

NOMINATION HEARINGS OF THE 114TH CONGRESS

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BEFORE THE

COMMITTEE ON FOREIGN RELATIONS UNITED STATES SENATE

ONE HUNDRED FOURTEENTH CONGRESS

FIRST SESSION—MARCH 10 THROUGH DECEMBER 2, 2015

SECOND SESSION—FEBRUARY 11 THROUGH SEPTEMBER 20, 2016

Printed for the use of the Committee on Foreign Relations



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NOMINATIONS

WEDNESDAY, JULY 22, 2015

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

Hon. Paul Wayne Jones, of Maryland, to be Ambassador to the Republic of Poland
Hon. Hans G. Klemm, of Michigan, to be Ambassador to Romania
Kathleen Ann Doherty, of New York, to be Ambassador to the Republic of Cyprus
James Desmond Melville, Jr., of New Jersey, to be Ambassador to the Republic of Estonia
Samuel D. Heins, of Minnesota, to be Ambassador to the Kingdom of Norway
Thomas O. Melia, of Maryland, to be an Assistant Administrator of the U.S. Agency for International Development

The committee met, pursuant to notice, at 2:09 p.m., in room SD-419, Dirksen Senate Office Building, Hon. Ron Johnson presiding.

Present: Senators Johnson, Shaheen, and Menendez
Also present: Senators Amy Klobuchar and Al Franken.

OPENING STATEMENT OF HON. RON JOHNSON, U.S. SENATOR FROM WISCONSIN

Senator JOHNSON. Good afternoon. This hearing of the European subcommittee of the Senate Foreign Relations Committee is called to order.

Welcome, Senator Klobuchar and Senator Franken from Minnesota, to introduce our first nominee, Mr. Samuel D. Heins. If the good Senators would offer their introductions, we would appreciate it.

Senator Klobuchar.

STATEMENT OF HON. AMY KLOBUCHAR, U.S. SENATOR FROM MINNESOTA

Senator KLOBUCHAR. Thank you very much, Mr. Chairman. And thank you very much for holding this hearing. I know your State, like ours, has a lot of Norwegians, so we appreciate it.

Senator JOHNSON. I am one of them.

Senator KLOBUCHAR. Well, I could not have guessed, with your last name.

I am proud to be here today to introduce Sam Heins, the nominee to serve as U.S. Ambassador to Norway.

Before I begin, I would like to take a moment to note that today marks exactly 4 years since the terrorist attacks that claimed 77 lives in Oslo and Utoya. A number of remembrance ceremonies are taking place across Norway, and the victims and their loved ones are in our thoughts and prayers.

I think it is a somber day, but it is also a very important day to show our solidarity with Norway and rededicate ourselves to the friendships between our countries. And getting an ambassador confirmed would be a major step forward.

As a Senator from the State, as I noted, that is home to 800,000 people of Norwegian heritage, really more than anywhere except Norway itself, I think it is only fitting that the nominee to be the United States Ambassador to Norway be from Minnesota.

As the Norwegian Ambassador to the United States Kare Aas noted, the ties between the Midwest and Norway are strong, and nowhere are they more deeply felt than in Minnesota.

Of course, there is much more to our nominee Sam Heins than the fact that he has Minnesota heritage. In addition to being an accomplished lawyer, Mr. Heins has demonstrated his devotion to, and leadership in, the cause of advancing human rights. In 1982, he founded, organized, and served as the first board chair for the Minnesota Advocates for Human Rights, which monitors and responds to human rights abuses throughout the world.

In 1985, he cofounded the Center for Victims of Torture, which provides services, research, and advocacy for victims of torture from across the world, where he continues to serve as a board member. It started as a humble rehabilitation center in St. Paul. Today, the center that our nominee founded is an internationally recognized organization that operates around the globe, providing desperately needed help to those who have been victimized by repression and violence.

This record of accomplishment is particularly appropriate for an Ambassador to Norway. Norway has long been an international leader on human rights issues. Just last month, for example, the United States and Norway issued a joint statement of support for international programs initiated by Freedom House and other like-minded groups to help civil society organizations around the world that have been threatened with violence as the result of their human rights advocacy.

Mr. Heins' extensive work on human rights and with NGOs that support human rights will be extremely helpful in sustaining and building on the strong United States-Norwegian partnership in this area. Norway is one of our strongest and most dependable international allies. We know of their important NATO involvement, especially on this committee you know that. And its military has participated in operations with the United States in the Balkans and in Afghanistan.

Norwegians work alongside Americans in standing up to Russian provocations in Ukraine, in countering ISIS and the spread of violent extremism.

As such, Norway deserves an ambassador who understands the country and is deeply committed to the relationship. We all know,

for a variety of reasons, as of today, it has been 663 days that Norway has not had an ambassador. The Foreign Minister was in to see me and he actually knew the exact number of days.

So I am very pleased, Mr. Chairman, that you and Chairman Corker were willing to hold this hearing so quickly after Mr. Heins has been nominated, so we can remedy the situation, which you did not cause. And I thank you so much for holding this hearing.

Senator JOHNSON. I appreciate you acknowledging that, and I also appreciate your persistence.

You have a tireless advocate there, Mr. Heins.

Senator Franken.

**STATEMENT OF HON. AL FRANKEN,
U.S. SENATOR FROM MINNESOTA**

Senator FRANKEN. Thank you, Chairman Johnson, for holding this very important confirmation hearing. The chairman is not just a Norwegian-American. He actually grew up in Minnesota.

Senator KLOBUCHAR. Yes, I know that. I heard that.

Senator FRANKEN. He does not like to admit it.

Senator JOHNSON. That could be used against me, so be careful. [Laughter.]

Senator FRANKEN. And he is a tremendous Vikings fan because of that.

Senator JOHNSON. That will be used against me. [Laughter.]

It is also not true.

Senator KLOBUCHAR. That record will reflect that is not true.

Senator FRANKEN. The record will reflect that is not true.

Senator JOHNSON. We do have some Super Bowls under our belt.

Senator FRANKEN. You do. We have some Super Bowls under our belt. We lost them all, but they are under our belt.

But, as you know, and as I think Senator Klobuchar mentioned, about 20 percent of Minnesotans trace their ancestry to Norway, and we have more Norwegian Americans living in Minnesota than in any other State and, as you just said, anywhere else but in Norway.

Norway and Minnesota enjoy a very productive bilateral relationship. Our universities collaborate on research projects. We collaborate in areas of renewable energy, health care, and other areas. And, of course, as you know, Mr. Chairman, our nations cooperate on very important security issues.

So it is very fitting that Sam Heins, a distinguished Minnesotan, has been nominated to serve as our next Ambassador to Norway. Mr. Heins is a graduate of the University of Minnesota, and he is a brilliant lawyer. He has been a great voice on behalf of women's rights, on human rights, refugees, just to name a few, and he has worked tirelessly to make sure that victims of torture receive the services that they need.

I am pleased that he was nominated to serve as Ambassador to Norway after this long vacancy, and I look forward to his speedy confirmation.

I thank you and Senator Corker.

Senator JOHNSON. Thank you, Senator Franken. Remind me not to invite you to another hearing. [Laughter.]

Senator FRANKEN. Okay. I will do that.

Senator JOHNSON. No, really, I thank both of the good Senators from Minnesota for coming in and offering those kind words of introduction.

And I would ask the other nominees now to be seated at the table, and we will continue on with the hearing.

It looks like we could have used just a slightly bigger table, but it looks like we squeezed you all in there.

Again, I want to welcome all of the nominees. I want to thank you for your previous service to the Nation and your willingness to serve as Ambassador of our Nation to the countries we are going to be handling nominations for: Ambassador to the Kingdom of Norway, Ambassador to Poland, Ambassador to Romania, Ambassador to Cyprus, Ambassador to Estonia, and nominee for the Assistant Administrator for Europe and Eurasia at USAID.

I am very happy to help move these nominations along. These are critical posts. It is extremely important that America is well-represented, and I assume, being patriots, you will do a good job of conveying, from my standpoint, American values to those countries, but at the same time recognize that your role is to make sure that we as elected officials of America understand the viewpoints of those countries to which you are going to be Ambassadors.

It is a critically important role, and, again, I am just very pleased that we are moving these nominations along in an expedited fashion so that our Nation will be well-represented in these countries.

With that, I will turn it over to our ranking member, Senator Shaheen.

**OPENING STATEMENT OF HON. JEANNE SHAHEEN,
U.S. SENATOR FROM THE STATE OF NEW HAMPSHIRE**

Senator SHAHEEN. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

I would just like to echo the chairman's comments about appreciation for your willingness to continue to serve this country and to serve in very important roles in Europe.

For a number of years, I think we viewed Europe as our most important ally, and we were well on the way to a Europe that was whole and free and at peace. Sadly, we are not in that position today.

So your willingness to serve at a time when there is continued financial upheaval in Europe, as well as the threat from Russia and from ISIS, is absolutely critical.

So thank you very much, and I look forward to hearing your testimony.

Senator JOHNSON. Thank you, Senator Shaheen.

We will just go from left to right. I will just introduce the nominees before you testify. Our first nominee is Ambassador Paul Wayne Jones, a nominee for the Ambassador to Poland. Ambassador Jones is a career member of the Foreign Service and currently serves as Principal Deputy Assistant Secretary of State in the Bureau of European and Eurasian Affairs, a position he has held since 2013.

Ambassador Jones.

**STATEMENT OF PAUL WAYNE JONES, NOMINATED TO BE
AMBASSADOR TO THE REPUBLIC OF POLAND**

Ambassador JONES. Thank you, Mr. Chairman, and committee members. It is a privilege to appear before you as President Obama's nominee to serve as United States Ambassador to the Republic of Poland. I am honored by the trust and confidence that President Obama and Secretary Kerry have placed in me.

With your permission, I would like to take this opportunity to briefly introduce some family members here today. My wife Catherine and I have been representing the United States together for the past 20 years of our marriage. Catherine, an award-winning author and mobile app developer, has lived in more countries than I have as the daughter of a retired U.S. Foreign Service officer and Ambassador Brandon Grove, whom I would also like to introduce.

We are so proud of our two children, Allie and Hale, who have been on the Foreign Service road with us since birth.

My brother-in-law, Paul Grove, is well-known for a distinguished career here in the Senate, as well as his wife, Martha, similarly at the National Archives, and their children Ella and Sam.

I regret that my father, a World War II veteran, did not live to see this day.

Mr. Chairman, I bring broad experience to this position, having served overseas on four continents, as well as in Washington over the past 28 years, including as Ambassador and three times as deputy chief of mission. I also bring intensive current experience from the past 2 years as Principal Deputy Assistant Secretary of State for Europe and Eurasia, where I have been responsible for U.S. relations with Europe, particularly Russia and Ukraine, as principal deputy to Assistant Secretary Toria Nuland.

I am honored to be nominated to succeed Ambassador Steve Mull, a longtime friend who has served with distinction for the past 3 years, together with an extraordinary team of Americans and Poles at our Embassy in Warsaw and our consulate in Krakow.

Today, Poland has become one of our closest and most capable NATO allies, a relationship that at its core is founded on democratic values and a shared commitment to policies that provide peace and prosperity for our peoples.

Poland will host the 2016 NATO summit, an example of its growing transatlantic and regional security role. The alliance will review implementation of its readiness action plan, which includes strengthening the headquarters of Multinational Corps Northeast in Poland and standing up NATO's new spearhead force, which conducted its first live training exercise last month in Poland.

For its part, Poland is strengthening the alliance through its 10-year, \$45 billion defense modernization program; its commitment now enshrined in law to invest at least 2 percent of its gross domestic product in annual defense spending; and its future hosting of a U.S. site for NATO ballistic missile defense.

Poland has shared our sacrifice in Iraq and Afghanistan, is contributing to NATO's mission in Afghanistan today, and is a member of the counter-ISIL coalition.

