WMD terrorism. These two centers, which were established in accordance with the recommendations of the 9/11 Commission and the Commission on the Intelligence Capabilities of the United States Regarding Weapons of Mass Destruction respectively, have proven vital to the work of the new WMDT Office, and we are beginning to reap the benefits of our cooperative efforts.

Our Department contributes extensively to interagency efforts to prevent, detect, and respond to the threat or use of WMD by terrorists. We are undertaking national, multilateral and global efforts to deny terrorists access to the most dangerous materials. We are developing new tools and capabilities with partner nations to detect the movement of WMD and to disrupt linkages between WMD terrorists and their facilitators. We are also cooperating extensively with partners to manage and mitigate the consequences of such attacks, which includes improving our capabilities to attribute the source and responsible actors in an attack. In accordance with the strategy of transformational diplomacy articulated by Secretary Rice, we have utilized partnerships to defend against WMD terrorism rather than resorting to paternalism, strengthening and empowering governments around the globe to take responsibility and join us in our efforts as equals.

The 9/11 Commission’s identification of WMD terrorism as the most grave danger facing the United States and its subsequent recommendation that “maximum effort” be devoted to combating this threat has generated a new focus and sense of urgency in our Department. We recognize that, even though important steps have been taken, much still remains to be done. The effects of a terrorist attack involving weapons of mass destruction would be nothing short of catastrophic. For this reason, we cannot and will not rest as long as terrorists continue to seek these weapons and attempt to use them against us.

Question:

At present, the Community of Democracies includes countries like Egypt, Qatar and Yemen which are not serious democracies. Last month, John Bolton suggested that Russia and China should be included in a reformed Human Rights Commission. What is the President’s vision for a substantive Community of Democracies and Human Rights Commission? What is the plan to pursue it and how actively is the plan being pursued?

Response:

There were over 140 participants and observers that were invited to the 2005 Community of Democracies Ministerial in Santiago, Chile. Egypt, Qatar and Yemen were among the 17 invited observers. In 2001, the U.S. recommended that an intermediate status of observers be developed for those states that could not yet be described as democracies but were moving in that direction.

The U.S. Government considers the Community of Democracies an important forum where democracies can come together to promote democratic principles and the consolidation of democratic institutions all over the world. As one of the 16 members of the Convening Group, the U.S. is actively engaged in all aspects of the

Community. We attend every meeting, often at the Under Secretary level, to ensure that our voice and vision are a part of all discussions. We also regularly meet with the civil society actors who play an important role within the Community. We envision the Community as an alternative forum where we can promote our democratic principles with other likeminded democracies. Though still nascent, the CD has already successfully sponsored and participated in some projects that have had impact on the ground, most notably in Georgia and East Timor. We are currently working to establish working groups that will embark on important and action-oriented projects around the world.

Although the U.S. voted against the UNGA resolution creating the new HRC due to its shortcomings and subsequently chose not to run for a seat, we remain committed to helping ensure that the new body's mandate is effective in dealing with human rights violators. Though the U.S. will not have a vote when the HRC meets, we are committed to promoting and protecting human rights and are working with our allies on and off the HRC toward that goal. We will lobby heavily for candidates who are committed to effective action on the ground and who will encourage the Council to deal with the worst human rights situations such as in Iran, Cuba, Zimbabwe, Burma, Sudan, and North Korea.

Question:

Last June, the Washington Post reported that the State Department intervened to block the American Foreign Service Association (AFSA) from granting an award for "constructive dissent" to John M. Evans, the U.S. Ambassador to Armenia.

While speaking to an Armenian American group in California in February 2005, Ambassador Evans referred to the "Armenian Genocide" and said that the U.S. government owes "you, our fellow citizens, a more frank and honest way of discussing the problem." He added that he had consulted a State Department lawyer who confirmed that the events of 1915 were "genocide by definition." He stressed that, "there is no doubt in my mind what happened" and it was "unbecoming of us, as Americans, to play word games here."

Following this speech, AFSA decided to honor Evans with the "Christian A. Herter Award," an honor that is intended to foster creative thinking and intellectual courage. As Washington Post staff writer Glenn Kessler revealed on June 9, 2005, the AFSA's withdrew its award following pressure from "very serious people from the State Department."

Could you please provide a full explanation of any and all State Department activities surrounding the withdrawal of the award?

Was there at any time discussion of how the decision to honor Evans might impact the visit of Turkish Prime Minister Recep Tayyip Erdogan, who visited Washington in June 2005?

In this regard, can you please provide information concerning all communications (written or oral) about Ambassador Evans' comments on the Armenian Genocide, including but not limited to communications between State Department employees and representatives of AFSA.

Furthermore, please provide information on any efforts by Ambassador Evans while "working in the system" to challenge existing American policy regarding non-recognition of the Armenian Genocide.

Finally, can you assure this Committee that the Department of State has not—and will not—take any punitive action against Ambassador Evans for speaking out about the Armenian Genocide?

Response:

The July / August 2005 issue of "AFSA News" stated that the AFSA Awards Committee decided not to confer the Christian A. Herter Dissent Award on Ambassador Evans because, upon review, the nomination did not meet the criteria for the award. The Department did not directly or indirectly attempt to influence ASFA's decision. The Washington Post article referred to was simply wrong.

Ambassadors are charged with representing the Administration's policies. Ambassador Evans's comments on the tragic events of 1915 did not reflect the Administration's policies; he himself later characterized the remarks as "inappropriate." It would be inappropriate for the Department to provide information on certain discussions, such as internal personnel matters. We note, however, that the Department did not hold internal discussions on how a private, in this case ASFA, award for Ambassador Evans might impact the visit of a foreign government official. Furthermore, the Department is unaware of any internal efforts made by Ambassador Evans to challenge U.S. policy on the events of 1915.

Ambassadors Evans, like all U.S. ambassadors, serves at the pleasure of the President.

Question:

In its FY07 foreign aid request, the Administration has not maintained military parity between Armenia and Azerbaijan.

The administration has requested nearly 40% more military assistance (FMF, IMET, NADR) for Azerbaijan than Armenia (\$10,180,000 for Azerbaijan and only \$6,290,000 for Armenia), despite an agreement with Congress to maintain military aid parity between the countries when Congress authorized the President to waive Section 907 of the Freedom Support Act which prevents military assistance to Azerbaijan. The agreement was arrived at during consideration of the FY02 aid package and was maintained for Fiscal Years 2003–2006.

Given the delicacy of negotiations over Nagorno-Karabakh and the failure of last weekend's Rambouillet meeting between Armenian President Robert Kocharian and Azerbaijani President Ilham Aliiev, doesn't the disparate aid requests send the wrong message and undermine prospects for peace?

Response:

As a Co-Chair of the OSCE Minsk Group, our goal is to help Armenia and Azerbaijan achieve a peaceful resolution of the Nagorno-Karabakh conflict. Military assistance to both countries in light of that ongoing conflict is carefully considered and calibrated to ensure that it does not hamper ongoing efforts to negotiate a peaceful settlement between Armenia and Azerbaijan. Although the Rambouillet summit between the two presidents marked a temporary stall in negotiations, the process has gained momentum again with a series of individual visits by Minsk Group Co-Chairs to the region. We continue to view 2006 as the necessary window for the sides to reach an agreement. At the same time, we are strongly urging the presidents to prepare their publics for peace, not for war.

While we do not have a policy that security assistance funding levels for Armenia and Azerbaijan should be identical, we work to ensure that assistance does not adversely affect the military balance between the two states. We do not believe that the differences in security assistance in the FY 2007 budget requests undermine prospects for peace or send the wrong message.

The waiver of Section 907 of the FREEDOM Support Act every year since 2002 has allowed us to provide military assistance that enhances Azerbaijan's interoperability with NATO and U.S. forces and furthers U.S. peacekeeping objectives. These funds also allow us to assist Azerbaijan in developing capabilities to promote Caspian security and indigenous humanitarian demining capabilities. We provide assistance to Armenia for similar purposes.

Question:

From January 9–20, 2006 the United Nations hosted a preparatory committee meeting for the second global conference aimed at eliminating the illicit small arms trade. The meeting was intended to set the agenda for a global conference to be held at the UN in late June and early July, at which governments will review implementation and clarify the Programme of Action (PoA) to Prevent, Combat and Eradicate the Illicit Trade in Small Arms and Light Weapons in All Its Aspects, which was agreed to at the first global conference on small arms in July 2001.

Unfortunately, after two weeks of discussions, governments achieved very little at this meeting. I am worried that we will be facing a repeat of last year's NPT review conference last year, where a series of failures at the preparatory level set the stage for a completely failed review conference.

a) Are you concerned about the outcome of the preparatory committee meeting and do you think that we are facing a situation that is analogous to the NPT conference last year?

b) What are you and the Department doing to ensure that the conference is productive and takes steps toward the goal of eradicating the illicit small arms trade?

Response:

The U.S. delegation to the 2006 Review Conference is working very closely with other member states and the President-designate of the Conference, Permanent Representative of Sri Lanka to the United Nations, Ambassador Prasad Kariyawasam, to ensure that the conference is productive and takes steps toward the goal of eradicating the illicit small arms trade. We have conveyed to the Ambassador and others that the United States plans to play a positive role at the meeting by leading on issues where it sets the international standard. This includes areas such as export controls, where the United States is widely acknowledged as the world's leader, by supporting, in principle, the United Kingdom's Transfer Controls Initiative, as well as management of government arms stockpiles, and destruction of excess and obsolete small arms and light weapons. Our delegation has had a

range of bilateral discussions with key states, where we have emphasized the need to focus the conference on implementation of the Programme of Action, agreed to by all States in July 2001, instead of undertaking a slate of distracting and likely contentious new initiatives. Such an approach has resonated positively with many states.

Question:

Since all illicit weapons start off in authorized hands, eradicating the illegal trade starts with ensuring weapons do not fall out of legal channels. What other steps is the Department taking to increase global controls over the transfer of small arms and light weapons?

