

Senate Committee On Foreign Relations
Chairman Richard G. Lugar
Opening Statement For
Nomination Of John Rood
August 2, 2006

Today, the Senate Foreign Relations Committee meets to consider the nomination of John Rood to be Assistant Secretary of State for International Security and Nonproliferation.

Mr. Rood has served as Special Assistant to the President and Senior Director for Counterproliferation Strategy since March 2005. Prior to his current position, he served as Deputy Assistant Secretary of Defense for Forces Policy and as Director for Proliferation Strategy, Counterproliferation, and Homeland Defense at the National Security Council. Mr. Rood has also worked at the Central Intelligence Agency and on the staff of our colleague Senator Jon Kyl.

If confirmed, the nominee will assume leadership of the new Bureau of International Security and Nonproliferation. This bureau is the successor to the Arms Control Bureau and the Nonproliferation Bureau, which were merged in July 2005 to improve coordination and performance in these critical areas. I strongly supported Secretary Rice's decision to create this new bureau, and have monitored Undersecretary Bob Joseph's efforts to establish it. Filling the position of Assistant Secretary is the last major piece of the reorganization.

While the bureau may be new, the challenges it confronts are not. The proliferation of weapons of mass destruction is the number one national security threat facing our country. As Assistant Secretary, our nominee would be at the intersection of U.S. policy and its programmatic and diplomatic responses to these threats. The work of the new bureau will be one of the most important elements of our government's efforts to ensure the security of the American people.

The International Security and Nonproliferation Bureau will be responsible for numerous issues, including: Iranian noncompliance with its NPT obligations; North Korea's missile and nuclear programs; civilian nuclear cooperation with India; the proliferation of WMD technologies; negotiations on a Fissile Material Cutoff Treaty; and the important work that remains to be done in the former Soviet Union to safeguard and eliminate weapons of mass destruction. We look forward to exploring with the nominee each of these important subjects today.

Over the years, I have been particularly focused on the activities of the Nonproliferation and Disarmament Fund, the Office of Export Controls Cooperation, the redirection of biological weapons expertise, the International Science and Technology Centers, and related efforts. I have traveled extensively to support and review these programs firsthand, and I am committed to their success. I have been particularly pleased to watch these State Department programs work hand-in-hand with the Nunn-Lugar Program at the Pentagon.

We welcome Mr. Rood. If you are summarizing a statement, the text of your entire presentation will be included in the hearing record. Also, please introduce family and friends that may have accompanied you on this important occasion.

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