Mr. Chairman, as President Obama said in his June 2014 visit to Warsaw, the United States has an unwavering commitment to Poland's security through our shared Article 5 obligations. In the

wake of Russia's actions in Ukraine, we have demonstrated this commitment.

The United States maintains a persistent rotational military presence in Poland, complemented by significant U.S. and NATO air, land, and sea exercises in Poland and in the region. And as Secretary Carter announced last month, we will begin prepositioning military equipment and materiel in Central and Eastern Europe, a large portion of which will be in Poland.

Our relationship with Poland takes inspiration from the strong cultural ties between our peoples, fostered by a vibrant community of some 10 million Polish Americans. Since the fall of communism in 1989, Poland has set a standard of democratic and economic reform based on shared transatlantic values. A staunch supporter of Ukraine, Poland has provided Ukraine financial, decentralization, anticorruption, and security assistance. Poland is also one of the top contributors of monitors to the OSCE special monitoring mission in Ukraine.

The United States and Poland enjoy very strong economic ties. U.S. exports to Poland have grown 22 percent since 2009, supporting tens of thousands of American jobs. U.S. defense companies are full partners in Poland's defense modernization. And the recent selection of Raytheon's Patriot system will strengthen those ties and sustain jobs here at home.

The United States is a leading and growing source of investment in Poland across a wide range of sectors. While security is the foundation of our relationship, particularly today, if confirmed, I will seek to deepen our ties across the board, from education exchanges and entrepreneurship to trade, investment and innovation, energy security, science and technology, law enforcement, and counterterrorism.

Mr. Chairman, if confirmed, I look forward to working with this committee and with Congress. I am happy to address your comments and questions.

Thank you very much.

[The prepared statement of Ambassador Jones follows:]

PREPARED STATEMENT OF AMBASSADOR PAUL WAYNE JONES

Mr. Chairman and committee members, it is a privilege to appear before you as President Obama's nominee to serve as United States Ambassador to the Republic of Poland. I am honored by the trust and confidence President Obama and Secretary Kerry have placed in me.

With your permission, I'd like to take this opportunity to introduce some family members here today. My wife, Catherine, and I have represented the United States together for the past 20 years of our marriage. Catherine, an award-winning author and mobile app developer, has lived in more countries than I have, as the daughter of retired U.S. Foreign Service officer and Ambassador Brandon Grove, whom I'd also like to introduce. We're so proud of our two children, Allie and Hale, who have been on the Foreign Service road with us since birth. My brother-in-law, Paul Grove, is well known from a distinguished career here in the Senate, and his wife, Martha, similarly at the National Archives. I regret my father, a World War II veteran, did not live to see this day.

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For its part, Poland is strengthening the alliance through its 10-year, \$45 billion defense modernization plan; its commitment, now enshrined in law, to invest at least 2 percent of its gross domestic product in annual defense spending; and its future hosting of a U.S. site for NATO ballistic missile defense. Poland has shared our sacrifice in Iraq and Afghanistan, is contributing to NATO's mission in Afghanistan, and is a member of the Counter-ISIL coalition.

As President Obama said in his June 2014 visit to Warsaw, the United States has an "unwavering commitment to Poland's security" through our shared Article 5 obligations. In the wake of Russia's actions in Ukraine, we have demonstrated this commitment. The United States maintains a persistent, rotational military presence in Poland, complemented by significant U.S. and NATO air, land, and sea exercises in Poland and the region. And as Secretary Carter announced last month, we will begin repositioning military equipment and materiel in Central and Eastern Europe, a large portion of which will be in Poland.

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While security is the foundation of our relationship, particularly today, if confirmed I will seek to deepen our ties across the board, from education, exchanges and entrepreneurship, to trade, investment, and innovation, energy security, science and technology, law enforcement, and counterterrorism.

Mr. Chairman, if confirmed, I look forward to working with this committee and Congress. I am happy to address your comments and questions. Thank you.

Senator JOHNSON. Thank you, Mr. Ambassador Jones.

Our next nominee is Ambassador Hans Klemm, a nominee for Ambassador to Romania.

Ambassador Klemm is a career member of the Foreign Service and currently serves as senior adviser to the Under Secretary for Management at the Department of State, a position he has held since January 2015. He previously served in posts in Germany, Japan, and South Korea.

Ambassador Klemm.

**STATEMENT OF HON. HANS G. KLEMM, NOMINATED
TO BE AMBASSADOR TO ROMANIA**

Ambassador KLEMM. Thank you, Mr. Chairman, Senator Shaheen, and distinguished members of the Senate Foreign Relations Committee. It is an honor for me to appear before you today as President Obama's nominee to be the next United States Ambassador to Romania. I am humbled and grateful for the confidence that the President and Secretary Kerry have placed in me.

If confirmed, I pledge to promote our interests, protect American citizens, and encourage even stronger ties with our excellent ally and strategic partner, Romania.

Mr. Chairman, I wish to note with regret that my wife, Mari, is not here today due to professional obligations that kept her overseas. If confirmed, however, Mari will eagerly join me in support of our mission in Bucharest.

Romania is a staunch NATO ally and a significant contributor to international peace and security. For years, it has been among the top 10 countries providing troops in Afghanistan, first to the International Security Assistance Force and now to the Resolute Support mission. As a demonstration of its commitment to European defense, Romania is hosting a European-phased adaptive approach missile defense site.

Romania is also home to a forward operating site, which hosts hundreds of U.S. Marines and U.S. Army personnel and serves as an important regional logistics hub. And Romania has stood firmly aside the United States in responding to Russian aggression in the region.

If confirmed, I will work resolutely to further strengthen both Romania's role within NATO and our bilateral military partnership.

Romania also has a key role to play in ensuring the prosperity of southeastern Europe. With its long history of domestic oil and gas production, it is well-placed to help Europe diversify sources and transit routes for energy. To do so, however, Romania must support regional energy cooperation and diversification, and the efficiency of its domestic gas transmission network.

If confirmed, I will seek to deepen our engagement with Romania in the area of energy security.

The information technology sector is another that has tremendous potential in Romania, as suggested by the growing presence of American firms in that country. We urge Romania to make further reforms to boost its economic development and the prosperity of its people, including creating more opportunity for American exports and investment.

If confirmed, I look forward to working with the Romanian Government and both of our private sectors to promote bilateral trade and investment, including the negotiations toward a transatlantic trade and investment partnership.

Last but perhaps most importantly, as you know, Mr. Chairman, Romania has been engaged in an extended, serious effort to root out high-level corruption and improve adherence to the rule of law. As Vice President Biden said during a visit to Bucharest last year, corruption represents a clear and present danger to a country's national security.

To tackle corruption, a scourge that affects the lives of all its citizens, Romania has stood up powerful, independent law enforcement and judicial entities. Scores of local, regional, and national officials have been investigated, indicted, and convicted.

If confirmed, I pledge to redouble our support to Romania's anticorruption institutions and civil society to bolster the country's adherence to the rule of law.

Senators, Romania is a friend and strategic partner and a stalwart ally. If confirmed, I pledge to work with you on the many areas of U.S. interest in Romania. I will also look forward to welcoming you to Bucharest, where you will see firsthand the outstanding work our Embassy is doing on behalf of the American people. Thank you.

[The prepared statement of Ambassador Klemm follows:]

PREPARED STATEMENT OF AMBASSADOR HANS G. KLEMM

Thank you Mr. Chairman, Senator Shaheen, and distinguished members of the Senate Foreign Relations Committee.

It is an honor for me to appear before you as President Obama's nominee to be the United States Ambassador to Romania.

I am humbled and grateful for the confidence that President Obama and Secretary Kerry have placed in me. If confirmed, I pledge to promote our interests, protect American citizens, and encourage even stronger ties with our excellent ally and strategic partner, Romania.

Mister Chairman, before beginning my remarks, I would like to note with regret that my wife, Mari, could not be here today due to professional obligations. If I am confirmed, Mari greatly looks forward to supporting our mission in Bucharest.

Romania is a staunch NATO ally and a significant contributor to international peace and security. For years, it has been among the top 10 countries providing troops in Afghanistan both to the International Security Assistance Force and now, Resolute Support Mission—saving U.S. taxpayers tens of millions of dollars by deploying and returning its own troops using Romania's own capabilities. I am proud to say that the United States helped Romania to develop these capabilities through an Excess Defense Articles grant of several C-130s. If confirmed, I will build on this cooperation to further increase Romanian defense capabilities and strengthen the alliance.

I also wanted to take a moment to publicly acknowledge Romania's commitment to European defense. Romania is hosting the U.S. site at Deveselu for NATO ballistic missile defense—the first new U.S. Navy facility in the European theater since Souda Bay in Crete. Romania is also home to our Forward Operating Site at Mihail Kogalniceanu, which hosts hundreds of U.S. Marines and U.S. Army personnel and serves as an important logistics hub for TRANSCOM. These examples of Romania's commitment are also the result of our excellent bilateral defense cooperation. Our military leaders at EUCOM, the European combatant command, and here in Washington, working together with the Department of State and across the interagency, have done a superb job in laying the foundation of this relationship. And if confirmed, I will rely on their expertise and advice to build on these successes.

Romania has stood with us in responding to Russian aggression in the region. Its leaders condemned Russian violations of Ukrainian sovereignty and have urged European Union solidarity on sanctions against Russia—including increasing them, if necessary, until Russia reverses course. Romania has provided humanitarian and development assistance to Ukraine and leads the NATO Cybersecurity Trust Fund for Ukraine. If confirmed, I hope to consult often with the Romanian Government on the best united course of action to resolve the conflict.

On the economic and energy fronts, Romania has a key role to play in ensuring the prosperity of southeastern Europe. With its long history of domestic oil and gas production and openness to exploration, Romania is well placed to help Europe diversify sources and transit routes for energy. Over time, we hope that Romania's role in the production and transit of energy for the region will grow. But in order to do so, Romania should advance priority projects that enhance regional energy cooperation, efficiency, and diversification—including upgrades to its domestic gas transmission network and improved interconnections with its neighbors. We applaud Romania's efforts to build a pipeline to Moldova, which will help that country benefit from an integrated European energy market. Our engagement with Romania in the energy sector has been robust and collaborative. To foster continued growth and attract continued investment, Romania must ensure that it has the appropriate regulatory and policy framework. If confirmed, I will continue our strong engagement on these issues.

Romania has supported the Transatlantic Trade and Investment Partnership Agreement, which will create jobs and economic growth on both sides of the Atlantic. Romania has improved its investment climate, and its economy is one of few among European Union members in recent years to achieve close to 3 percent

growth. Romania enjoys several advantages, including a skilled, multilingual labor force and a strategic location bridging Europe with Central Asia, the Caucasus, and the Middle East. The information technology sector has tremendous potential in Romania, as evidenced by the growing presence of American firms and the overwhelmingly positive response to the recent cyber-security trade mission led by Department of Commerce Deputy Secretary Bruce Andrews. Now, Romania still needs to undertake further reforms. The United States has encouraged Romania to continue to professionalize the management of state-owned enterprises, strengthen its regulatory framework, and increase transparency in official decisionmaking. These reforms are crucial to increase the well-being of the Romanian people and create more opportunity for Romanian and American companies. If confirmed, I look forward to working with the Romanian Government and private sector to make more progress on these fronts.

Last but not perhaps most important, Romania has been engaged in a years-long, serious effort to root out high-level corruption and improve adherence to the rule of law. As Vice President Biden said during a visit to Bucharest last year, corruption represents a clear and present danger to a country's national security, and outside forces exploit these weaknesses to exercise malign influence and undermine the independence of sovereign countries. That is exactly why we have been so engaged in helping Romania sustain empowered, independent entities to tackle an issue that affects the lives of all Romanians. We are also helping Romania to focus on asset forfeiture, transparency initiatives, and on supporting the next generation of reformers. Altogether, Romania has made significant achievements in fighting corruption. Scores of local, regional, and national officials have been investigated, indicted and convicted on corruption charges. We must remain engaged with our Romanian partners to help ensure continued progress and that Romania's anticorruption institutions have the freedom and independence to act, and to ensure the Romanian people will see no backsliding on the hard-won progress made so far. If confirmed, I will support Romania's anticorruption institutions and civil society to strengthen adherence to the rule of law.