Response:

The Department has taken multiple measures to reduce the risk of weapons falling out of legal channels. The Department's Directorate of Defense Controls carefully reviews all commercial export licenses for small arms and light weapons (SA/LW) and ammunition, and our "Blue Lantern" end-use monitoring program is regularly deployed to ensure that U.S.-licensed defense exports are used only as authorized. Through the Export Control and Border Security Program (EXBS), we are working diligently with over 50 countries to ensure that they are equipped with an export control system that is based on robust laws and has the proper enforcement mechanism to implement them.

On the multilateral front, the 40 Participating States of the Wassenaar Arrangement, including the United States, contribute to regional and international security and stability by promoting greater transparency and greater responsibility in transfers of conventional weapons to prevent destabilizing accumulations. In addition, through information sharing in the organization, proliferation concerns are highlighted and various agreements among the member states have resulted in tighter export controls to prevent illicit transfers. Similar efforts are undertaken at the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE), where 55 participating States, including the United States, have agreed on measures for export controls on man-portable air defense systems (MANPADS), end-user certificates and verification procedures for SA/LW exports, and brokering controls over SA/LW. Within the OSCE, the United States has also provided funding for the destruction of surplus SA/LW in Tajikistan. The United States has also provided seminars in Tajikistan and Kazakhstan on the physical security and stockpile management of SA/LW. Through the NATO Partnership for Peace, the United States has taken the "lead nation" role for the first three-year phase of a trust fund project to destroy ammunition, SA/LW, and MANPADS. During this time, 33,000 tons of ammunition, 400,000 pieces of SA/LW, and 1,000 MANPADS will be destroyed.

Question:

Prior to the change in export controls in 1999, the United States dominated the commercial satellite-manufacturing field with an average market share of 83 percent. Since that time, market share has declined to 50 percent. Overall, US satellite manufacturers have lost somewhere between \$2.5 and \$6.0 billion since 1999 due primarily to International Traffic in Arms Regulations (ITAR) regulations.

For example, the European Union has advocated the use of non U. S. commodities in satellite applications due to the difficulty of American export controls. Alcatel Alenia Space, a joint venture formed in 2005 by combining the space businesses of France's Alcatel and Italy's Finmeccanica is a genuine threat to American leadership in this vital sector. Alcatel announced earlier this decade that it would create an "ITAR-free" spacecraft and by 2004, it had doubled its market share from around 10% in 1998 to over 20%.

The upshot is that the U. S. satellite industry has been adversely impacted, while other countries gain the advantage in the commercial satellite sector.

What steps is the Department taking to streamline the regulatory process and prevent further erosion of market share for American companies? How can Congress help?

Response:

As you know, Congress mandated that civilian communications satellites be placed on the U.S. Munitions List and be subject to the export licensing jurisdiction of the State Department.

A significant factor in the loss of market share by U.S. satellite manufacturers is the enhanced competitiveness of European manufacturers. European competitiveness also has been enhanced in part by the transfer of ITAR-controlled technology as part of various technology assistance agreements and manufacturing licensing agreements solicited by U.S. manufacturers.

The Department of State has undertaken a number of initiatives, with the Department of Defense, to streamline the export licensing process, while ensuring that U.S. defense exports remain out of the hands of governments and groups that would do us harm. One of these initiatives is a fully electronic licensing system called D-Trade. Export license applications that are submitted through D-Trade are completed in half the time needed with the legacy paper system.

The State Department has recently submitted to the committees on appropriations and foreign affairs of the Congress a report on the defense trade licensing process. This report discusses measures to improve that process. Among the areas in which Congress can help are the following:

- Relief from Congressionally mandated reporting requirements on arms transfers, including the Javits report and the 655 report.
- Raising the thresholds for notifying Congress on arms transfers (Section 36 of the Arms Export Control Act).
- Relief from preclearance procedures (which are not mandated by law) for Section 36 arms transfers.

Apart from process improvements, the Department is responsive to proposed exports of commercial communications satellites that benefit U.S. manufacturers and that accord with U.S. national interests. For example, the prohibition on exports and sales to certain countries outlined in Section 126.1 of the ITAR recently was waived to allow for the potential export of a commercial communications satellite to Vietnam, a proscribed destination under the ITAR

Question:

I signed a letter to President Bush that was organized by Mr. Payne and several other Members. The Letter urges American leadership in authorizing a UN peacekeeping force for Darfur. What is the status of the discussions at the UN and do you anticipate that a UN force will be established? Has there been any discussion of what role the United States and our NATO allies might play in that force?

Response:

Following the signing of the Darfur Peace Agreement in Abuja on May 5, I addressed the United Nations Security Council to urge support for deployment of a UN peacekeeping force to Darfur. On May 16, the Council unanimously adopted Resolution 1679, which called for deployment of a joint African Union (AU) and UN assessment team to prepare for the UN operation in Darfur. The joint AU/UN assessment team is expected to complete its work in Darfur before the end of June. Based on the joint AU/UN assessment, the Security Council will move forward on establishing the mandate and force strength of the UN operation in Darfur. We anticipate adopting a Security Council resolution by the end of July calling for a UN force in Darfur with a robust mandate to protect civilians under threat of violence, to enable delivery of humanitarian assistance, and to support implementation of the Darfur Peace Agreement.

In the meantime, we are working with our NATO Allies to strengthen the African Union Mission in Sudan (AMIS), to assist its transition, and to support the UN mission in Darfur. To date, NATO has offered and the AU has accepted airlift, staff capacity building, assistance in establishing a joint operations center, lessons learned support, and pre-deployment certification of AU peacekeeping units. Additionally, the AU has invited NATO officials to Addis to discuss a NATO technical teams visiting Darfur to explore on-the-job capacity building to AMIS sector headquarters. The AU has not requested, nor has NATO offered to provide, combat troops to participate in peacekeeping operations. Alliance personnel are currently in Addis coordinating the agreed measures of support with their AU counterparts. Finally, as full details of a UN re-hat of AMIS emerge, NATO will be open to consultations with the UN as to how the Alliance might support a UN peacekeeping operation.

Question:

How much supplemental funding for UN peacekeeping will the Administration ask for in the forthcoming Defense supplemental request? Why would the Administration choose to underfund UN peacekeeping again in 2007?

Response:

In FY 2005 the Administration requested supplemental funding of \$780 million in order to fund a shortfall in the CIPA account that resulted from the creation of several new peacekeeping missions after the submission of the regular budget request for FY 2005. Congress enacted supplemental funding of \$680 million for CIPA,

and authorized a transfer of \$50 million from CIPA to the PKO account to support the African Union Mission in Darfur. This resulted in a net shortfall for FY 2005 of \$145.010 million. This, together with the projected shortfall for FY 2006 of \$376.752 million totals \$521.762 million. The FY 2006 supplemental budget contains a request of \$69.8 million for the CIPA account for Sudan/Darfur as well as language providing transfer authority from the Peacekeeping Operations request which, in total, would offset a total of \$129.8 million in the above total for a net shortfall of \$391.962 million at the end of FY 2006.

We expect that there will be no new shortfalls in FY 2007, i.e. that the request will be sufficient to pay FY 2007 assessments. We have asked for an increase in FY 2007 funding for Sudan operations in anticipation of the UN's taking over operations in Darfur.

Question:

At a recent IPR roundtable hosted by the American embassy in Beijing, an assistant FBI director said U.S. companies lost \$40 billion in 2004 alone from intellectual-property rights violations, most of them committed in China. Russia was also cited as a major center of IPR violations.

Despite years of U.S. government action to compel Russia and China to take specific steps to address the massive theft of U.S. intellectual property, the problem has only gotten worse. Russia and China continue to fail to provide effective protection of U.S. intellectual property as required under international obligations and a recent report by the U.S. Patent and Trademark Office noted that IP infringement in China had reached "epidemic levels."

What has the State Department done, apart from cooperative efforts involving other executive branch agencies, to compel these governments to promptly address the inadequacies in their legal and enforcement regimes? For example, China has done little to create a robust criminal law regime to fight piracy and has instead relied on toothless administrative sanctions that merely become part of the cost of doing business for Chinese pirates. Do you see any evidence that China is making a commitment to using its criminal law to enforce intellectual property rights?

How can Russia be permitted to join the WTO, a rules-based organization, if the Russian government cannot demonstrate the ability or the will to abide by international rules? What has the Department done to communicate to the Russian government that failure to address intellectual property rights issues will impede Russia's entry into the WTO?

Response:

The Department of State is actively engaged with Beijing and Moscow at the highest levels to promote and protect American innovation and competitiveness in China and Russia. We agree that we need to see continued measurable results in both countries.

In China, I and other senior State Department officials have pressed Beijing to substantially reduce piracy and counterfeiting and improve intellectual property rights protection and enforcement—coordinating our messages with those of our colleagues in other agencies and of other countries. In addition, through our International Intellectual Property Rights Enforcement Office in Washington, our Embassy in Beijing and our consulates throughout China, the State Department itself has advocated effectively and consistently on behalf of American businesses and entrepreneurs whose intellectual property rights have been violated. The U.S. Ambassador to China hosts an annual Roundtable that puts the critical concerns of American firms directly before senior Chinese government officials and promotes practical solutions. Our Consul General in Shenyang has worked successfully to ensure that government offices in Liaoning province use legal software, and our Consul General in Guangzhou has led business delegations to meet with local officials across Guangdong province—resulting in first-time raids and crackdowns. We have also leveraged the State Department's International Visitor Program to train Chinese IPR officials and company representatives on the importance of IPR protection and successful strategies and models to improve enforcement.

Our engagement has contributed to positive developments. On April 11, during the U.S.-China Joint Commission on Commerce and Trade (JCCT) meeting, Beijing restated its commitments to increase criminal prosecutions and reduce exports of infringing products. In addition to new commitments on the use of legal software in government and in enterprises, Vice Premier Wu Yi also pledged to take action, including by imposing criminal penalties, against producers of pirated optical discs. Beijing also agreed to take steps to facilitate the transfer of IPR cases from the administrative to the criminal justice systems.

In addition, the Chinese government has issued a requirement that all personal computers manufactured in or imported into China be pre-installed with legal operating software. This step has already resulted in Chinese purchases of U.S. software, including an agreement by Lenovo, China's top computer maker, to purchase more than \$1.2bn of Microsoft products over the next 12 months. While pleased to note this progress, we share your recognition that much more remains to be done.