We have many agencies represented at Embassy Bucharest. Besides the Department of State, there is the Department of Defense, FBI, U.S. Secret Service, the Drug Enforcement Administration, the Department of Justice, Department of Commerce, and Department of Agriculture, in addition to others. If confirmed, ensuring the Embassy's efficient and effective operation and its good stewardship of taxpayers dollars will be among my top priorities.

Senators, Romania is a strategically important friend and stalwart ally that has made great strides in transforming itself, even as it helps us to keep a watchful eye on Russia's destabilizing actions in the region. If confirmed, I will work with you and your colleagues on the many areas of U.S. interest and look forward to welcoming you all to Bucharest, where you can see firsthand the outstanding work our Embassy is doing on behalf of the American people and in support of our strategic partnership. Thank you.

Senator JOHNSON. Thank you, Ambassador Klemm.

Our next nominee is Mr. Samuel Heins, a nominee for the ambassadorship to the Kingdom of Norway. Mr. Heins was a partner at Heins Mills & Olson in Minneapolis, MN, from 1994 to 2013.

In 1983, he founded Minnesota Advocates for Human Rights, where he continues to serve as a member.

Mr. Heins.

**STATEMENT OF SAMUEL D. HEINS, NOMINATED TO BE
AMBASSADOR TO THE KINGDOM OF NORWAY**

Mr. HEINS. Thank you, Chairman Johnson, Senator Shaheen, and members of the committee, for the opportunity to appear before you today.

I would also like to thank Senator Klobuchar and Senator Franken for their generous remarks. I hope I can live up to the standards that they set as exemplary public servants.

I would also like to thank President Obama and Secretary Kerry for their trust and confidence in me. I am extraordinarily grateful to the President for nominating me to be Ambassador to Norway,

and I am honored and humbled that the committee is considering my nomination.

I would like to introduce my wife and partner, both professionally and in life, Stacey Mills. I would not be here today without her love and support.

I am also joined by some wonderful members of our family, my stepson, Clark Newman, and my niece, Nicole Mills.

My mother, who is 97, is watching and is very proud that I have the honor to appear before you today.

If confirmed by the Senate, I intend to be a reliable, diligent, and energetic representative of the United States to Norway. I will undertake those duties recognizing the vital importance of our bilateral relationship and the utmost seriousness of the work of a U.S. Ambassador. As a key part of this responsibility, I will ensure the safety and security of U.S. citizens and our Embassy community in Norway.

Norway holds a unique place in the world, and its relationship with the United States is of tremendous value and significance. Norway is one of the world's great democracies, and its leadership publicly declares that the United States is its closest ally.

If the Senate confirms my nomination, I will devote every effort to enhancing this remarkable relationship.

I know from my own experience that our friendship extends beyond the formal relations between sovereign nations. There are more than 800,000 proud Norwegian-Americans, as my Senators have remarked, in my home State of Minnesota alone. They share their culture, history, and pride in their heritage with the rest of us. And we Minnesotans are happy to think of ourselves as honorary Norwegians. We are proud of the admirable Norwegian culture that is an intrinsic and historic part of our State.

In facing the challenges that confront us as a nation, we know that Norway is a dependable and responsible partner. As a founding member of NATO, Norway is a long-standing and steadfast ally. Norwegian and American military personnel have served side by side in operations in Afghanistan, Kosovo, over the skies of Libya, and beyond. Norway has repeatedly demonstrated its military readiness and commitment to interoperability through regular joint exercises with U.S. and other allied forces.

Former Norwegian Prime Minister Jan Stoltenberg is the current NATO Secretary General, as you know, a testament to the respect of the alliance for Norway's dedication to transatlantic security.

Norway has been fully committed to the U.S.-EU approach to support Ukraine, imposing all rounds of sanctions against Russia despite the economic burden.

Norway has also repeatedly called for full implementation of the Minsk agreement and is supporting Ukraine's reform efforts. Norway is a strong partner in the coalition to counter ISIL, contributing military trainers for Iraqi forces, as well as millions of dollars in humanitarian support for both Iraq and Syria.

In addition, Norway is at the forefront of our efforts to combat violent extremism, hosting a 2-day summit in June to further the agenda of the White House summit on countering violent extremism held in February.

Norway and the United States are substantial investors in each other's business enterprises. Over 300 U.S. companies have a presence in Norway, and Norway is the fifth fastest-growing source of foreign direct investment in the United States. If confirmed, I intend to expand this relationship and work to create even more opportunities for U.S. businesses and American workers.

We share with Norway vital economic and environmental interests in the Arctic. We are fortunate that our staunch friend Norway works closely with us on the Arctic Council, which we now share, sharing our goals for responsible stewardship of the region and strengthening international cooperation.

Norway has established itself as a peacemaker and peacekeeper, as well as a generous activist in the alleviation of humanitarian crises and the promotion of human rights around the world. I know from my work over the last 30 years with human rights and humanitarian NGOs that in the international arena, Norway commands principled, moral high ground. It has earned its reputation as an honest broker. If confirmed, I look forward to working with Norway in pursuit of these important undertakings.

Throughout my career, I have been a business manager and advocate and negotiator. I will bring these skills to bear, if the Senate confirms me as Ambassador to the Kingdom of Norway. Norway's partnership and alliance with the United States requires ambassadorial representation in Oslo that it is hardworking, informed, and dedicated to advancing what can only be described as an extraordinary international friendship.

Thank you.

[The prepared statement of Mr. Heins follows:]

PREPARED STATEMENT OF SAMUEL D. HEINS

Thank you Chairman Johnson, Senator Shaheen, and members of the committee for the opportunity to appear before you today. I would also like to thank Senator Klobuchar and Senator Franken for their generous remarks. I hope I can live up to the standards they set as exemplary public servants.

I would also like to thank President Obama and Secretary Kerry for their trust and confidence in me. I'm extraordinarily grateful to the President for nominating me to be Ambassador to Norway, and I'm honored and humbled that the committee is considering my nomination.

I'd like to introduce my wife and partner, both professionally and in life, Stacey Mills. I wouldn't be here today without her love and support. I'm also joined by some wonderful members of our family, my stepson, Clark Newman, and my nieces, Elizabeth Potter and Nicole Mills, and nephew, Noah Potter. My mother, who is 97, is watching and is very proud that I have the honor to appear before you today.

If confirmed by the Senate, I intend to be a reliable, diligent, and energetic representative of the United States to Norway. I will undertake those duties recognizing the vital importance of our bilateral relationship and the utmost seriousness of the work of a U.S. Ambassador. As a key part of this responsibility, I will ensure the safety and security of U.S. citizens and our Embassy communities. Norway holds a unique place in the world, and its relationship with the United States is of tremendous value and significance. Norway is one of the world's great democracies, and its leadership publicly declares that the United States is its closest ally. If the Senate confirms my nomination, I will devote every effort to enhancing this remarkable relationship.

I know from my own experience that our friendship extends beyond the formal relations between sovereign nations. There are more than 800,000 proud Norwegian-Americans in my home State of Minnesota alone. They share their culture, history, and pride in their heritage with the rest of us. We Minnesotans are happy to think of ourselves as honorary Norwegians. We are proud of the admirable Norwegian culture that is an intrinsic and historic part of our State.

In facing the challenges that confront us as a nation, we know that Norway is a dependable and responsible partner. As a founding member of NATO, Norway is a long-standing and steadfast ally. Norwegian and American military personnel have served side by side in operations in Afghanistan, Kosovo, over the skies of Libya, and beyond. Norway has repeatedly demonstrated its military readiness and commitment to interoperability through regular joint exercises with U.S. and other allied forces. Former Norwegian Prime Minister Jens Stoltenberg is the current NATO Secretary General, a testament to the respect of the alliance for Norway's dedication to transatlantic security.

Norway has been fully committed to the joint U.S.-EU approach to support Ukraine, imposing all rounds of sanctions against Russia despite the economic burden. Norway has also repeatedly called for full implementation of the Minsk Agreement, and is supporting Ukraine's reform efforts.

Norway is a strong partner in the Coalition to Counter ISIL, contributing military trainers for Iraqi Forces, as well as millions of dollars in humanitarian support for both Iraq and Syria. In addition, Norway is at the forefront of our efforts to combat violent extremism, hosting a 2-day summit in June to further the agenda of the White House summit on Countering Violent Extremism held in February of this year.

Norway and the United States are substantial investors in each other's business enterprises. Over 300 U.S. companies have a presence in Norway, and Norway is the fifth fastest-growing source of foreign direct investment in the United States. If confirmed, I intend to expand this relationship and work to create even more opportunities for U.S. businesses and American workers.

We share with Norway vital economic and environmental interests in the Arctic. We are fortunate that our staunch friend Norway works closely with us on the Arctic Council, sharing our goals for responsible stewardship of the region and strengthening international cooperation.

Norway has established itself as a peacemaker and peacekeeper, as well as a generous activist in the alleviation of humanitarian crises and the promotion of human rights around the world. I know from my work over the last 30 years with human rights and humanitarian NGOs that in the international arena, Norway commands principled, moral high ground. It has earned its reputation as an honest broker. If confirmed, I look forward to working with Norway in pursuit of these important undertakings.

Throughout my career I have been a business manager, an advocate, and a negotiator. I will bring those skills to bear if the Senate confirms me as Ambassador to the Kingdom of Norway.

Norway's partnership and alliance with the United States requires ambassadorial representation in Oslo that is hardworking, informed and dedicated to advancing what can only be described as an extraordinary international friendship.

Senator JOHNSON. Thank you, Mr. Heins.

Our next nominee is Mr. James Melville, a nominee for the Ambassador to Estonia. Mr. Melville is a career member of the Foreign Service and currently serves as the Deputy Chief of Mission of the U.S. Embassy in Berlin.

Previously, Mr. Melville has served as Executive Director of the Bureau of European and Eurasian Affairs and in positions in London, Moscow, Paris, and Brussels.

Mr. Melville.

STATEMENT OF JAMES DESMOND MELVILLE, JR., NOMINATED TO BE AMBASSADOR TO THE REPUBLIC OF ESTONIA

Mr. MELVILLE. Chairman Johnson, Senator Shaheen, thank you for holding this hearing today. It is a privilege to appear before you as the President's nominee to be Ambassador to the Republic of Estonia. It is a tremendous honor to be asked to serve in this post, and I would like to thank President Obama and Secretary Kerry for their confidence in me.

If confirmed, I look forward to working with you and your colleagues in Congress to protect American citizens and further U.S. interests in Estonia.

Mr. Chairman, with me is my wife, Joanna. We celebrated our 31st anniversary yesterday. I would have loved to have introduced you to our sons, Desmond and Daniel, but they were unable to make the trip down here today. I am very pleased, however, to introduce my rooting section from New Jersey, led by my mom, Georgina Melville; my sister-in-law, Ruth Bayus; my sister and brother-in-law, Eileen and Frank Karpicki; my nephew, Nicolas Karpicki; and my nieces, Kathleen and Francesca Karpicki.

Danny and Desmond were born in Berlin during our first assignment, and they grew up in the Foreign Service.

My late father immigrated to America when he was young, as did my mother's parents. They raised me and my six brothers and sisters to be very proud of our Irish heritage but to be even prouder to be Americans.

It has been the greatest honor of my life to serve our Nation for nearly 30 years, and I am deeply fortunate to have had Joanna and our sons by my side. We are all very excited about the prospect of an assignment to Estonia, a country we last visited in its first year of independence from Soviet occupation while assigned to the U.S. Consulate in St. Petersburg.

Estonia is a strong and reliable ally in NATO, a member of the E.U. and the Eurozone, and a provider of development assistance focused on good governance and democracy.

This year, we marked the 75th anniversary of the Welles Declaration, under which the United States would not recognize the incorporation of Estonia, Latvia, and Lithuania into the Soviet Union. This declaration provided critical support and encouragement for Estonia during their 50 years of occupation and remains a powerful symbol today. Our shared values continue to underline our robust cooperation bilaterally, regionally, and globally.

If confirmed, I hope to work to reinforce our partnership with Estonia during a new period of Russian aggression in the region and continue to strengthen the already deep and productive relationship we have enjoyed these many years.

A NATO ally since 2004, Estonia has shown unwavering support for our shared objectives around the world. Estonian troops served with us in Iraq and Afghanistan, and Estonia continues to contribute to NATO's Resolute Support mission. Estonia has met the NATO standard of committing 2 percent of its GDP to defense spending, serving as a model for other allies in making the investments necessary to ensure our common security. Estonian soldiers have proven themselves accomplished and knowledgeable partners in Iraq, Afghanistan, and around the world, nonetheless, our continued support remains crucial in helping Estonia respond to growing threats.

If confirmed, I look forward to working to implement the European Reassurance Initiative and continuing efforts to facilitate joint training and exercises, and increasing interoperability under Operation Atlantic Resolve.

The birthplace of Skype, Estonia has established itself as a world leader in information technology. If confirmed, I will continue to work to expand our opportunities for trade and commercial relations with this innovative partner. This includes working with my

Estonian colleagues in support of the Transatlantic Trade and Investment Partnership.

As an expert on cyber issues, Estonia hosts the NATO Cyber Centre of Excellence in Tallinn, which the United States joined in 2011, and has shared its expertise on e-governance with other nations, including Ukraine and other eastern partnership countries. If confirmed, I look forward to continuing our strong cooperation on cyber issues. Outreach to and promoting resilience within all parts of society is an important component of an Ambassador's work. If confirmed, I will work closely with my team to continue outreach to the Estonian- and Russian-speaking public, including youth, as we welcome the strengths of a diverse and inclusive society.

Estonia has played an active role in advancing our shared security, economic, and social values. If confirmed, I look forward to representing my country in advancing a still deeper connection between the United States and Estonia.

I am grateful for the opportunity to have addressed you today and am at your disposal to answer any questions you may have.

Thank you.

[The prepared statement of Mr. Melville follows:]

PREPARED STATEMENT OF JAMES D. MELVILLE, JR.

Chairman Johnson, Senator Shaheen, members of the committee, thank you for holding this hearing today. It is a privilege to appear before you today as the President's nominee to be Ambassador to the Republic of Estonia. It is a tremendous honor to be asked to serve in this post, and I would like to thank President Obama and Secretary Kerry for their confidence in me. If confirmed, I look forward to working with you and your colleagues in Congress to protect American citizens and further U.S. interests in Estonia.

Mr. Chairman, with me is my wife Joanna. We celebrated our 31st anniversary yesterday. I would have loved to introduce you to our sons, Desmond and Daniel, but they were unable to make the trip down here today. I am very pleased, however, to introduce my rooting section from New Jersey, led by my Mom, Georgina Melville, and including my sister-in-law, Ruth Bayus, my sister and brother-in-law, Eileen and Frank Karpicki, my nephew, Nicholas Karpicki, my nieces, Kathleen and Francesca Karpicki, my sister, Laura Hampton, and my niece, Colleen Hampton. Danny and Desmond were born in Berlin during our first assignment, and they grew up in the Foreign Service. My late father immigrated to America when he was young, as did my mother's parents. They raised me and my six brothers and sisters to be very proud of our Irish heritage, but to be even prouder to be Americans. It has been the greatest honor of my life to serve our Nation for nearly 30 years, and I am deeply fortunate to have had Joanna and our sons by my side. We are all very excited about the prospect of an assignment to Estonia; a country we last visited in its first year of independence from Soviet occupation while assigned to the U.S. consulate in St. Petersburg.

Estonia is a strong and reliable ally in NATO, a member of the EU and the Eurozone, and a provider of development assistance focused on good governance and democracy. This year we mark the 75th anniversary of the Welles Declaration under which the United States would not recognize the incorporation of Estonia, Latvia, and Lithuania into the Soviet Union. This declaration provided critical support and encouragement for Estonia during their 50 years of occupation and remains a powerful symbol today. Our shared values continue to underline our robust cooperation bilaterally, regionally, and globally.

If confirmed, I hope to work to reinforce our partnership with Estonia during a new period of Russian aggression in the region and continue to strengthen the already deep and productive relationship we have enjoyed these many years.

A NATO ally since 2004, Estonia has shown unwavering support for our shared objectives around the world. Estonian troops served with us in Iraq and Afghanistan, and Estonia continues to contribute to NATO's Resolute Support Mission (RSM). Estonia has met the NATO standard of committing two percent of its GDP to defense spending, serving as a model for other allies in making the investments necessary to ensure our common security.

Estonian soldiers have proven themselves accomplished and knowledgeable partners in Iraq and Afghanistan and around the world, nonetheless our continued support remains crucial in helping Estonia respond to growing threats. If confirmed, I look forward to working to implement the European Reassurance Initiative (ERI) and continuing efforts to facilitate joint training and exercises and increasing interoperability under Operation Atlantic Resolve.

The birthplace of Skype, Estonia has established itself as a world leader on information technology. If confirmed, I will continue to work to expand opportunities for trade and commercial relations with this innovative partner. This includes working with my Estonian colleagues in support of TTIP.

As an expert on cyber issues, Estonia hosts the NATO Cyber Security Center of Excellence in Tallinn, which the United States joined in 2011, and has shared its expertise on e-governance with other nations, including Ukraine and other Eastern Partnership countries. If confirmed, I look forward to continuing our strong cooperation on cyber issues.

Outreach to, and promoting resilience within, all parts of society is an important component of an ambassador's work. If confirmed, I will work closely with my team to continue outreach to the Estonian and Russian speaking public, including youth, as we welcome the strengths of a diverse and inclusive society.

Estonia has played an active role in advancing our shared security, economic, and social values. If confirmed, I look forward to representing my country in advancing a still deeper connection between the United States and Estonia.

I am grateful for the opportunity to have addressed you today, and am at your disposal to answer any questions you may have. Thank you.

Senator JOHNSON. Thank you, Mr. Melville.

Our next nominee is Ms. Kathleen Doherty, a nominee for Ambassador to Cyprus. Ms. Doherty is a senior member of the Foreign Service and currently serves as the Deputy Assistant Secretary in the Bureau of European and Eurasian Affairs.

Previously, Ms. Doherty has served at U.S. Embassies in London, Moscow, and Rome, working on economic affairs.

Ms. Doherty.

**STATEMENT OF KATHLEEN ANN DOHERTY, NOMINATED
TO BE AMBASSADOR TO THE REPUBLIC OF CYPRUS**

Ms. DOHERTY. Thank you, Mr. Chairman, Senator Shaheen. I am honored to appear before you today to be considered for the position of United States Ambassador to Cyprus. I am grateful to be nominated by President Obama, and I appreciate Secretary Kerry's confidence in me.

If confirmed, I pledge to work with all of you to advance in Cyprus the fundamental U.S. interests in a Europe whole, free, prosperous, and at peace.

I am pleased to be joined today by my partner, Mike Nelson; my sister, Erin; and many friends. I am thankful for the support of family and friends all these years.

Today is part of a journey that started when I traveled overseas at age 13 to visit Ireland, where my father was born and where I first became curious about the world beyond. As the daughter of an immigrant, I am proud to represent the United States and the hope of promise of this country.

This is a hopeful time for Cyprus, a country situated at the crossroads of Europe, the Middle East, and Africa. With the resumption of settlement talks in May and the strong commitment of both the Greek Cypriot and the Turkish Cypriot leaders, there is a real window of opportunity to forge a just and lasting peace.

If confirmed, I would do all that I could to support efforts by courageous and visionary leaders, ordinary people, and the United Na-

tions, to reach the promise of a bizonal, bicomunal federation. A reunified Cyprus would provide for a more prosperous future for all Cypriots.

Such an example would resonate well beyond the island. It would strengthen Greece-Turkey relations. A reunified Cyprus would also enhance regional security and boost NATO-EU cooperation.

Senators, I also believe it would serve as an inspiration for others who wish to define a new future after a painful past.

The Republic of Cyprus is a valued friend and an important strategic partner. The United States cooperates with Cyprus on a range of priorities, including counterterrorism, maritime security, and law enforcement. Cyprus' participation in the counter-ISIL coalition and its efforts to prevent the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction demonstrate its commitment to international security.

U.S.-led investment in Cyprus, increasing nearly sevenfold over the last 2 years, is an example of our growing economic ties. Cyprus' economy is turning the corner earlier than projected after the country's acute fiscal crisis in 2012. Its economic reform programs will help ensure that this positive growth continues.

At the same time, progress on a settlement could have a positive impact on the entire island's economy. Study after study has shown a Cyprus settlement would create opportunities for greater trade and investment, bringing tangible benefits to all Cypriots.

The discovery of natural gas reserves in Cyprus' offshore waters has expanded possibilities for increasing regional energy security through diversification of resources, routes, and suppliers. We have emphasized our support of the Republic of Cyprus' right to develop hydrocarbon resources in its exclusive economic zone.

We believe that resources should be shared equitably between both communities within the context of an overall settlement. Hydrocarbons have the potential, if managed correctly, to serve as an incentive for a Cyprus settlement. If confirmed, I would seek to build upon this potential.

During his visit to Cyprus in May 2014, Vice President Biden emphasized that a reunified Cyprus would expand the possibilities for strengthening our partnership.

If confirmed, I will be accredited to one government, the Republic of Cyprus. That said, I will support both Greek-Cypriot and Turkish-Cypriot communities in their efforts to pursue reconciliation and reunification.

If confirmed, I believe my experience will prepare me well for the challenges and opportunities ahead. Throughout my 25-year career, I worked closely with Members of Congress, the U.S. military, and nearly all U.S. Government agencies and departments.

While serving in Washington and at posts overseas, I have strengthened United States-European relations, promoting trade, investment, economic opportunity, and innovation. I have been a strong advocate for the diversification of energy supplies and for the United States and the EU to work together to address energy challenges. I have championed efforts that enhance European security working through NATO and the EU. And while serving as Deputy Assistant Secretary, I worked on the peace process in Northern Ireland, which gave hope to long-divided communities.

If confirmed, I will dedicate myself to strengthening the bonds between the United States and Cyprus, and working with Members of Congress, partners in the U.S. Government and elsewhere, and with the talented staff of the Embassy in Nicosia to further our goals and support the promise of a better future for all Cypriots.

Mr. Chairman, Senator Shaheen, thank you again for the opportunity to be here with you today. I would be pleased to answer any questions you may have.

[The prepared statement of Ms. Doherty follows:]

PREPARED STATEMENT OF KATHLEEN A. DOHERTY

Chairman Johnson, Senator Shaheen, members of the committee. I am honored to appear before you today to be considered for the position of the United States Ambassador to the Republic of Cyprus. I am grateful to be nominated by President Obama and appreciate Secretary Kerry's confidence in me. If confirmed, I pledge to work with all of you to advance in Cyprus the fundamental U.S. interest in a Europe whole, free, prosperous, and at peace.

I'm pleased to be joined today by my partner, Mike Nelson, and my brother Bob Doherty, who along with the other members of my family have supported me all these years. Today is part of a journey that started when I first traveled overseas at 13 to visit Ireland, where my father was born, and where I first became curious about the world beyond. As a first generation American on my father's side, I am proud to represent the United States and the hope and promise of this country.