The State Department will continue to use all available avenues to ensure Beijing meets all its JCCT commitments and uses its criminal law to create a climate of deterrence against IP infringement, consistent with its obligations under the WTO TRIPS Agreement. We will work together—with Congress, with other agencies, and with like-minded countries—to make that shared goal a reality.

In Russia, we are likewise committed to combating significant and growing intellectual property theft using all available tools. We are working to advance our enforcement agenda through engagement with Russia in the G8, through the U.S.-Russia Intellectual Property Rights Working Group, in our WTO bilateral and multilateral negotiations, and through targeted training of Russian law enforcement officials, industry representatives, forensic specialists, prosecutors, and judges.

We regularly raise concerns about IPR infringement at the highest levels of the Russian government. President Bush has personally pressed President Putin on this issue, as have I, the Deputy Secretary, Ambassador Burns, and other senior State Department officials. We continue to insist on closing plants that produce pirated optical discs on government-owned property, shutting down internet sites selling unauthorized downloads, and improving border enforcement—including increased seizures and prosecutions. We have made it clear that Russia must take significant, sustained action to address these and other remaining issues in our bilateral WTO accession negotiations.

The Administration's efforts to promote stronger protection and enforcement of IPR in Russia have resulted in positive steps, including raids on optical disc plants and warehouses on restricted-access sites, new draft regulations to tighten the optical disc licensing regime, and prosecutorial investigation of the illicit music downloading site allofmp3.com. Clearly, however, a great deal remains to be done. President Putin has publicly recognized the need for better IPR enforcement in Russia. We will continue to urge him to follow his words with strong actions that both anchor and build on recent progress.

RESPONSES FROM THE HONORABLE CONDOLEEZZA RICE, THE SECRETARY OF STATE, U.S. DEPARTMENT OF STATE, TO QUESTIONS SUBMITTED FOR THE RECORD BY THE HONORABLE CHRISTOPHER H. SMITH, A REPRESENTATIVE IN CONGRESS FROM THE STATE OF NEW JERSEY AND VICE CHAIRMAN, COMMITTEE ON INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS

Question:

Yesterday I chaired a hearing on how American technology and know-how is substantially enabling repressive regimes in China and elsewhere in the world to cruelly exploit and abuse their own citizens. Last December, cyber dissident Shi Tao was arrested and sentenced to 10 years of prison after Yahoo turned over information identifying him to the Chinese secret police. And last week in Atlanta (Feb 8), Chinese and Korean-speaking thugs beat up American citizen Dr. Peter Yuan Li and stole two computers, his wallet, his home telephone files from a locked cabinet. Dr. Li is the director of the Internet Freedom Project, which is creating cutting edge technology using proxy URLs to circumvent China's extensive internet filtering system. These are only a few examples—there could be many more.

a) Has there been any response by China regarding U.S. concerns that during the visit of President Bush in December, 2005, Chinese dissidents were arrested and harassed prior to and during the President's visit? Has our ability to influence the PRC on human rights diminished? If so, why does the U.S. have less influence now to promote human rights with the Chinese government than before when we could expect Chinese dissidents to be released prior to the arrival of a Presidential visit?

Response:

We raised our deep concerns about the detention and harassment of Chinese activists prior to and during the President's visit in November, and we have continued to do so at every opportunity, including the recent visit of President Hu Jintao to the U.S. in April. Regrettably, we received no official reply from Chinese authorities, but we do understand most if not all of the previously arrested individuals have by now been released from detention.

We are disappointed by the China's lack of responsiveness to our human rights concerns, including the releases of prisoners of concern. The cooperation we saw on a number of issues of longstanding concern in 2005 has stalled and we are working hard to get it back on track, making it clear to China that bringing its human rights practices into compliance with international standards is a key part of becoming a stakeholder in the international system.

We are also continuing to work to support those in China who are working for change. We are pressing for systemic reforms in China's judicial system, and we fund rule of law programs and work also with Chinese non-governmental organizations to encourage the growth of China's civil society as well as greater political participation.

The State Department's annual China human rights and religious freedom reports documents China's serious abuses of human rights in violation of internationally recognized norms, stemming both from the authorities' intolerance of dissent and the inadequacy of legal safeguards for basic freedoms. Human rights has and always will be an important part of our overall relationship with China and we will continue to press publicly in our reports and privately in meetings in Washington D.C. and Beijing, our human rights concerns with the Chinese government.

Question:

b) What has been the State's Departments response to the PRC's outrageous claim earlier this week that its internet regulations are "fully in line" with the rest of the world and that no one had been arrested just for writing online content?

Response:

We have consistently raised our concerns with the Chinese government over the restrictions it is placing on the free flow of information and the arrest and detention of Internet writers and cyber dissidents, who have done nothing more than peacefully express personal or political views on the Internet. We will continue to emphasize to our Chinese government interlocutors that allowing people the freedom to express themselves on the Internet and elsewhere doesn't weaken China, but rather promotes stability at a time of dramatic social and economic transformation. A freer China will be a healthier China, in part because people who are free to express their views and participate in their own local governance have a stake in dealing with the economic and social issues confronting them. President Bush addressed the importance of Internet freedom in his recent meeting with President Hu. The State Department will continue to press China on this point and urge China to adhere to its international obligations.

Question:

What is the Administration's plan to implement the TVPRA now that it has been enacted into law? Has the State Department requested adequate levels of funding for trafficking programs?

Response:

In FY 2005, the U.S. Government obligated approximately \$95 million to 266 international anti-trafficking in persons (TIP) projects in 101 countries, up from approximately \$82 million in FY2004. These projects are working to ensure human trafficking is prevented, the survivors are protected, and the traffickers are put in jail. They are sponsored through the coordinated efforts of the Departments of State, Justice, Labor, Health and Human Services, and USAID.

While funding was authorized in the 2005 TVPRA, there has been no corresponding appropriations legislation. Agencies are willing to tackle these issues, but have noted that it will be difficult to fulfill the mandates without additional funding. Appropriated funds consistent with levels proposed in the reauthorization are needed to fully meet Congressional mandates. In FY 2007, the Department of State requested approximately \$26.54 million in anti-trafficking program funds; increased funding could lead to the rescue of more victims, the passage of more international laws, an increase in public awareness as well as other efforts to eliminate human trafficking.

Question:

Last year, the State Department placed Sudan on the Tier 2 watch list for trafficking in persons, which implied an improvement in their efforts to curb trafficking. We were told that this was a four-month experiment based on their support for the Committee for the Eradication of Abduction of Women and Children (CEAWC), an organization to repatriate trafficked persons. When I visited Sudan last summer, I met with this group, and they were concentrating on women kidnapped to become brides and not on the thousands of Sudanese sold into chattel slavery over the years.

Now the Government of Sudan has ended its' support for that organization. Since State is now considering trafficking rankings for its June report, where would you say Sudan stands at this point? Do you really believe they have taken serious steps to redress the wrongs done to so many people sold into slavery in Sudan?

Response:

As communicated to you in a March 2006 letter from the Department's Assistant Secretary of Legislative Affairs Jeffery Bergner, Sudan was elevated from a ranking of Tier 3 to Tier 2 Watch List in September 2005 based on commitments by the country to take additional future steps over the next year to combat human trafficking, coupled with positive anti-trafficking efforts undertaken between June and August 2005. Any failure by the Government of National Unity (GNU) to live up to its commitments will negatively impact its tier ranking.

We recognize and share your concerns regarding chattel slavery in Sudan. This egregious practice remains a key focus of the Department of State and we are closely monitoring Sudan's progress as it works to address these concerns. We have sent multiple staff to Khartoum, Southern Sudan, and Darfur to examine instances of slavery and a variety of other trafficking in persons issues. State Department officials have met with CEAWC and other GNU officials to push for the return of abducted and enslaved persons in accordance with international protection principles.

As you noted, there was a break in national government funding to CEAWC in 2005; however, the GNU granted funding in January 2006 that enabled CEAWC to make three separate efforts to return 340 people to Bahr el Ghazal in late January and early February 2006. We do not know if CEAWC will receive further funding from the GNU to continue its work. We continue to press the GNU to provide CEAWC the funding necessary to fulfill its mandate.

As required by the Trafficking Victims Protection Act, Sudan's tier ranking must be based on the government's efforts to combat all forms of trafficking in persons occurring in the country. Abduction and resulting enslavement of individuals from the Nuba and Dinka tribes is but one form of trafficking in persons that exists in Sudan. When evaluating whether Sudan is taking steps to combat trafficking in persons, the Department must consider not only this form of slavery, but also the full scope of enslavement of Sudanese citizens, including forms such as children utilized as camel jockeys or soldiers, children in commercial sexual exploitation, forced domestic servitude, and bonded labor.

On March 1, the Office to Monitor and Combat Trafficking in Persons began drafting the 2006 TIP Report. The Department closely examined reports from NGOs and information gathered by Department personnel in Sudan in order to make its determination of Sudan's 2006 tier ranking. The Report, due to be released in early June, will reflect, to the best of our ability, the GNU's cumulative efforts to combat trafficking in persons since September 2005.

Question:

The Belarus Democracy Act mandated a report regarding the sale and delivery of weapons from Belarus to countries determined to be involved in terrorist activities and on Lukashenka's personal wealth and assets. The report is now more than one year overdue, despite months of inquiries to the NSC and my January 6th letter (which has gone unanswered) to Stephen Hadley asking for its release. My understanding is that the State Department had prepared the report on time and transferred it back then to the NSC for final clearance. I would really appreciate your assistance in facilitating the transmission of this report.

Response:

The report was signed by the President for transmittal on March 16, 2006. The NSC provided the attached copies of the transmittal letters to Chairman Hyde and Ranking Member Tom Lantos.

Question:

While I welcome the Administration's increased attention to the plight of Belarus, I am concerned by the \$10 million requested for Belarus under the FREEDOM Support Act (which actually represents a decrease of almost \$2 million from last year). Is this enough, especially when we are also expanding international broadcast efforts to that country, given Lukashenka's almost total domination of the media? Is this the signal we want to send to those in Belarus struggling for freedom and democracy?