This is a hopeful time for Cyprus, a country situated at the crossroads of Europe, the Middle East, and Africa. With the resumption of settlement talks in May and the strong commitment of both the Greek Cypriot and Turkish Cypriot leaders, there is a real window of opportunity to forge a just and lasting settlement. If confirmed, I would do all that I could to support efforts by courageous and visionary leaders, ordinary people, and the United Nations to reach the promise of a bizonal, bicomunal federation. A reunified Cyprus would provide for a more prosperous future for all Cypriots. Such an example would resonate well beyond the island, strengthening Greece-Turkey relations and links across the Eastern Mediterranean. It would serve as an inspiration for others who wish to define a new future after a painful past. A reunified Cyprus would also enhance regional security and boost NATO-EU cooperation.

The Republic of Cyprus is a valued friend and important strategic partner. If confirmed, I am committed to boosting our bilateral relationship to promote peace, security, and prosperity in the region and beyond. The United States cooperates closely with Cyprus on a range of priorities including counterterrorism, maritime security, and law enforcement. Cyprus' hosting of the Joint OPCW-U.N. Mission to dismantle Syria's chemical weapons, participation in the Counter-ISIL Coalition, as well as its regional efforts to prevent the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction demonstrate its commitment to international security.

U.S.-led investment in Cyprus, increasing nearly sevenfold over the last 2 years, is a concrete example of our growing economic ties. Cyprus is supportive of our efforts to conclude the U.S.-EU Transatlantic Trade and Investment Partnership (TTIP). TTIP can help develop the island's growing professional services sector and provide new opportunities for entrepreneurship. Cyprus' economy is turning the corner, earlier than projected after the country's acute fiscal crisis in 2012. As the sacrifices required by fiscal consolidation and structural reforms are beginning to bear fruit, Cyprus' economic reform programs will help ensure that this positive growth continues. At the same time, progress on a settlement could have a positive impact on the entire island's economy. Study after study has shown a Cyprus settlement would create opportunities for greater trade and investment, bringing tangible benefits to all Cypriots. If confirmed, I would draw upon my years of experience creating opportunities in the areas of entrepreneurship, innovation, and commerce—particularly for women and young people—and push this vision forward.

The recent discovery of natural gas resources in the Eastern Mediterranean, including in Cyprus' offshore waters by U.S. company Noble Energy in 2011, has expanded possibilities for increasing regional energy security through diversification of resources, routes, and suppliers. We have emphasized our support of the Republic of Cyprus' right to develop hydrocarbon resources in its exclusive economic zone. We also believe the resources should be shared equitably between both communities within the context of an overall settlement. Hydrocarbons have the potential, if managed correctly, to be a catalyst for increased cooperation as well as enhanced

regional stability, security, and prosperity. Energy potential should serve as an incentive to a Cyprus settlement. If confirmed, I would seek to build upon this potential.

During his historic visit to Cyprus in May 2014, Vice President Biden emphasized that a reunified Cyprus would expand the possibilities for strengthening our partnership. If confirmed, I will be accredited to one government, the Republic of Cyprus. That said, I will support both Greek Cypriot and Turkish Cypriot communities in their efforts to pursue reconciliation and reunification.

If confirmed, I believe my experience will prepare me well for the challenges and opportunities ahead. Throughout my 25-year career, I have worked closely with Members of Congress, the U.S. military, and nearly all U.S. Government agencies and Departments, and know how we can work together to support the goal of a whole and prosperous Cyprus. While serving in Washington as Deputy Assistant Secretary in our Bureau of European and Eurasian Affairs and at posts overseas, I have strengthened U.S.-European relations, promoting trade, investment, economic opportunity and innovation. I have been a strong advocate for the diversification of energy supplies, and for the U.S. and European Union to work together to address global and regional energy challenges. I have championed efforts that enhanced European security, working through NATO and the EU, and while serving as a Deputy Assistant Secretary of State, I supported the peace process in Northern Ireland, which gave hope to long divided communities.

If confirmed, I will dedicate myself to strengthening the bonds between the United States and Cyprus, and working with Members of Congress, partners in the U.S. Government and elsewhere, and with the talented staff of the Embassy in Nicosia to further our goals in Cyprus and support the promise of a better future for all Cypriots.

Mr. Chairman, members of the committee, thank you again for the opportunity to be here with you today. I would be pleased to answer any questions you may have.

Senator JOHNSON. Thank you, Ms. Doherty.

Our final nominee is Mr. Thomas Melia.

Am I pronouncing that correctly, "Melia"?

Mr. MELIA. We pronounce it "Melia." But you may have it—

Senator JOHNSON. I am happy to go with your pronunciation. I will probably still get it wrong, but it is close.

A nominee for Assistant Administrator for Europe and Eurasia at USAID, Mr. Melia is currently executive director of Democracy International and previously served from 2010 to 2015 as Deputy Assistant Secretary in the Bureau of Democracy, Human Rights and Labor at the Department of State.

Mr. Melia.

STATEMENT OF THOMAS MELIA, NOMINATED TO BE AN ASSISTANT ADMINISTRATOR OF THE U.S. AGENCY FOR INTERNATIONAL DEVELOPMENT

Mr. MELIA. Thank you, Mr. Chairman, Senator Shaheen, Senator Murphy. It is an honor to appear before you today as President Obama's nominee to be Assistant Administrator for Europe and Eurasia at the U.S. Agency for International Development.

I am grateful for the trust and confidence placed in me by President Obama, Acting Administrator Lenhardt, and Secretary Kerry at this critical time in the region.

I am pleased to be joined today by my best friend, my spouse, Amy Conroy; our son, Tomás; and my brother, Tim, who is standing in for the wider Melia clan, my mother, Margaret; my sister, Kay; my brothers, Terry and Pat, who may be watching on the video link today.

It happens that Amy grew up in a USAID family as her father, Dennis, pursued a career in the agency and its predecessor agen-

cies from the early 1950s to the 1980s, working to advance U.S. interests in Asia and sub-Saharan Africa. Since then, Amy has built a distinguished career promoting women's participation in American politics and in leading some of the best-known and most important nonprofit advocacy organizations in the United States.

My son, Tomás, meanwhile, as he prepares to enter the seventh grade, is learning the importance of public service, too, and investing great energy in developing critical national security skills in lacrosse, basketball, and soccer.

For more than 30 years, I have worked to promote democratic governance and fundamental freedoms throughout the world, mainly while working for nongovernmental, nonprofit organizations, and now at Democracy International, an exciting new entrant in the community of democracy support organizations.

I believe the United States can, and should always be, a reliable friend of democracy and its advocates worldwide, not only because a more democratic world would enhance America's prosperity and security, but because democracy is the only political framework that can ensure that universal human rights are respected and that the voices of the poor and marginalized are heard by their leaders.

As Deputy Assistant Secretary of State in the Bureau for Democracy, Human Rights and Labor most of these last 5 years, I oversaw the Bureau's work in three regions, including Europe and Eurasia.

I know this region and its people well. I was the U.S. chair of several bilateral working groups and led delegations to address human rights, civil society, rule of law issues in countries across the region—including Armenia, Azerbaijan, Belarus, Georgia, Hungary, Moldova, Russia, Turkey, and, of course, Ukraine, where I led official U.S. missions more than six times in 3 years.

Ukraine is a central focus of USAID's Bureau for Europe and Eurasia, as it is across the administration. The agency plays an important role supporting the Government of Ukraine's accelerated reform efforts, and I want to acknowledge the many members of this committee, in particular, who have led Congress in providing vital support to the people of Ukraine.

In various capacities inside and outside government over the years throughout my career, I have seen firsthand the effectiveness of development assistance as an important aspect of our foreign policy, particularly in the former Communist countries of Europe and Eurasia. Yet, even with this success, the region's transformation is incomplete, and we find ourselves today at a tipping point.

The threat of political and economic backsliding remains. The resurgence of extreme nationalism across the continent reminds us of the fragility of the post-war social compact we once thought had been secured by creation of the European Union. Trafficking in persons continues to be a serious human rights challenge in the region. Conspicuous, high-level corruption undermines public confidence in the utility of democratic institutions and open markets.

It turns out there is more to be done to secure the transition from totalitarianism to the Europe we have all envisioned—whole, free, and at peace.

Having begun my professional career working for more than 5 formative years for Senator Daniel Patrick Moynihan, I understand and appreciate the important role that Congress plays—and in my view should play—in the development and execution of U.S. foreign policy. The Congress is the democratic fulcrum that ensures our international policies properly project American values and remain focused on core national interests. If confirmed to the position the President has nominated me for, I would welcome the opportunity to work closely with this committee as together we chart the way forward to advance USAID's mission: to end extreme poverty and promote resilient, democratic societies—while advancing our own security and prosperity.

If confirmed, I look forward to working with you on a regular basis. Thank you again for the opportunity to speak to you today. I welcome any questions you may have.

[The prepared statement of Mr. Melia follows:]

PREPARED STATEMENT OF THOMAS O. MELIA

Chairman Johnson, Ranking Member Shaheen, members of the committee, it is an honor to appear before you today as President Obama's nominee to be Assistant Administrator for Europe and Eurasia (E&E) at the U. S. Agency for International Development (USAID). I am grateful for the trust and confidence placed in me by President Obama, Acting Administrator Lenhardt, and Secretary Kerry at this critical time for the region.

I want first to recognize the outstanding work being done by Susan Fritz, who has been leading the Bureau as acting Assistant Administrator since January. Ms. Fritz has served our country with great distinction throughout a 25-year career at USAID and is a true expert on the development challenges we confront in the region. I also want to acknowledge with appreciation Paige Alexander, the previous Assistant Administrator for E&E, and to thank her for advice and guidance during this process. I worked closely with Ms. Alexander in my previous position at the Department of State and know how effective her leadership was in the region and in the U.S. Government's interagency deliberations.

I also want to thank my family, friends, and professional colleagues whose support and encouragement have allowed me to pursue this opportunity. I am especially pleased to be joined today by my best friend, my spouse, Amy Conroy, and our son Tomás. It happens that Amy grew up in a USAID family, as her father pursued a career in the Agency and its predecessors from the early 1950s to the 1980s, working to advance U.S. interests in Asia and sub-Saharan Africa. Her sisters were born in Ethiopia and Iran, when the Conroy family was posted to those countries. Since then, Amy has built a distinguished career promoting women's participation in American politics and in leading some of the best-known and most important nonprofit advocacy organizations in the U.S. For more than 30 years, she has been making significant contributions to strengthen American democracy. Tomás, meanwhile, as he prepares to enter the seventh grade, is learning the importance of public service at the community, national and international levels.

For more than 30 years, I have worked to promote democratic governance and fundamental freedoms throughout the world, mainly while working for nongovernmental, nonprofit organizations, including the National Democratic Institute and the bipartisan Freedom House. Since leaving government service earlier this year, I am proud to be working at Democracy International, an exciting new entrant in the community of democracy support organizations. As a university teacher and occasional writer of articles and books, I have also had the opportunity to discuss with scholars and practitioners how the United States might better help those men and women in other countries who share our values to build their own democratic societies and institutions. While each country's path will be decided by its own citizens—we as outsiders will only ever be supporting actors in other nations' national dramas—I believe that the United States can and should always be a reliable friend of democracy and its advocates worldwide. This is why it is so important that the U.S. Government's recently released second Quadrennial Diplomacy and Development Review (QDDR) highlights, as one of the Nation's four top strategic priorities, "promoting open, resilient and democratic societies." For this is the only sure path to enduring development outcomes for the poorest and least resilient societies. It is

the only political framework that can ensure that universal human rights are respected, and that the voices of the poor and the marginalized are heard by their leaders.

From 2010 to earlier this year, I served as Deputy Assistant Secretary of State in the Bureau for Democracy, Human Rights and Labor (DRL). In that role, I oversaw the Bureau's work in three regions, including Europe and Eurasia. I know this region and its people well. I have worked with political leaders, including government officials and opposition leaders, human rights activists and community leaders. I have coordinated our efforts with our closest allies. I was the U.S. chair of several bilateral working groups, and led delegations to address human rights, civil society, or rule of law issues in countries in this region—including Armenia, Azerbaijan, Belarus, Georgia, Hungary, Moldova, Russia, Turkey—and of course Ukraine, where I led official U.S. missions more than six times in 3 years.