Response:

We are committed to standing with the people of Belarus in their struggle for a democratic future. We believe that, with the requested \$10 million in FY 07 FREE-

DOM Support Act funds, we will have sufficient resources to fund a robust democracy promotion program in Belarus. We will have adequate funds to continue to expand external broadcasting and other independent media as conditions permit. The Administration has demonstrated its support for democracy in Belarus through a variety of measures including assistance to democratic forces, proactive diplomacy with European partners, and sanctions specifically targeted at those responsible for abuses. The pro-democracy signals that we are sending and will continue to send are very strong.

Question:

Russia recently has threatened to withdraw from the conventional arms control regime for Europe in response to our reasonable insistence that, before this regime is adapted by treaty, Moscow honor the commitments it made in Istanbul in 1999 regarding the presence of military forces and weaponry in both Moldova and Georgia. Russia is now also playing games regarding the status talks regarding Kosovo by claiming the result of those talks could provide Moscow with precedent and impetus to recognize breakaway regions in the former Soviet space. How serious are these threats? Will the United States remain firm in pressing Russian officials to honor their Istanbul commitments?

Response:

U.S. officials will continue to express at all levels and make clear our firm position that, together with other NATO Allies, we will only move to ratify the Adapted CFE Treaty once all remaining Istanbul commitments have been fulfilled. These remaining Istanbul commitments include, with regard to Moldova, the withdrawal of Russian military forces. Moldova has said that it wants all Russian forces, including the Russian peacekeeping force, withdrawn. We support Moldova's sovereign right to make that decision. With regard to Georgia, there has been important progress this year, but Georgia and Russia still need to resolve the question of the Russian presence at the Gudauta base, in Abkhazia.

The Russian Federation has expressed concern regarding what it considers the delay in entry into force of the Adapted Conventional Armed Forces in Europe Treaty (A/CFE). Senior Russian officials have also stated that the current Treaty on Conventional Armed Forces in Europe (CFE Treaty) does not adequately address the Russian Federation's security concerns. However, Russia has not formally suggested that it will withdraw from the CFE Treaty. The CFE Treaty provides important benefits to all its signatories, including detailed information on the military forces of all participating states, and the opportunity to verify that information. NATO Allies have agreed that the Treaty is a cornerstone of European stability and security, and it benefits all of Europe, including Russia.

These are issues that the United States raises with Russia in our bilateral exchanges, including at very senior levels. United States officials at all levels place great importance on pressing Russian officials on this subject. Most recently, Paula DeSutter, Assistant Secretary of State responsible for verification, compliance, and implementation of arms control treaties, and the head of the U.S. delegation to the third Review Conference of the CFE Treaty which began on May 29, traveled to Moldova on her way to the conference in Vienna, to underscore the continuing U.S. commitment to Moldova's sovereignty. These are also issues that NATO and Russia discuss regularly in the NATO-Russia Council.

Question:

As Co-Chairman of the Helsinki Commission, I have repeatedly raised the need for improved standards of performance in Kosovo, not as a precondition for status talks but as a requirement to respect Europe-wide OSCE norms on human rights practices—regardless of the course or result of those status talks. It's simply the right thing to do and needs to be done. With the passing of Kosovo President Rugova and the preparations of talks, however, can we expect concrete improvements in areas like freedom of movement and the ability of the displaced to return? What levers can we apply to ensure that real progress is made in these areas? What is the status of efforts to temporarily relocate displaced Roma currently residing in UN-run camps contaminated by lead, as well as to rebuild their original neighborhood?

Response:

The United States and its Contact Group partners are encouraging Martti Ahtisaari, U.N. Special Envoy for the Kosovo Status Talks, to address issues important to the protection of minority rights before discussing status. Negotiations on devolving competencies to Kosovo's municipalities are scheduled to begin in late-February, and we expect talks on other core issues like the protection of religious sites in Kosovo, minority rights and the economy to begin soon as well.

While the overall number of minority returns to Kosovo has been modest, we believe the status process can help resolve many of the impediments to returns. In addition to providing more effective and responsive local government, decentralization will likely lead to the creation of new municipalities and provide communities more control over areas such as healthcare, education and police/justice. Mechanisms to accelerate the pace of resolving outstanding property claims will also be addressed within the context of these talks, and my personal representative to the status process, Ambassador Frank Wisner, will continue to press the Kosovars to do more to implement the internationally-endorsed Standards. The United States is also encouraging both Serbia and Kosovo to finalize the terms of a Protocol on Returns as soon as possible.

The United States continues to use its political and financial resources to work with the UN Mission in Kosovo and its international partners to find a sustainable solution for the displaced Roma currently living in polluted camps in northern Kosovo. While an alternate location has been established to temporarily house the displaced Roma, this community has not taken the opportunity to move. In addition to providing assistance to help educate the Roma about the dangers of lead and ways to mitigate its effects, the United States has set-aside approximately one million dollars to help with medical treatment as part of the relocation effort. Rubble clearing in the original Roma neighborhood began last year, but full-scale reconstruction of this community is proceeding slowly because of limited funding.

Question:

Uzbekistan is consistently ranked as one of the worst-of-the-worst for religious freedom. After the violence in Andijan last May, things have only gotten worse. Members of Congress and the US Commission on International Religious Freedom have consistently called for Uzbekistan to be designated a Country of Particular Concern under the International Religious Freedom Act.

Considering the deteriorating conditions, do you anticipate Uzbekistan being designated in the near future?

Response:

We continue to be deeply concerned about and closely follow the treatment of religious believers in Uzbekistan, including the treatment of evangelical Christians and observant Muslims. We have raised religious freedom with the Karimov Government on many occasions and will continue to do so. Uzbekistan remains under consideration for designation as a CPC country and may be designated at any time during the year.

Question:

I wholeheartedly support the President's vision for making democratization and respect for human rights the touchstone for all US foreign policy decisions. In Central Asia this policy has been challenged, as we've seen fraudulent elections in Azerbaijan and Kazakhstan, a dirty constitutional referendum in Armenia, increasing repression in Uzbekistan, backsliding in Tajikistan, confusion in Kyrgyzstan, and just plain craziness in Turkmenistan.

What is the U.S. doing to push these governments to change?

Response:

We use a variety of diplomatic and programmatic tools to promote President's Bush's Freedom Agenda in Central Asia and the Caucasus. We continue to make clear to Central Asian and Caucasus leaders that our relationships in the region rest on shared interests in a broad agenda encompassing democratic and economic reform, energy and security. These elements are mutually reinforcing; only with cooperation on all three areas can we ensure stability and progress. We continue pressing these governments bilaterally and multilaterally at every level to cease human rights abuses and to take specific steps to address democracy deficits. A series of high-level U.S. officials have recently traveled to the region to emphasize this message including Assistant Secretary for European Affairs Daniel Fried in March, Vice President Cheney and Assistant Secretary for South and Central Asian Affairs Richard Boucher this May and myself last October.

We will continue to work with our EU allies and within the UN and OSCE to press for reform and accountability for abuses. We plan to continue diplomatic, moral and material support for human rights and democracy activists in the region. U.S. officials regularly meet with activists, advocate on their behalf in their home country and in international fora, attend their trials when necessary and permitted, and provide material support for their efforts.

Despite challenging working environments in Central Asia, our democracy programs in the region focus on strengthening the institutions of civil society and the

rule of law, fostering effective public advocacy, supporting human rights, improving the political process (including free and fair elections), increasing the accountability of government institutions, and supporting independent media. Our training and exchange programs seek to create a cadre of reform-minded citizens by reaching out to the next generation of leaders and giving them first-hand experience with the day-to-day functioning of a market-based, democratic system.

KAZAKHSTAN:

The Government of Kazakhstan's democracy and human rights record is a mixture of progress and setbacks. We have suggested to the Government of Kazakhstan steps it could take to improve its record and we have urged progress on these at every opportunity. Some small steps resulted, although there have been a series of notable setbacks including the flawed December 2005 presidential election. President Bush sent President Nazarbayev a letter requesting that electoral violations be investigated and pursued. At the OSCE, we publicly pressed the Kazakhstani Government to address electoral violations and bring its laws and practices in line with OSCE standards. We will continue to work with the Government of Kazakhstan to urge and help it implement democratic reform.

KYRGYZSTAN:

We are concerned about the situation in Kyrgyzstan. We continue to press President Bakiyev and his government vigorously to institute a genuine dialogue with the opposition and civil society in order to combat corruption and organized crime, forge ahead with democratic reforms, in particular constitutional reform, judicial reform, implementation of OSCE electoral recommendations, and bringing Kyrgyzstan's media laws and practices in line with international standards.

The Kyrgyz Government has made some progress in improving communication with civil society and has implemented some of their requests by removing a few high-level officials from office. The recent civil society protests were peaceful. We were encouraged that President Bakiyev and Prime Minister Kulov jointly addressed the protestors on April 29.

Kyrgyzstan submitted a Millennium Challenge Account Threshold Country Plan on May 12. It presents a well-focused set of programs that, if implemented, will promote the rule of law and address the critical concerns of corruption and organized crime.

The United States has been a strong supporter of the OSCE Center in Kyrgyzstan and has provided substantial funds in extra-budgetary contributions to the continued operations of the Center in the Human, Political/Military as well as Economic-Environmental Dimensions.

TAJIKISTAN:

We are continuing to reinforce positive developments and engage the Government, the international community, and the Tajik public to advance progress toward democratic reform and respect for human rights. We are actively engaging with like-minded international and NGO implementing partners to lay the groundwork for a free, fair, and transparent November 2006 presidential election. Both in Washington and in the field, we continue to meet regularly with election officials, as well as with other diplomatic and international missions, to emphasize the need for free and fair elections, build election-monitoring capacity, and coordinate activities.

A U.S.-funded NGO is conducting procedural and ethical training for members of the Precinct Electoral Commission, including implementation of OSCE election recommendations following the 2005 parliamentary elections. The United States also supports development of civic and election manuals and textbooks for NGO resource centers and school curricula.

In October 2005, I met with political party leaders for a roundtable discussion of the political climate and encouraged them to continue democratic reforms and voice their opinions. Assistant Secretary of State for South and Central Asian Affairs Richard Boucher and National Security Council Senior Director Elisabeth Millard echoed this message when they met with Tajikistan's political party leaders, independent mass media representatives, and other civil society players in Dushanbe in May.