Senator Cardin may recall that I led or participated in many U.S. delegations to meetings of the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE) during those 5 years, including each year's Human Dimension Implementation Meeting in Warsaw, where I led our interaction with civil society and human rights activists from across the OSCE region. I was honored to serve and work closely with both Secretaries of State Hillary Clinton and John Kerry in the annual ministerial meetings of the OSCE. Moreover, during these past 5 years, I was also fortunate to work with impressive colleagues from across the U.S. Government, including at the Department of Justice and Department of Defense, as well as the National Security Council staff, and most frequently with USAID counterparts, so I know the inter-agency apparatus and procedures well.

Having begun my professional career working for more than 5 years for Senator Daniel Patrick Moynihan, I understand and appreciate the important role the Congress plays—and in my view should play—in the development and execution of U.S. foreign policy. The Congress is the democratic fulcrum that ensures our international policies are leveraged to properly project American values and remain focused on core national interests. If confirmed in this role, I would welcome the opportunity to work closely with this committee as together we chart the way forward to advance USAID's mission: to end extreme poverty and promote resilient, democratic societies—while advancing our own security and prosperity.

USAID's Bureau for Europe and Eurasia was created a quarter century ago, pursuant to specific legislative mandates enacted after the fall of the Berlin Wall and the dissolution of the Soviet Union, with the goals of promoting Euro-Atlantic integration and fostering a Europe whole, free, and at peace. I have seen firsthand the effectiveness of development assistance as an important aspect of our foreign policy, particularly in the formerly Communist countries of Europe and Eurasia. For well over two decades, the United States and USAID have played a key role in the region, supporting successful transitions from assistance to partnership in 10 formerly Communist countries that have joined the European Union. Today, we count several of these countries as some of the United States' strongest and most able allies. The region serves as a model for the principles of sustainable development, for creating the conditions where international assistance is no longer needed.

However, even with this success, the region's transformation is incomplete, and we find ourselves today at a tipping point. In a growing number of countries that had appeared to have successfully transformed, the threat of political and economic backsliding still remains. Multiple political crises and the recent resurgence of extreme nationalism in multiple countries across the European Continent remind us of the fragility of the post-war social compact we once thought had been secured by creation of the European Union. Trafficking in persons continues to be a serious human rights challenge in the region. Conspicuous high-level corruption undermines public confidence in the viability and utility of democratic institutions and open markets. It turns out there is more to be done to secure the transition from totalitarian rule to the Europe we all have envisioned—whole, free, and at peace.

Development assistance remains a strategic imperative in a region facing rising internal and external pressures. Structural instability and democratic and economic stagnation are all exacerbated by Russia's aggressive actions, reminding us that the United States still has an important role to play.

Ukraine is a central focus of USAID's E&E Bureau, as it is across the Obama administration. The agency continues to play an important role supporting the Government of Ukraine's accelerated reform efforts across key sectors, providing macro-economic assistance, helping strengthen civil society, supporting energy security, and providing humanitarian relief to conflict-affected communities in the east. While progress is being made, Ukraine must continue to aggressively pursue not only enactment of new laws, but also actually implementing real reforms. In order to be successful, Ukraine will need continued support and technical assistance from

the international community, and I want to acknowledge the many members of this committee in particular who have led the Congress in providing vital support to the people of Ukraine.

I want to emphasize, however, that Russian pressure is not limited to Ukraine. At a Senate Appropriations Subcommittee on State and Foreign Operations hearing on February 24, 2015, Secretary Kerry, in response to a question regarding Russian influence in the region, stated, "Whether it's Serbia, Kosovo, Montenegro, Macedonia, other places—they are all in the firing line." If confirmed, I will be a strong advocate for strong continued USAID engagement in the Balkans, as well as in Georgia and Moldova, where increased Russian pressure has the potential to destabilize those countries and threaten important progress toward implementation of the historic Association Agreements and Deep and Comprehensive Free Trade Area agreements with the European Union. It is important that the United States continues to support the sovereign right of these countries to choose their own futures and help them meet the conditions of these agreements. I also want to say—to the peoples of Belarus, Armenia, and Azerbaijan, and Russia—that we support their aspirations to live in prosperous, democratic countries, at peace internally and with their neighbors, and more fully integrated into Europe and the modern world.

This is a pivotal moment for the wider European region, facing its most significant challenges—economic, social, political and military—in decades. The United States and USAID have an important role to play in the region and must continue to demonstrate leadership and commitment to Europe's success. If confirmed, I look forward to working with the Senate Foreign Relations Committee and all of our partners to achieve our objectives in the region.

Thank you again for giving me the opportunity to appear before you today. I welcome any questions you might have.

Senator JOHNSON. Thank you, Mr. Melia.

Let me start with the nominees for ambassadorships to the different countries with the same question. We will just go from left to right. Tell me what is the number one or top two or three opportunities in terms of economic cooperation between our two countries.

Ambassador JONES. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

As I briefly outlined in my statement, we have a strong economic-commercial relationship between the United States and Poland, but I believe there is opportunity for significant growth.

Poland's economy has been consistently growing over the last years, even during the financial crisis. And it is strong across the board, a comprehensive growth. Poland's significant domestic market, its location next to significant markets, present a lot of opportunities for U.S. exporters and U.S. investors.

Secretary Pritzker led a delegation of the President's export council last fall to Poland and identified several different areas where there is great promise to expand our exports and our investments in both directions. Those include areas such as defense, as I mentioned, the defense industry, IT, aerospace, areas such as green cities, green technology, energy cooperation.

So I will, if confirmed, work very closely with the American business community, the Polish business community, to try to expand those opportunities.

Senator JOHNSON. Thank you, Ambassador.

Ambassador Klemm.

Ambassador KLEMM. Thank you, Mr. Chairman, an excellent question.

You are familiar with Romania, as a result of your visit there last year. The country has great potential. It is one of the fastest growing in the European Union. It has relatively low debt, and it is fiscally sound and has an educated population. As a result, there

is already a substantial presence of U.S. investment in the country, particularly in the sectors of energy, IT, and manufacturing.

All that said, I think there is still great potential for American firms to increase their presence in Romania and, importantly, increase exports to the country to support job growth here at home.

That growth in U.S. presence and, actually, economic development in of itself in Romania is hindered I think by two major factors. One is corruption. Romania still faces a serious problem with corruption. Within the European Union, it is ranked among the very bottom of countries facing corruption and, of course, the contribution that makes to its business and investment environment. And the other one is infrastructure.

In both cases, Romania is committed to improving its environment. It is drawing on European Union resources to help build out its infrastructure, particularly in roads and rail and energy. And then corruption, as I mentioned in my remarks, and as you saw firsthand, Senator, it has put into place some very powerful and courageous institutions in law enforcement and the judiciary to try to deal with corruption and over time has established really both a courageous and remarkable record in terms of pursuing corruption at the local, regional, as well as national level. Thank you.

Senator JOHNSON. Senator Murphy and I, when we were in Romania, met an incredibly courageous young woman, Laura Kovesi. And as Ambassador, we, certainly, hope that you make sure that she remains supported by the Romanian Government.

Mr. Heins.

Mr. HEINS. Thank you, Senator.

There are identified a number of really great opportunities for American companies in Norway. They include oil and gas, in particular technologies for cleaner extraction, more efficient extraction, of oil and gas, and technologies that would permit the extraction of oil and gas in evermore remote and difficult to work in areas.

LNG transport, carbon capture and technology, other green technologies, including wind and solar and hydro; there are opportunities in the marine industry for joint partnerships with Norway; and in health care, with regard to medical devices, medical equipment and pharmaceuticals—these all present real opportunities, I believe, for U.S. industry to export to Norway.

Senator JOHNSON. Mr. Melville.

Mr. MELVILLE. Thank you, Senator.

Estonia is a very successful economy and very welcoming to American businesses. There are approximately 100 American companies who already have a presence in Estonia, which has a well-deserved reputation as an innovative, creative place for startups. And the best example, of course, I already mentioned. That is Skype.

But Estonia has a very responsible approach to managing their economy, as well. They have a balanced budget. They are very open to investors from the United States. We only have about 2.2 percent of their economy in exports now, and there is lots of room for advocacy and growth there, which, if confirmed, I look forward to taking advantage of.

Senator JOHNSON. I would mention the way they balanced their budget was to dramatically reduce spending.

Ms. Doherty.

Ms. DOHERTY. Thank you, Senator.

As I mentioned in my testimony, U.S. investment has already increased sevenfold in the past 2 years in Cyprus, primarily in the professional services sector and tourism, but, most importantly, in the energy sector. Cyprus is in the process of identifying the depth of its natural gas reserves, but the potential is quite high. U.S. company Noble has already invested a significant amount of money in exploration.

But, obviously, the most important thing that could happen for Cyprus and U.S. business opportunity is reunification of the island, which would offer great opportunity for U.S. trade and investment and also Cypriot investment in the United States.

I spent most of my career actually doing economic and commercial advocacy and diplomacy, and I spent a lot of years promoting innovation and entrepreneurship, especially among young people and women. So I look forward to doing that, if I were to be confirmed.

Senator JOHNSON. Can you also tell me a little bit about what you know about the banking crisis there in 2012 and 2013, kind of the cause and effect, and the aftermath?

Ms. DOHERTY. Yes, Senator.

As you do know, Cyprus went through a very serious economic and fiscal crisis in 2012. Cyprus has undertaken several economic reforms. Despite very high unemployment and other constraints, it actually expects to have modest growth this year. So we are reasonably optimistic that Cyprus is moving forward in terms of economic opportunity, and its reform program is quite serious and ambitious.

Senator JOHNSON. Mr. Melia, within Europe and Eurasia, can you talk about the top priorities for U.S. assistance through USAID?

Mr. MELIA. Yes, Mr. Chairman. Thank you.

The mix of assistance programs in this region differs somewhat from other parts of the world for some obvious reasons. In the Europe and Eurasia region, USAID's programs revolve around support for democratic transformation, through democracy and governance programs; support for economic growth, helping promote institutional and structural reform to make these countries more attractive to international investment; to reform their legal structures, to be more law-abiding and fair and transparent; and providing, in some cases, startup investments for small- and medium-sized businesses to model the kind of investments that the private sector can use to jump start business development.

So economic growth is a big part of it. Energy security is the other piece, energy security, economic growth and democratic transformation.

Senator JOHNSON. Can you just mention the country names where the top priorities are, where most of the aid is flowing?

Mr. MELIA. Well, the biggest focus these days, of course, is Ukraine. The investment in Ukraine went from about \$50 million, 2 years ago, to \$150 million in the current year. That reflects the heightened priority that we are all placing on bolstering Ukraine

at this difficult moment and the action by this committee and the Congress to enable us to do that.

So Ukraine is the biggest focus and that program is built around these three priority sectors—democratic transformation, economic growth, energy security, which is paramount in Ukraine. And there is a modest health program as well in Ukraine, which has a large incidence of drug-resistant tuberculosis.

Senator JOHNSON. Thank you.

Senator Shaheen.

Senator SHAHEEN. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Since I think almost everyone has mentioned energy security, let me just urge you, as you are looking at the potential for energy resources throughout Eastern Europe and in the countries that we hope you will be representing the United States in, that you also look at energy efficiency. It is an area where we have tremendous potential to export. It is the cheapest and fastest way to develop energy. And it is a place where I think, particularly in some of the countries that you are representing, that there has not been much focus. Ukraine is one of those, which has been mentioned several times. So I would just urge you to think about that.

Mr. Melia, you talked about support for Ukraine. Georgia and Moldova are also countries where USAID still has a robust effort. But in most of the countries in Europe, USAID funding has declined precipitously.

So is that a reflection of a lack of need for those economic development programs?