TURKMENISTAN:

The core problem in Turkmenistan is the repressive cult-of-personality regime run by Saparmurat Niyazov is designed to prevent citizens from demonstrating any kind

of democratic activity, from choosing their own leaders, to exercising freedom of religion, association, assembly and speech.

U.S. diplomatic and assistance efforts are directed toward providing the population of Turkmenistan with the tools to develop democracy, a free market economy and improved education and health systems. The United States has expanded public outreach programs directed toward Muslim audiences and continued educational and professional exchange programs to give citizens greater contact with and understanding of democratic values.

We regularly advocate on behalf of individual cases of abuse, coordinate closely with other diplomatic missions and international organizations, and fund programs targeted to develop civil society and promote the rule of law. In November 2005, the United States, EU, and several other countries jointly introduced a successful UN General Assembly resolution that condemned and called upon the Government of Turkmenistan to address severe human rights abuses.

UZBEKISTAN:

In Uzbekistan, we have made clear to the highest levels of the Uzbek Government that the U.S. will not sacrifice progress on democracy and human rights for the sake of our other interests. We have continued to call for an independent international investigation into the May, 2005 tragic events at Andijon, irrespective of the consequences.

In addition, we undertook an immediate review of U.S. assistance to Uzbekistan after the Andijon massacre. As a result, aid to the central Government of Uzbekistan was severely limited, and numerous military, border security, and economic reform assistance programs were canceled. Approximately \$3 million of these funds were reprogrammed to support additional democracy and human rights programs in Uzbekistan. We have also supported a resolution on Uzbekistan in the U.N. Third Committee and closely monitored trials of dissidents and oppositionists.

Unfortunately, during the past year, the Government of Uzbekistan (GOU) has undertaken numerous actions to limit cooperation with the United States and the situation for human rights has not improved. The GOU has closed scores of non-governmental organizations that had served as partners in implementing our assistance programs for the people of Uzbekistan. In addition, and notably, the GOU requested that we remove U.S. forces from its Karshi-Khanabad (K2) airbase, which had been a key facility in our fight against terrorism and our efforts in Afghanistan.

Despite these setbacks, we will continue to shine an international spotlight on human rights abuses in Uzbekistan, including mistreatment of those who seek to practice their religion freely; press countries that have Uzbek refugees not to return them to Uzbekistan; and work to ensure the GOU improves its human rights record and fully implements the rule of law.

We will continue to seek the truth about and accountability for the death of hundreds at Andijon. We will also continue to explore with our EU allies other means to hold the GOU accountable.

ARMENIA:

The U.S. strongly encouraged Armenia to hold a constitutional referendum in 2005 consistent with international standards; we were disappointed with the outcome. The United States pressed Armenian authorities to investigate allegations of fraud and take action against any parties involved in fraud.

The United States has designed a multi-year, multi-million dollar election strategy to aid the Government of Armenia in holding parliamentary and presidential elections in 2007 and 2008 that are consistent with international standards.

The Millennium Challenge Corporation (MCC) found Armenia eligible for assistance in 2006. However, following the constitutional referendum, MCC sent a letter to Armenian President Kocharian to inform him that the conduct of the referendum, including allegations of fraud, electoral mismanagement, mistreatment of opposition party members, and uneven access to the media, called into question Armenia's commitment to good governance. The letter further noted that the Armenian Government needed to make progress in MCC's "ruling justly" category "to avoid either suspension or termination—actions that, per MCC policy, can be initiated even after a Compact is signed and in the implementation stage." To avoid such action, the MCC encouraged the President to take specific corrective steps that would constitute progress.

Significant democratization, human rights observance and respect for rule of law, including meaningful preparation for upcoming national elections, remain top priorities for the U.S.

AZERBAIJAN:

The United States is engaged in broad-ranging diplomacy and democracy assistance to Azerbaijan, including transparency initiatives, technical assistance and support for civil society and grass roots development. In addition to these ongoing efforts, the United States pushed intensively for the Government of Azerbaijan to conduct parliamentary elections in 2005 (and 10 rerun elections in May 2006) according to international standards; we were disappointed that they did not, and urged corrective action after both election rounds. We support the OSCE's post-election conclusions—which noted improvements in candidate registration, domestic observer participation and finger-inking to prevent fraud—while pointing to persistent problems and recommending areas to improve. President Bush raised our democracy concerns during his recent meeting with President Aliyev. We will continue to work through diplomatic engagement and assistance with the Government of Azerbaijan to encourage meaningful democratization, and will continue to urge respect for human rights and rule of law.

Question:

The United States has used the commemoration of the Dayton Peace Agreement's 10th anniversary last November to provide added impetus to needed constitutional reform in that country. Consensus on reform, however, has been difficult to achieve, and what has found consensus has been criticized. First, the existing package of reforms does not fully address the fundamental flaw of Dayton—basing statehood on a balance of ethnic groups rather than the will of the citizenry. Second, it repeats a Dayton practice—perhaps necessary ten years ago but not today—of reaching agreement without seeking broader public input. Can you comment on the validity of these criticisms and on the degree of U.S. support for more fundamental reforms of the Bosnian state structure?

Response:

In November 2005, the leaders of Bosnia and Herzegovina's eight major political parties committed to pursue constitutional reforms to streamline the office of the Presidency and the Parliamentary Assembly and to strengthen the Council of Ministers. They pledged to make these changes by March 2006, the legislative deadline by which the reforms need to be enacted in order to take effect for the upcoming October 2006 elections. Given the limited time available for enacting these reforms, the parties decided to limit participation in negotiations to those that signed the November commitment. However, the package of reforms will be open for public debate and comment once it is submitted to parliament.

The changes currently under discussion would only be first steps in a longer-term, multi-phased process. Additional reforms will be necessary for Bosnia and Herzegovina to further break down the ethnic divisions institutionalized by Dayton and to achieve full integration into Euro-Atlantic structures. We have committed to continue to help the Bosnians to pursue such reforms.

Question:

At a recent Helsinki Commission hearing, Assistant Secretary of State Fried outlined several areas of "vital and energetic" cooperation between our nation and Russia. Nevertheless, both he and Assistant Secretary Lowenkron also expressed the Administration's concern regarding Russia's commitment to, or perhaps lack of commitment to, internationally recognized human rights. I have in mind especially the recently-passed law on NGOs, which most observers consider unreasonably restrictive. Will the President raise human rights issues with President Putin at the July summit of the G-8 in St. Petersburg?

Response:

The President has the kind of relationship with President Putin that allows him to raise our concerns on various matters, including democracy, in a frank and direct manner.

We remain concerned about democratic backsliding in Russia, including the new NGO law, and have repeatedly conveyed these concerns to the Russian government. Implementing regulations for the NGO law are expected to be adopted in mid-April. We have made clear to the Russian government our view that these implementing regulations should facilitate, not hinder, the work of NGOs in Russia. The G-8 is an organization of leading industrial democracies. The G-8 Presidency brings responsibility in these areas, but also the opportunity to highlight a country's achievements.

Question:

President Putin has invited leaders of Hamas to Moscow for talks, supposedly to "persuade the group to give up its radical policies." How do you interpret Moscow's move? In general, how do you assess Russian cooperation as a member of the "Quartet" (US, UN, EU, Russia) seeking a peaceful solution to the Middle East conflict?

Response:

We are concerned about the Russian decision to reach out to Hamas. We have repeatedly stated that we do not see the utility in contacts with Hamas, or the Palestinian Authority's government, until it accepts the principles outlined by the Quartet on January 30: a renunciation of violence, recognition of Israel, and acceptance of previous agreements and obligations, including the Road Map.

Question:

As you know, the North Korea Human Rights Act calls on the State Department to facilitate the submission of applications for refugee status by citizens of North Korea seeking refugee protection. As of the end of October 2005, the U.S. had not settled a single North Korean refugee. I included an amendment in this year's State Department Authorization Bill that calls for a detailed description of the measures you have taken with respect to facilitating refugee application submissions under the Act. This description is to include country-specific information with respect to United States efforts to secure the cooperation and permission of the governments of countries in East and Southeast Asia to facilitate United States processing of North Koreans seeking protection as refugees. Can you tell me whether any North Koreans have been granted refugee status in the United States since last October and what measures are being taken to ensure the implementation of that provision if the Act?

Response:

We are pleased to note that we recently resettled six North Koreans in the United States.

The Administration remains deeply concerned about the hardships suffered by the North Korean people and the plight of those North Koreans who have fled their country in search of asylum. Consistent with the intent of the North Korea Human Rights Act, we are working with regional governments and refugee organizations to find ways to effectively assist with cases of individual North Korean asylum seekers as they arise. As we highlighted in our October 2005 report to Congress on this subject, many host governments are reluctant to allow us to process cases of North Korean asylum seekers on their territory.

Question:

The ink was barely dry on the 2006 Foreign Operations Appropriations bill which contained carefully chosen conditions limiting Foreign Military Financing and defense exports for the Indonesian military. Many of us were deeply disappointed that the waiver came without any obvious or sudden improvement in the Indonesian human rights situation.

The FY07 budget request asks for \$6.5 million FMF for Indonesia, a more than 6-fold increase over expected FMF expenditure in FY06.

What are the human rights benchmarks for disbursing this aid? Shouldn't ending restrictions on foreign journalists in Papua, and implementation of special autonomy for Papua be among those benchmarks?

Response:

Fostering a stronger partnership with Indonesia, now the world's third-largest democracy and home to more Muslims than any other country in the world, is critical to the national security of the United States. We face immediate challenges to our security interests in Southeast Asia, including terrorism, threats to strategic sea lanes, transnational threats to regional stability, and the omnipresent potential for natural disasters. In light of these challenges, it was necessary and prudent to exercise the National Security Waiver of restrictions on assistance to the Indonesian armed forces. The waiver has created a new climate of trust between the United States and Indonesia. Working together with a reforming, democratic Indonesia, we are now constructively and pro-actively confronting pressing challenges to our national security.