Mr. MELIA. Well, thank you, Senator. And coming from the great State of New Hampshire, I am sure you are very familiar with energy-efficiency programs. That is very much a part of the energy programs in Ukraine and in the region. So I want to acknowledge that it is an important part.

No, the declines over the last few years in assistance levels for the region do not reflect necessarily a diminishing of the need. It has reflected the challenge we all face in trying to make limited and sometimes dwindling amounts of money available to deal with a growing number of crises in the world.

In the FY16 budget request, the administration has proposed increasing funding levels in almost, I believe, in every country that we have an aid program in these days.

I would be a strong advocate for enlarging those budgets, at the same time ensuring that the money is well-targeted and well-spent.

We have not talked about the Balkans, Serbia and its neighbors—

Senator SHAHEEN. I was about to raise that. So I am glad that you did.

Mr. MELIA. They are also in the line of fire from Russia. The Russian propaganda and meddling in local politics and the pugnacious energy politics are being applied against Serbia and its neighbors, as well as against those countries that adjoin Russia.

So I will be an advocate for more robust programs in the key countries across the region.

Senator SHAHEEN. Thank you. I appreciate you saying that. As you point out, economic assistance, development assistance, is one

of the best ways that we can encourage democratic values in many of the countries that we are working in.

Let me just ask you, if you could, to zero in a little bit more on the Balkans. I was just in Bosnia, and one of the things we heard there is the economic challenges that they are facing. And given the other governance challenges, are there other ways in which we can support Bosnia that would be helpful as they are trying to address their governance challenges as well?

Mr. MELIA. Bosnia and its neighbors are still in the process of creating new states. Institutions and habits of democratic governance are still very much in their nascent stages. So I would hope that we would be able to continue to provide the kind of technical advice and information exchanges that help them do that.

At the same time, we can deploy American know-how in other fields that are important to them—energy security, how to manage grids, how to develop energy efficient approaches to industry and housing. There is a lot of information that we can bring to help people make better decisions. It does not always require a lot of money, but it requires some money to be present and to be able to deploy the know-how that Americans have developed over the years.

So I think there is more to be done in the Balkans. I just visited Kosovo, Serbia, and Macedonia earlier this year on one of my last trips at the State Department. And they generally want more American presence. They are finding their way through coalition-building and democratic politics, media, and transparency. There are a lot of things that are very much in progress there that I think we should not walk away from at this point. When Europe writ large is at a tipping point, we need to consolidate the gains that we helped them achieve before we move on to the next crisis.

Senator SHAHEEN. Thank you. I could not agree more, and I look forward to working with you to address those challenges.

Ms. Doherty, you talked about the potential in Cyprus to come to an agreement that might reunite the country and address what has been a frozen conflict for a very long time. We have heard that before. So what are the reasons that we should be hopeful that this time might be different?

Ms. DOHERTY. Thank you, Senator. That is an extremely important question, and I would like to express why we think the situation is different.

Primarily, the commitment of the two leaders, the Greek Cypriot President and the Turkish Cypriot leader, are fundamentally committed to the process of reunification. They actually know each other from their childhood. They have worked together before. And they have been pursuing these talks since May. They have been meeting regularly and the negotiators meet almost every single day.

We want to be supportive of the process as much as possible, and if confirmed, I will do what I can to be supportive to both communities as they try to undertake a very difficult path to reconciliation and reunification.

Senator SHAHEEN. Thank you very much.

Mr. Jones, one of the other places I recently visited was Poland. I was there in June for the global security conference in Wroclaw.

What I heard from the Poles was a great deal of concern about Russia and its renewed threat to particularly Eastern Europe.

What more can we do to support Poland in its efforts to be a bulwark against further incursions by Putin into Eastern Europe?

Ambassador JONES. Thank you, Senator, for obviously a very important question and one that can be addressed in many ways.

Briefly, Poland obviously has become a significant contributor to security in the alliance and in Central and Eastern Europe through its military but also through its society, its democracy and the activism of its civil society in the region, and through its economy that is helping other countries nearby grow.

I think we want to address the full spectrum, the hybrid spectrum of possibilities of interference with our partners and our allies. And I think we have done an excellent job within the NATO alliance and bilaterally at deterring and bolstering the security of Poland and our allies. I think there is more we can do in the areas of cybersecurity, in the areas of countering disinformation, in the areas of energy security, as you mentioned, all of which are vulnerabilities to allies and partners in the region.

Thank you.

Senator SHAIHEEN. Thank you very much. My time has expired. Again, thank you all for your willingness to serve.

Senator JOHNSON. Senator Menendez.

Senator MENENDEZ. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Let me congratulate all of the nominees on their nominations and extend I think the thanks of all of us for your families' willingness to join, because it is a collective effort, at the end of the day, so we appreciate their willingness to sacrifice on behalf of the Nation as well.

Mr. Melville, anyone who was born in Jersey City and has family from Berlin has got to be an extraordinary public servant. So congratulations on your particular nomination.

As you know, the President Ilves, whom I visited with last year, lived and studied in New Jersey. And he can actually turn a New Jersey accent pretty quickly, so you will have a lot to talk about with them.

Mr. MELVILLE. If confirmed, Senator, I very much look looking forward to working with President Ilves, another Jersey boy.

Senator MENENDEZ. Yes, and it is amazing how he can turn it on. He tells me he does not do it very often, and it does not necessarily help him there are lot. But anyhow, you will have a lot to talk to him about.

I think what is happening in Estonia, the challenges, the concerns they have in Poland, which I was also at last year, obviously with the Russian invasion, countries that all have legitimate reasons to be concerned about Russia's resurgence and its actions, concerns in the case of Estonia about Russian-speaking populations and what that means to stability in the country, particularly with all the propaganda that Russia spends an enormous amount of money in those countries, and how we counteract that. So I look forward to working with both of you in your respective nominations.

Let me turn to Ms. Doherty. You are going to a country that as you and I discussed, I have a lot of interest in, Cyprus. I have been

following the Cyprus question for the better part of my congressional career.

I think for the first time in decades, Cyprus has a historic opportunity to forge a lasting agreement between the Greek and Turkish Cypriots. And the efforts of President Anastasiades and the Turkish Cypriot leader Akinci have put all of the difficult issues on the table, which I think is very important.

However, one of the concerns that I have even in a moment in which I think there is an opportunity is that, at the end of the day, any potential agreement has to be Cypriot-led and Cypriot-agreed to. When we try to impose upon the Cypriots our will or the will of the international community, that is a challenge. We saw that in the Annan plan, which was rejected by the people of Cyprus.

So I hope we have learned from that lesson and try to be a facilitator, but not try to impose our will on the Cypriots, because that will not have a lasting effect.

I think there are some things that are important to recognize, and so as you visited with me and I shared with you some of my concerns, I come to this with the view that, even though we have expectations at this moment, at the core of this problem is an invasion of Turkey and an occupation of Northern Cyprus. And I would like to hear your views on that, as a starting point.

Ms. DOHERTY. Thank you, Senator. And thank you for your interest in Cyprus all these years. You have a lot of expertise on the issue and on the country, and I very much appreciate that as well.

As you mentioned, this needs to be a Cypriot-led process, and it is a Cypriot-led process. The commitment of both the Turkish Cypriot leader and the Greek Cypriot President, they seem very determined to doing and taking the very tough questions at hand.

I think the issues of the past are very painful. They need to be recognized. They need to be considered. They need to be acknowledged.

But I think at this moment, as we said, we have a historic moment that we need to look at the future and really concentrate on what can be done to actually move this process through its process of reconciliation and reunification. And if I were to be confirmed, I would do a lot of listening to both sides. I would be engaged as much as possible, as they asked me to be, and try to be supportive of the U.N.-facilitated process as well, Senator.

Senator MENENDEZ. I appreciate our desire to look forward, but sometimes unless we reconcile ourselves with the past, it is difficult to move forward.

America had slavery as an original sin, and it was not until we came face to face with that reality that it was not truly possible for us to liberate ourselves and to move forward in a way that really had all American society progress.

So what I would hate to hear is you as the United States Ambassador not acknowledge or say what your predecessor has said about the reality is that we have the most militarized place in the world in Northern Cyprus with thousands of Turkish troops who invaded and occupied a sovereign country, a country that is part of the European Union.

So while you want to focus on the future, can I have an assurance that I will not be hearing from you that there was never an invasion of Cyprus?

Ms. DOHERTY. Senator, the years of intercommunal violence were terrible and many lives were lost. I think we need to really think about those and recognize it.

I worked in the peace process in Northern Ireland, and I also understand how violence can divide communities.

I think we need to focus on the future, Senator, and I think the issue—

Senator MENENDEZ. I appreciate that, but you are not giving me an answer to my question.

Ms. DOHERTY. The issue of foreign troops is one of the core elements of the peace process and settlement process. The two Cypriot leaders need to find a resolution that is satisfactory to both—

Senator MENENDEZ. So if Turkey, who says in a recent visit by the President of Turkey to the occupied section of Cyprus, who says that this is time for the agreement to come about—sounds good—but then at the end insists that Turkish groups continue to be in Northern Cyprus even if there is an agreement between Turkish and Greek Cypriots that the European Union is enough of a safeguard.

Would we say that we still want to look forward then? Or would we acknowledge that agreement between the two parties is what should prevail, and that Turkey would have to seek to withdraw its troops?

Ms. DOHERTY. I think, Senator, we need to focus on what the Turkish President has said. He said this is an opportunity not to be missed. He said that even just this morning in Cyprus.

So I think we need to work very closely with Ankara, as well as Athens, as well as the two communities on both sides of the island, in ensuring that we have a resolution that is satisfactory to all parties.

Senator MENENDEZ. Mr. Chairman, may I have two additional minutes?

Well, okay, I know what the State Department tells you to say. That is not satisfactory to me. And I think it does not take a lot to acknowledge that if Greek and Turkish Cypriots come to an agreement, which says we want the Turkish troops out of here and we are willing to accept the European Union as our security guarantee, that we should be able to say that the two parties who are the people who are most involved in terms of their lives and future, that we should be able to honor that. And if we cannot say that, that is a problem.

So I hope that the State Department will allow you in some response in writing to give me a better response than what we got.

Let me ask you this, the committee on missing persons in Cyprus has been unable to access so-called Turkish military zones where the remains of Greek and Turkish Cypriots missing persons are likely buried. They have been very slow in allowing the process of exhumations to move forward. What is your take on this issue, considering the fact that the United States has contributed over \$500,000 to the committee for the exhumation and identification of the remains of 500 Turkish Cypriots and 1,500 Greek Cypriots?

Ms. DOHERTY. We have called repeatedly for expeditious access to all burial sites, as have the two Cypriot leaders. While the access has been slow, Senator, the Turkish Government has provided information on two new military sites, as you have seen in the U.N. security report that was just released, which is a step forward, a positive trend forward.

That said, we continue to raise this issue with Ankara, and we will continue to press for a greater and more expeditious access to all burial sites.

Senator MENENDEZ. So if you are confirmed as Ambassador, you will make that one of your priorities?

Ms. DOHERTY. I will, indeed, sir.

Senator MENENDEZ. Finally, for the purposes of not extending the time here, I will submit some questions for the record for you and a few others.

Cyprus is the only European country where the United States still maintains an arms embargo. It is on a short list with countries that it does not deserve to be, like North Korea and Iran—despite being a strategic partner of the United States, despite being part of the coalition fighting ISIL, despite being one of the only stable democracies in the region, a member of the European Union, and someone that is working with us on just about every element that we want to.

Now, an amendment that I authored was passed on the national defense authorization bill, which passed here in the Senate. Do you have a view as to lifting the outdated arms embargo on this European Union country?

Ms. DOHERTY. Thank you, Senator.

Cyprus is an important partner. We are prohibited under the Foreign Assistance Act of 1987. There is a statutory requirement that prohibits defense sales and transfers. So we are obligated to follow that statutory requirement.