The National Security waiver has also enabled the Administration to more vigorously assist the Indonesian Armed Forces in its internal reform process. We are assisting the Indonesian military to move towards becoming a modern, professionalized force that respects the rights of its citizens and is accountable to civilian authority. Our entire mil-mil assistance and engagement program with the Indonesian government is designed to emphasize and facilitate such reform. The floodgates to

advanced U.S. military hardware have not been thrown wide open. We continue to thoroughly examine the appropriateness of all military assistance to Indonesia and make decisions on a case-by-case basis. Each applicant for U.S. training is thoroughly vetted in accordance with Leahy guidelines.

Since the fall of Suharto in 1998, Indonesia has made great strides in overcoming over three decades of authoritarianism. As reported in the 2006 State Department Human Rights Report, the overall human rights situation in Indonesia has continued to improve over the past year. The end of internal conflict in Aceh Province was a major step forward, and included the orderly and peaceful withdrawal of over 22,000 military personnel. U.S. assistance has played a significant role in the Aceh peace process. There is evidence that the TNI has been willing to punish soldiers who have committed abuses during the conflict in Aceh, including a total of 160 convictions for human rights-related offenses in 2004 and 2005. Achieving accountability and ending the culture of impunity for members of the Indonesian security forces is critical for the long-term success of Indonesia's democratic transformation.

Indonesia faces many significant human rights challenges, particularly in areas of separatist sentiment such as the provinces Papua and West Irian Jaya. We firmly support the territorial integrity of Indonesia and do not condone any separatist movements, but we remain concerned about human rights conditions in Papua and West Irian Jaya. We continue to urge the Indonesian government to allow greater access to the region for international journalists, diplomats, and humanitarian organizations, and we believe that full implementation of the special autonomy law is important to addressing political, economic, and human rights concerns. President Yudhoyono has expressed his commitment to peacefully resolving the tensions in Papua and West Irian Jaya.

A key area for improvement is establishing accountability for numerous human rights violations committed by the security forces. The Administration continues to emphasize the need to achieve credible accountability for atrocities committed in East Timor in 1999, including by members of the Indonesian military. After the failure of previous efforts to punish those responsible, Indonesia and East Timor have established the Indonesia-East Timor Truth and Friendship Commission (TFC). The Administration has emphasized to both Indonesia and East Timor that, in order to be credible, the TFC must name the perpetrators, be transparent, hold public hearings, involve the international community, and protect witness confidentiality. The Administration will continue to work with our Indonesian and East Timorese democratic partners to strengthen support for justice within their societies. We are also awaiting the UN Secretary General's briefing to the Security Council on the UN Commission of Experts report submitted in May 2005.

Question:

Despite reforms, Vietnam remains a Communist dictatorship with a very poor human rights record. Today we have heard that Vietnamese Buddhist human rights activist Thich Quang Do of the banned Unified Buddhist Church of Vietnam, who has been under house arrest, was jailed. Yet there are proposals to raise IMET funds for Vietnam from \$50m to \$95m. How can we justify such aid for Vietnam?

Response:

We remain concerned about the unsatisfactory human rights situation in Vietnam and have been pressing the Government of Vietnam to change its policies and laws on human rights and religious freedom. We consistently raise our concerns with the Government of Vietnam about religious minority groups, including the Unified Buddhist Church of Vietnam, Thich Quang Do and their other leaders who remain under pagoda arrest. As you know, we suspended the bilateral human rights Dialogue with Vietnam in 2002 for lack of progress by Vietnam.

The June 2005 White House meeting of Prime Minister Phan Van Khai and President Bush raised our bilateral relationship to a higher plane. The meeting also reinforced for the Vietnamese the importance this Administration attaches to human rights and democracy. The two leaders agreed to continue an open and candid dialogue on issues of common concern, including human rights and religious freedom.

Vietnam's willingness to more seriously address U.S. human rights concerns also came after Vietnam's designation as a Country of Particular Concern and against the backdrop of Vietnam's interest in joining the World Trade Organization. Both the Ambassador at Large for International Religious Freedom Hanford and Assistant Secretary for Democracy, Human Rights and Labor Lowenkron have conducted extensive high-level discussions with the Government of Vietnam. In May 2005, the U.S. concluded a landmark agreement with Vietnam on improving conditions for religious freedom. Vietnam had improved its legal framework for religion, but was facing challenges to implementation, progress on which became an integral part of the

agreement. In the months before and after the Prime Minister's visit, Vietnam released 17 people who had been on the U.S. Government's list of prisoners of concern.

Due to the positive steps noted above, on February 20, 2006 we resumed the US-Vietnam Human Rights Dialogue in Hanoi to press for further progress. At the dialog, we urged the Government of Vietnam to permit greater freedom of religion and freedom of the press, to abolish restrictions on the Internet, to end current detention policies, to provide access to prisons by the international community, and to release all remaining political and religious prisoners of concern.

One of the goals of our International Military Educational Training (IMET) program is to train foreign militaries in international standards of law, including human rights issues. IMET funding for Vietnam is currently being used to teach English to military personnel. As with all IMET funding, the Department carefully follows Leahy vetting procedures to ensure that human rights violators do not receive U.S. funding.

RESPONSES FROM THE HONORABLE CONDOLEEZZA RICE, THE SECRETARY OF STATE, U.S. DEPARTMENT OF STATE, TO QUESTIONS SUBMITTED FOR THE RECORD BY THE HONORABLE THOMAS G. TANCREDO, A REPRESENTATIVE IN CONGRESS FROM THE STATE OF COLORADO

Question:

Madam Secretary, while listening to the radio several weeks ago, I caught word of the "proactive diplomacy" which our Interest Section in Havana, Cuba has been carrying out under the leadership of Chief of Mission Michael Parmly. Madam Secretary, I was so impressed with this nose to nose style of diplomacy that I called down there, spoke with Edward Lee, the Deputy Chief of Mission and assured him that people here in Washington were watching and applauding their activities.

Is this the sort of diplomacy that we can expect to see from other American diplomatic posts around the world? Secondly, despite the fact that President Castro has erected a wall to block the Cuban people from seeing the messages (he has also placed pictures of Abu Ghraib in front of the Interest Section), can our team down there continue to count on support from Washington?

Response:

The U.S. Interests Section in Havana enjoys the full support of the Department in its efforts to innovatively implement the President's policy to break the Castro regime's information blockade and expose Cubans to democratic ideals and free market principles. The President's Commission for Assistance to a Free Cuba underscored the need for innovative and energetic methods to break the Cuban government's information blockade of the Cuban people. The second report of this Commission, which I chair along with Commerce Secretary Gutierrez, will pursue additional ways to communicate America's message to the Cuban people. Part of this effort has been the installation of the streaming electronic billboard you refer to at the Interest Section's offices on the Havana waterfront. The Cuban regime erected dozens of flagpoles to obscure the billboard from view, but it remains visible and it continues to broadcast news, messages of inspiration, and other items of interest.

Question:

Is the United States prepared to use all of the tools of diplomacy at its disposal to push for a UN peacekeeping force that has a mandate that allows forces on the ground to take proactive action to prevent the killing of innocent civilians?

In the International Peacekeeping Activities section of the budget, I noticed that there is \$441 million set aside for the UN Mission in Sudan (UNMIS). Are you prepared to use that funding to support operations in Darfur if need be?

Response:

Following the signing of the Darfur Peace Agreement in Abuja on May 5, I addressed the United Nations Security Council to urge support for deployment of a UN peacekeeping force to Darfur. On May 16, the Council unanimously adopted Resolution 1679, which called for deployment of a joint African Union (AU) and UN assessment team to prepare for the UN operation in Darfur. We anticipate that the UN force will have a robust mandate to protect civilians in Darfur under threat of violence and to support implementation of the Darfur Peace Agreement. Based on the joint AU/UN assessment, we expect that in mid-June the UN Secretary General will provide options to guide the Security Council in considering the mandate and force strength of the UN operation in Darfur. In addition to the funding in the Contributions for International Peacekeeping Activities account for the United Nations Mission's work to enhance security throughout Sudan, including Darfur, the U.S.

has contributed about \$220 million since 2004 to support the African Union mission. We have requested additional funding in the FY 2006 supplemental to continue our support. In the meantime, we are working with our partners to strengthen the African Union Mission in Sudan before its transition to the UN. We expect many of the African Union forces to be incorporated into the UN force.

Question:

Yesterday, I met with the Serbian Orthodox Christian Bishop of Kosovo. He described his concerns about what may happen to his people if Kosovo becomes an independent country. His fears were based on the record of violence directed against Serbs and other non-Albanians by what he considers the jihad terrorist and organized crime elements that are prevalent in that province.

What reason is there to believe that security for the Serbian Christian population in Kosovo would be any more effectively secured in an independent Kosovo than has been the case so far under U.N. administration and NATO military control?

Response:

Violence targeting Kosovo Serbs and other minorities declined since the March 2004 riots, which were primarily motivated by ethnic, not religious bias. While minor sporadic incidents of intimidation and violence continue, Kosovo's provisional government has taken steps to foster reconciliation, including rebuilding more than 90 percent of the homes damaged during the March violence and working closely with the Serbian Orthodox Church to repair the 30 churches damaged during these riots. We recognize, however, that this is only a start, and will continue to press Kosovo's provisional government to do more to implement the internationally-endorsed Standards.

As noted by U.N. Envoy Kai Eide in his October 2005 report on the situation in Kosovo, progress in defining Kosovo's future status will also help encourage efforts to implement the Standards, many of which deal with protecting minorities. Following Ambassador Eide's report, the UN Security Council endorsed Secretary General Annan's proposal to begin status talks in 2005 with former Finnish President Martti Ahtisaari as his envoy. The Contact Group is working closely with Mr. Ahtisaari to address areas related to protection of minorities before moving to status. One concrete way in which Serb and other minorities might feel a greater sense of empowerment is by devolving greater authorities to local communities; we expect talks on decentralization of government authority to begin later this month. We are also encouraging the Ahtisaari team to bring both sides to the table to begin discussing soon how to better protect religious sites and minorities in Kosovo.

Following a status settlement, the United States and the European Union have agreed that a continued international civilian and military presence will be needed in Kosovo to help implement the settlement and ensure the protection of minority rights. Regardless of the status outcome, the new international civilian mission will possess executive authority and oversight in sensitive areas, such as police and justice, and will continue to work alongside the NATO-led Kosovo Force for the foreseeable future.

Question:

Secondly, it is my understanding that two of the primary mission statements of UNMIK (UN Mission in Kosovo) are to "maintain civil law and order and promote human rights". Madam Secretary, \$50 million has been set aside in the '07 budget to help fund UNMIK. Are you confident in that mission's ability, working with its NATO counterparts, to protect the Christian minority living in Kosovo?

Response:

The UN Mission in Kosovo (UNMIK) continues to oversee the development of meaningful self-government in Kosovo and provide—with the NATO-led Kosovo Force (KFOR)—a safe and secure environment for all residents of Kosovo in accordance to UN Security Council Resolution 1244 (1999). As part of the UN-led civilian mission, more than 2,000 international police officers, including approximately 270 U.S. officers, currently serve alongside and oversee the development of the multi-ethnic Kosovo Police Service (KPS). In addition to the continued professional development and training of the KPS, KFOR is better prepared to respond to any widespread violence. Following the March 2004 riots, many KFOR national contingents removed caveats that limited their movements and ability to engage, and measures to increase KFOR's crowd and riot control capabilities have also been improved.

Question:

I am pleased that the Bush administration has taken such a strong stand in favor of sowing democracy's seeds around the world. In addition to planting the seeds of

democracy in new places, does the administration place the same emphasis on protecting new democracies that have sprung up in places like—for example—Taiwan? And without giving me the standard canned “we support the status quo” line, I’d like you to tell me what the administration is doing to improve our ties with Taiwan’s democratic government, and what we are doing to protect the ability of their public to make independent, democratic decisions free from undue coercion by China or from bureaucrats at the State Department.

Response:

The American people can be deeply proud of U.S. support for Taiwan’s democracy, prosperity, and security. Taiwan has no better friend in the world than the United States.

We are far and away Taiwan’s most important partner in areas that matter to Taiwan’s security and welfare. As President Bush said last November in Kyoto, “Modern Taiwan is free and democratic and prosperous. By embracing freedom at all levels, Taiwan has delivered prosperity to its people and created a free and democratic Chinese society.”

Taiwan is our eighth largest trade partner, and we are Taiwan’s third largest trade partner. Deputy United States Trade Representative Karan Bhatia’s visit to Taipei May 25–26 for talks pursuant to the 1994 Trade and Investment Framework Agreement (TIFA) demonstrate our commitment to expand our already strong trade relations. Ambassador Bhatia is the highest-level administration official to visit Taiwan in the last six years.

Taiwan fully participates in all Department of State education and cultural exchange programs, including citizen exchange programs on good governance and IPR protection. We actively reach out to the Taiwan press in recognition of the essential role it plays in Taiwan’s democratic society, and have numerous training and exchange programs for Taiwan’s judiciary. The Department recently increased funding for our bilateral Fulbright exchange program with Taiwan.

The U.S. strongly supports Taiwan’s membership in organizations that do not limit membership to states. In multilateral organizations where its membership is not possible, we also support opportunities for Taiwan’s voice to be heard, recognizing Taiwan’s important role in economic and other transnational issues. Thanks in large part to consistent support from the United States, Taiwan is a full member of World Trade Organization (WTO) and the Asia-Pacific Economic Cooperation (APEC), and is now invited to participate in many technical activities of the World Health Organization (WHO).

The advanced defensive systems, training, supplies, and maintenance that we make available to Taiwan in accordance with the Taiwan Relations Act (TRA) enable Taiwan to provide for its self-defense. Also in keeping with the TRA, the United States maintains its own capability to respond to attempts to coerce Taiwan.

Every U.S. President in the last 27 years has supported the “one China” policy because it enables meaningful and productive cooperation with the people of Taiwan, even as we seek a realistic but positive relationship with the PRC. In this context, maintenance of the status quo is essential to the welfare of Taiwan’s democracy, Taiwan’s security, and U.S. interests in the Western Pacific.

Question:

Madam Secretary, I was happy to see the \$22.7 million in the budget for the African Development Foundation. As a Member who has consistently supported various micro-enterprise initiatives, I want to express my appreciation for the administration’s dedication to this project. However, after reading the State Department’s budget summary I am concerned that the ADF is depending on securing approximately \$18 million in matching donations from African governments. Are you confident that they will come thru on their pledge?

Response:

Because of the success of ADF’s enterprise development program, African governments have offered to co-fund the Foundation’s programs to enable ADF to do more in their respective countries. The Foundation currently has Memoranda of Understanding with ten governments and two international corporations to provide \$13.5 million in annual contributions and five proposed strategic partnerships, valued at total \$5.0 million annually. Governments have largely been reliable in making their cash contributions. The major problem is that ADF has not had adequate funding to fully match all firm and proposed contributions. Consequently, at the current level of funding, ADF would be able to leverage only a maximum \$10.5 million in contributions in FY 2007 and would leave at least \$8.0 million of this private co-funding on the table. (A list of the strategic partnerships is attached to this statement).

ADF's STRATEGIC PARTNERSHIPS

Country	Annual Contribution	Program Focus	Date Signed
Already signed			
Botswana	\$400,000	PDM/MSE	Aug 97
	+ \$100,000 ops		
Ghana	\$5,000,000	T&I	Nov 02
		T&I	(amended)
Swaziland	\$400,000	AIDS remediation	Mar 03
	+ \$100,000 ops		
Zambia	\$500,000	SME/T&I	Jun 03
Cape Verde	\$500,000	SME/T&I	Jun 03
Mali	\$1,000,000	SME/T&I	Jul 03
Senegal	\$1,000,000	SME/T&I	Sept 03/
Nigeria – Kano State	\$1,000,000	Housing/SME	Sep 04
Sao Tome	\$500,000¹	SME/T&I	Sep 04
Benin	\$1,000,000	SME/T&I	Mar 05
Nigeria – Kaduna State	\$1,000,000	Ag/SME	Nov 05
Guinea – Global Alumina	\$1,000,000	SME/Supply Chain	Jan 06
Total Active	\$13,500,000		
Under Discussion			
Zambia – Imaginations	\$1,000,000	Agriculture & Youth development	Jun 06 (tent)
Angola – ESSO	\$1,000,000	SME/Supply Chain	Jun 06 (tent)
Kenya	\$1,000,000	Ag Bus/SME	2006/07 TBD
Niger	\$1,000,000	Ag/SME	2006/07 TBD
Burkina Faso	\$1,000,000	Ag/SME	2006/07 TBD
Additional FY06	\$5,000,000		
TOTAL potential	\$18,500,000		

1. The program has never been initiated due to inadequate appropriated funds.

¹ Sao Tome program not started due to lack of funds, so contributions not drawn.

RESPONSES FROM THE HONORABLE CONDOLEEZZA RICE, THE SECRETARY OF STATE,
U.S. DEPARTMENT OF STATE, TO QUESTIONS SUBMITTED FOR THE RECORD BY THE
HONORABLE DIANE E. WATSON, A REPRESENTATIVE IN CONGRESS FROM THE STATE
OF CALIFORNIA

Question:

Madame Secretary, It is my understanding that during testimony before the Senate Foreign Relations Committee on February 15, 2006, you were asked about a proposal to reduce aid levels to El Salvador. I understand that you responded by saying that traditional aid to El Salvador was being reduced because they were now participating in the Millennium Challenge program. However, the administration has previously maintained that MCC funding would supplement, not replace traditional U.S. foreign assistance. So is the Administration changing its policy on the use of MCC as a supplement for traditional assistance rather than a replacement? If so, what is the rationale for that change?

Response:

President Bush committed in 2002 that MCA assistance would lead to an increase in overall development assistance by \$5 billion by FY 2006 over then existing assistance levels, and he has exceeded that promise. Total U.S. Official Development Assistance (ODA), nearly doubled from \$10 billion a year in 2000 to \$19 billion in 2004—reversing a 40-year trend in declines of ODA as a percentage of GDP.

The President did not make any specific commitments regarding funding levels per country when he announced the MCA. Country-specific allocations are based on a variety of factors, and it is not uncommon for country levels to fluctuate based on political, economic, and security considerations. Countries may receive more or less assistance depending on the goals and activities of those programs.

MCC Compacts are designed to reduce poverty through sustained economic growth by addressing the greatest barriers to development, as identified by the country. As MCC Compacts prove successful and the economy grows, it would be logical to expect there to be less of a need for non-MCC assistance. Hence, we would expect that, *over time*, assistance to these countries will be reduced. But to be clear, even in those cases where the Administration is now proposing modest cuts in some assistance programs to an MCA country with a Compact, these countries will all be receiving significantly more development assistance with the Compact plus other funding than they did without a Compact.

As for El Salvador, we are currently negotiating a Millennium Challenge Account (MCA) compact with El Salvador and expect that compact to be very large. In my testimony to the House International Relations Committee on February 16, I discussed how we are balancing cuts with increases in economic support funding (ESF)—as in the Dominican Republic, El Salvador, and Guatemala—to provide more flexible budget support that will allow countries to begin work to improve their eligibility for MCA compacts. In the case of El Salvador, to address concerns about the period before the MCC Compact might enter into force, the Administration has increased funding for rural development assistance by \$10 million for FY 2007. Moreover, once its MCA compact is agreed to and goes into effect, there will be, as I testified to your committee, a substantial increase in foreign assistance to the country—assistance of a size and nature that I expect to have a significant and lasting impact in El Salvador by reducing poverty through economic growth.

Foreign assistance for the Western Hemisphere has nearly doubled since the start of this Administration, from \$862,452,000 in FY 2001 to \$1,696,841,000 in FY 2007. Although the FY 2007 request for Latin America represents an overall decrease of one percent from the FY 2006 request, it does not reflect a reduced commitment to Latin America. The President's request will provide sufficient funds to maintain key programs. In addition to FY 2007 foreign assistance, the Millennium Challenge Corporation (MCC) has approved compacts for Nicaragua (\$175 million) and Honduras (\$215 million). On February 8, MCC's Board approved a \$35 million program for Paraguay as a Threshold Country. MCC funding has actually increased the total resources available to the region.

Question:

It has consistently been the policy of the United States to seek the transfer of Charles Taylor, the Butcher of Liberia, to the Special Court in Sierra Leone so he can stand trial for war crimes. Last year Congress appropriated \$13 million in the FY06 Foreign Operations appropriations bill to see the Court through the end of its mandate. All of Congress, and specifically the members of both the House International Relations and House Appropriations Committees, have made clear they want to see Taylor tried by the Special Court and that the United States government

should support that effort on all levels, including through financial support to the Court. However, it has come to our attention that the Administration has approached Congress in an attempt to reprogram significant amounts in the ESF [Economic Support Fund] account, significantly altering this \$13 million. My understanding is that the State Department is seeking to reduce the amount the United States will provide to the Court to less than half of what Congress appropriated. Despite the recent commitment of the United Nations to provide additional funding, the failure of the United States to follow through on providing the full appropriated amount of \$13 million will hamper the Court and thereby prevent the United States from achieving its policy goal of seeing Charles Taylor tried by the Special Court. So my question is; is it still the policy of the U.S. State Department to seek the immediate transfer of Charles Taylor to the Special Court for trial, and, if so, why would the State Department seek to reprogram the \$13 million necessary to make this happen?

Response:

The people of West Africa deserve to see an end to impunity and to see Charles Taylor face justice for these horrific crimes. We are committed to ensuring that the Special Court can complete its work in a timely manner and hold accountable those who bear the greatest responsibility for serious violations of international humanitarian law. We plan to continue to provide financial support, while encouraging other countries to contribute as well to ensure that the Special Court is fully funded.

Question:

The recent successful political process in Liberia is of major benefit to the United States and our strategic interests. However, rebuilding Liberia is not a one or two year effort. Rebuilding this country will take a sustained commitment. We have seen in the past how early optimism regarding countries emerging from conflict fades as news cameras move on to the next emergency and donors lose interest. Why did the administration not include any funding for Liberia in its recent supplemental funding request? What specific plans are in place, or being formulated, at the State Department and USAID, to sustain the long-term, multi-year commitment necessary to support Liberia's reconstruction efforts? How can Congress help to sustain your efforts?

Response:

Thanks to strong Congressional support in Fiscal Years 2004, 2005, and 2006, the United States has been able to play the leading role in helping Liberia begin recovery from fourteen years of civil war, generations of corruption, and a near-total absence of government services and of respect for human rights and the rule of law. This funding is key to helping the new government of Liberia establish the conditions for consolidating the peace and building prosperity.

Our FY 2006 programs, which are also reflected in the Administration's FY 2007 request of \$89.945 million for Liberia, will accomplish the following goals:

- Economic Support Funds (ESF) will continue to provide funding primarily for quick-impact reconstruction of schools, hospitals and government buildings in county centers using war-affected youth, as well as rural road construction needed to facilitate economic revival. It will also support transparent economic management (GEMAP), civil service retrenchment, national reconciliation (TRC), judicial reform and police training.
- Child Survival and Health (CSH) will expand primary health care in targeted communities; strengthen non-governmental organizations and county health teams organizationally; and expand health care training.
- Development Assistance (DA) will expand USAID's community-focused, post-war rehabilitation and reconstruction activities. DA will increase access to justice, agricultural production and market access, train newly elected government officials, strengthen civil society and support education.
- International Narcotics Control and Law Enforcement (INCLE) funds will provide civilian police to the UN mission to monitor, mentor and reform the Liberian National Police.
- Peacekeeping Operation funds (PKO) will support security sector reform (SSR). This funding will contribute to a multi-year effort to create a professional, capable and fiscally sustainable Liberian military.
- Foreign Military Financing (FMF) will complement SSR efforts with sustainment training and some military equipment.
- International Military Education and Training (IMET) will build professionalism and fund leadership and specialized skills training for the new Liberian military.

- Migration and Refugee Assistance (MRA) funding for Africa will support the return and reintegration to Liberia of refugees and internally displaced persons and Liberian refugees from Cote d'Ivoire, Guinea, Sierra Leone, and Ghana.

We plan to sustain the long-term, multi-year commitment necessary to support Liberia's reconstruction efforts by maintaining programs and funding levels to meet Liberia's needs. We have ongoing discussions with the Liberian government about the country's needs and will continue to consider those needs in conjunction with our policies and budget priorities. We will, of course, work closely with Congress in formulating and pursuing these priorities.

Question:

What is the Administration doing to convince the Government of Ethiopia that the current political impasse there is damaging to Ethiopia's future and the future of the U.S./Ethiopia relationship? What efforts is the United States making to secure the immediate, unconditional release of all political prisoners in Ethiopia?

Response:

The United States has made very clear in the numerous meetings with the Ethiopian Government that the on-going political impasse is unsustainable and that the Government must engage in a good faith dialogue with Ethiopia's various opposition groups to address the underlying causes of the current political crisis. Senior U.S. Embassy and Department of State officials continue to press senior government officials to take unilateral actions to demonstrate their goodwill in liberalizing the political space and remedy the perceived marginalization of various ethnic groups. Senior Department of State officials continue to call for the immediate release of all Ethiopian prisoners of conscience. Absent such actions, we have called for due process for detainees in accordance with Ethiopian and international law.

Question:

Recently I wrote to Assistant Secretary Sauerbrey regarding the issue of stateless persons. These are people without a recognized citizenship, who are thereby often deprived of a host of basic human rights. Stateless persons are a highly vulnerable group that is largely ignored and too often falls between the cracks of government bureaucracies, but which ought to be among the primary concerns of your bureau. Millions of stateless persons, especially those who are not also refugees, continue to be overlooked to an unacceptable degree by the U.S. and many other countries. What efforts is the State Department making on the issue of statelessness? Does the PRM Bureau plan to make this issue a focus? How can Congress help? What specific conversations has the U.S. government had with the governments of Pakistan and Bangladesh regarding the issue of stateless Biharis in Bangladesh?

Response:

As Article 15 of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights states: "Everyone has a right to a nationality." As such, the prevention and reduction of statelessness is a humanitarian priority, which may also aid in lessening human rights abuses, forced displacements, trafficking in persons, and refugees flows.

The Department appreciates and shares your concerns for stateless populations who are vulnerable to abuse and exploitation. The Bureau of Population, Refugees, and Migration (PRM) is working closely with the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) to support its mandate on statelessness. The PRM Assistant Secretary, along with her Senior Advisor, is reviewing policy and program areas where the Bureau can effectively extend protection to stateless populations most in need, whether through the Refugees Admissions program or other activities. The Bureau will seek to implement any recommendations resulting from this review, to the extent possible and in coordination with UNHCR and non-governmental organizations to alleviate the plight of stateless people around the world. The Bureau looks forward to briefing interested Members of Congress on on-going activities.

Question:

There are over 60 pending criminal prosecutions in Turkey against journalists, writers and other intellectuals for their speech. Most are accused of "denigrating Turkishness" under Penal Code 301. How has the administration publicly condemned these attacks on freedom of expression in Turkey and the penal code provisions that suppress speech? What is the administration doing to push Turkey to improve its respect for human rights and democratic norms?

Response:

The United States engages the Government of Turkey on a broad range of human rights issues, including police and judicial practices, religious freedom, government ethics, trafficking in persons, the right of return for internally displaced people and freedom of expression. The *2005 Country Report on Human Rights Practices for Turkey* notes a decrease in the number of cases against writers and an increase in the number of their acquittals. However, the report also notes that “individuals could not criticize the state or government publicly without fear of reprisal, and the government continued to restrict expression by individuals sympathetic to some religious, political and Kurdish nationals or cultural viewpoints.”

Freedom of expression remains a major concern in Turkey and we continue to raise the issue, along with others, in our meetings with government officials at all levels as well as journalists and other members of civil society in Turkey. Consulate and Embassy officials follow these issues closely, and express U.S. concern by attending and reporting on Section 301 trials. The State Department regularly provides informal reports on these cases to several Congressional offices in response to their inquiries. The United States supported a professional exchange program in 2005 for Turkish journalists designed to foster ethics and journalistic responsibility among younger reporters and to promote freedom of expression for editors and media gatekeepers. U.S. officials meet regularly with members of the bureaucracy, legislature, executive branch, and judiciary to encourage broad reforms, including freedom of expression and other reforms needed to meet EU accession criteria and fulfill Turkey’s OSCE commitments.

Question:

I am very concerned that the administration has not maintained military parity between Armenia and Azerbaijan in its FY07 foreign aid request, especially considering the fragile cease fire between Armenia and Azerbaijan and Azerbaijan’s President Ilham Aliev’s repeated threats to resume war to overtake Nagorno Karabagh. In light of these threats, how can the President justify providing more military assistance to Azerbaijan and can he continue to certify that U.S. military assistance will not undermine efforts to negotiate a peaceful settlement of the Nagorno Karabagh conflict?

Response:

As a Co-Chair of the OSCE Minsk Group, our goal is to help Armenia and Azerbaijan achieve a peaceful resolution of the Nagorno-Karabakh conflict. Military assistance to both countries in light of that ongoing conflict is carefully considered and calibrated to ensure that it does not hamper ongoing efforts to negotiate a peaceful settlement between Armenia and Azerbaijan. Although the Rambouillet summit between the two presidents marked a temporary stall in negotiations, the process has gained momentum again with a series of individual visits by Minsk Group Co-Chairs to the region. We continue to view 2006 as the necessary window for the sides to reach an agreement. At the same time, we are strongly urging the presidents to prepare their publics for peace, not for war.

While we do not have a policy that security assistance funding levels for Armenia and Azerbaijan should be identical, we work to ensure that assistance does not adversely affect the military balance between the two states. We do not believe that the differences in security assistance in the FY 2007 budget requests undermine prospects for peace or send the wrong message.

The waiver of Section 907 of the FREEDOM Support Act every year since 2002 has allowed us to provide military assistance that enhances Azerbaijan’s interoperability with NATO and U.S. forces and furthers U.S. peacekeeping objectives. These funds also allow us to assist Azerbaijan in developing capabilities to promote Caspian security and indigenous humanitarian demining capabilities. We provide assistance to Armenia for similar purposes.