That said, we do have some waiver authority. And we have on a case-by-case basis, provided equipment to Cyprus under our waiver authority. And we would consider all possibilities should the Cypriot Government present us with a list of requests. We will consider those within our own authorities.

Senator MENENDEZ. Well, I will submit, Mr. Chairman. I do not want to delay—

Senator JOHNSON. You can ask more questions.

Senator MENENDEZ. That is an invitation I will not resist. I am sure Ms. Doherty would appreciate—

Ms. DOHERTY. I am from New York, sir.

Senator MENENDEZ. I understand, yes. Which is a great suburb of New Jersey. [Laughter.]

So we like New Yorkers.

Look, just a different topic, on Cyprus, obviously, but a different topic.

In the future for both the Greek and Turkish Cypriots is the exclusive economic zone, which abuts alongside Israel, in terms of the zone. Cyprus and Israelis have been working jointly toward being able to explore the fulfillment of that exclusive economic zone, which can not only be a tremendous opportunity for Cyprus and, if there is reunification, a tremendous opportunity for Turkish and

Greek Cypriots, but also an opportunity to help Europe with its energy needs and keep moving away from Russia's dominance in that respect.

But Turkey came in there and started claiming responsibility—not responsibilities, but started claiming that it has rights, even though it is nowhere near this exclusive economic zone, sent in the Barbaros exploration ship into Cypriot waters, followed it with warships.

Do we believe that the Cypriot Government has the right to explore the exclusive economic zone in accordance with international law that we would want to have observed in our own interests?

Ms. DOHERTY. Yes, Senator. We believe the Republic of Cyprus has the right to develop its exclusive economic zone.

Senator MENENDEZ. Okay. And we would hope that that would be without the interference of other countries? Is that a fair statement?

Ms. DOHERTY. The incident mentioned, that you described, sir, we did raise our concerns and we feel very strongly that the Republic of Cyprus does have its right to develop its own. So if I were to be confirmed, I would also speak out for anything that raises tension and serves as an impediment to the reconciliation process.

Senator MENENDEZ. One final question, then to Mr. Melville and Ambassador Jones. What do you think, in your respective roles with Poland and Estonia—and you may have answered this before. I tried to listen while I was in my office in a meeting, keeping the TV on. So I do not know if I missed it.

But as it relates to this issue of Russia and its bombardment in Eastern Europe and the efforts on both trying through its media and other forums to affect communities particular more in Estonia but also with the challenge that the former President of Poland described to me when I was visiting with him, what is the U.S. role in responding to that?

Mr. MELVILLE. Thank you, Senator, for that important question.

Yes, the Russian-speaking population of Estonia is about a quarter, more or less 300,000, concentrated in the northeast part of the country. Fortunately, recent polling indicates a strong identity on the part of these Russian-speaking Estonians with Estonia. They like the fact that they are members of a stalwart ally, a strong democracy with progressive, liberal economic opportunities. But it is true there is a cultural pull of Russia.

We have been looking for opportunities to reach out to that community to counter the Russian propaganda with fact-based, truthful reporting.

So, for example, through the international visitors program, we have invited journalists to be trained in the United States, and through various other programs, in investigative techniques and honest reporting. We are looking for opportunities to encourage English-language training in this community as well. And the Embassy, as a matter of fact, spends a lot of time and resources on public outreach to that community.

As a Russian speaker myself, if confirmed, Senator, I would look to spend a lot of time there. And I think there is a lot of strength through diversity that I think the United States provides a wonderful model of. And that would be an important part of the public

outreach that I would engage in, were I to be confirmed as Ambassador.

Ambassador JONES. Thank you, Senator.

Poland is a terrific partner in this effort to counter Russian disinformation and propaganda. Some of the things that the United States is doing in cooperation with Poland and a number of other interested partners include helping to network and build capacity among Russian-speaking independent journalists in the Russian-speaking areas, such as in Estonia and other countries nearby Russia, also helping with building capacity in content and building capacity of broadcast capability.

I think there are a couple of different threats coming our way in the area of disinformation. One is to this Russian-speaking community. Another is, frankly, to Europe and even in our country where the effort is more about trying to confuse debates and undermine solidarity within the alliance and within the European Union.

I think what we are working together with several countries on is to try to make clear, sort of unmask this propaganda machine, and make clear to our publics, our elites, our legislatures, and our government partners how this is done and how coordinated it is emanating from Moscow.

And if confirmed, I will, certainly, take up that issue very energetically with the Government of Poland.

Senator MENENDEZ. Thank you.

Thank you, Mr. Chairman, for your courtesy. I appreciate it.

Senator JOHNSON. No, I appreciate it, because that is actually a line of questioning I was going to continue on, quite honestly.

So I am hearing that we are pushing back. Do either of you two gentlemen think that we are pushing back even close to enough?

Ambassador Jones.

Ambassador JONES. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

I think Russia has invested a significant amount of money over a period of many years in creating what appears to be very slick and Western-looking media capabilities that are existing in many, many countries, including our own, and I think we are starting our pushback.

I think we are off to an important start, collaborating with other governments. But we will not be matching the annual budget that Russia frankly puts into this effort. So we have to do it smarter. We have to rely on, in my view, as I say, networking and building capacity among journalists. And I think over time, we have the potential to turn this into a strategic vulnerability for Russia.

Senator JOHNSON. I am concerned when I hear you say we are not going to match the budget. Russia is about a \$2 trillion a year economy. Western Europe combined with the U.S. is over \$30 trillion. We have started but we are not even close to pushing back. It is completely inadequate.

And this is extremely important. They are getting away with what they are doing in Ukraine because of their incredibly effective propaganda.

When I was over there with Senator McCain, we sat down with Foreign Minister Sikorski. I know he has some ideas. I would really encourage you to work with the Foreign Minister and, certainly,

the Polish people. We have to push back. I think it is just absolutely vital.

As long as I am on Poland here, we held a hearing in my other committee, the Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs Committee, on the visa waiver program. I think an awful lot of people had a perspective that this actually represented a security threat to America. I think the testimony was pretty clear that if properly handled, if properly structured, if a country is fully cooperating and put in place the requirements of a visa waiver program, that it actually improves our security.

Can you speak to that, because I know Poland as well as other European countries that are no longer on these visa waiver systems would like to become part of it? Can you just kind of speak to your perspective in terms Poland?

Ambassador JONES. Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I could not agree more with the approach you just outlined.

The Obama administration is committed to the expansion of the visa waiver program through legislation that would allow greater flexibility, so that countries such as Poland can be considered to join the visa waiver program.

Poland has a growing and strong economy. So we strongly believe that it would benefit our business as well as our people-to-people ties. As you indicated, there are a number of requirements that Poland has already instituted. Poland is a very close cooperater on counterterrorism and law enforcement. So those requirements are virtually all met.

So as I say, we would welcome additional flexibility that would allow us to consider Poland.

Senator JOHNSON. Okay, good. Obviously, I hope they succeed, because it actually does improve our own security, particularly in light of what is happening now with terrorism around the world and folks going into Europe.

The first congressional delegation trip I took 2 months into my term here was to visit Georgia, Ukraine, Estonia, Latvia, and Lithuania. It was very obvious then talking to representatives of all five of those nations that Russia had a very overt, were not trying to hide it at all, effort to destabilize those democracies.

Again, propaganda is going to be extremely important. What other measures can we take? I will start with you, Ambassador Klemm.

Ambassador KLEMM. Thank you, Senator.

In the case of Romania, you do not have the presence of a population with strong Russian ties. In fact, the relationship between Russia and Romania, historically, has often been fraught. So the inclination of the population in Romania to be attracted to Russian propaganda starts at a very low level.

The affection, according to opinion polls, among Romanians for the United States, for example, is very, very high, and for Russia actually remarkably low.

That said, Romanians are very concerned about Russia and Russian aggression and the impact that has had on regional security. They share a very long border with Ukraine. And right over the horizon across the Black Sea, is Russia itself.

So the steps that they have taken are working with us and with the NATO alliance to ensure that the alliance and the bilateral security posture is strong and able to resist Russian aggression.

Senator JOHNSON. Talk about the other ways that Russia tries to destabilize. Obviously, they utilize their oil and gas resources. Corruption within these systems is endemic and a legacy of the Soviet system.

Just describe a little bit about that in terms of what the pushback would be and the other ways that Russia tries to destabilize other than just propaganda.

Ambassador KLEMM. Yes, sir. You have raised two important areas.

One is in energy. Here, too, Romania is fortunate that it is somewhat isolated from those pressures in that it is still a net exporter of energy. It is very, very slight. Their oil and gas reserves are declining. But at least today, they have not been vulnerable to Russian pressure on energy. That said, all of their neighbors are. All of their neighbors are very much reliant on Gazprom sources, particularly natural gas.

What we have been encouraging Romania to do is to invest in its energy infrastructure, which is antiquated, so that it can be part of a European-wide solution to improve diversification of energy resources.

Senator JOHNSON. Mr. Melville, you can feel free to answer those two questions, but I also want you to speak to the difference in perspective that I hear as I meet with representatives from Eastern Europe versus representatives of Western Europe, in terms of the imperative of pushing back or basically how we should push back on Russian aggression. Can you speak to that issue?

Mr. MELVILLE. Yes, Senator.

Estonia, as you know, has been one of our most stalwart allies in terms of responding to the recent Russian aggression. Within the European Union, they have advocated the imposition of sanctions, despite the fact of having that border with Russia and close trade ties. It would have economic consequences, but Russia's conduct is so objectionable that they are willing to take the leadership role in standing up to that aggression.

So the Estonian Government has been very clear that until Russia implements all of the provisions of the Minsk agreement and withdraws from their illegal annexation of Crimea, the sanctions should stay in place.

So the policy of the Estonian Government and the United States Government in response to Russian aggression is indistinguishable.

Senator JOHNSON. Although, do the Eastern European countries not want us to have a far more robust response? I mean, they would like to see us provide lethal defensive weaponry, for example. I think the Eastern European countries would like to see that. Western European countries would not or are certainly more cautious about it.

Is that an accurate statement?

Mr. MELVILLE. I would point to Estonia's role as a NATO ally. They provide security to the alliance. They have stepped up markedly their contributions toward host nation support for the presence that has been increased since the Wales summit last year.

We have a persistent and continuing presence of American troops now in Estonia. The Estonians are spending 40 million over the next 5 years to beef up the host nation support that they are providing for the infrastructure to support those troops. They are taking great measures to improve their border security. And, of course, their borders are also NATO borders. That is another contribution to our collective security.

And as the President said when he was in Tallinn last September, the defense of Tallinn, Riga, and Vilnius is the same as the defense of Berlin, Paris, and London.

So I think Estonia's role in the alliance and leadership in standing up to Russia and the increased aggression has been admirable.

Senator JOHNSON. Ambassador Jones, can you speak to that basic comment about the different perspectives, Eastern Europe versus Western Europe? And do you really believe that Poland is satisfied with America's response to this? Do you think they prefer seeing a little bit more robust response to the situation in Ukraine, for example?

Ambassador JONES. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

I think that since the summit in Wales, the last NATO summit, the response from NATO and from the United States has grown much more visible and much more tangible to countries such as Poland.

Senator JOHNSON. Describe that a little bit for us.

Ambassador JONES. As Secretary Carter just announced last month, we will be prepositioning an armored brigade worth of equipment and materiel in several countries of Central and Eastern Europe for use in exercises, for use in training. We will also be, using the European reassurance initiative funding, upgrading the infrastructure in Poland, particularly at two bases, an aviation base and an army base. So we will be able to more effectively train together on this continuous, persistent basis with U.S. forces and forces from—every member of the alliance that contributes to this effort.

I think as we have seen, we have had an aviation detachment in Poland for some years now. We increased the numbers within days of aircraft to that detachment, within days of Russia's land grab in Crimea.

So I think the people of these countries are seeing that response. Now I will not say that there are not differences about how we should take it forward. As I indicated in response to Senator Shaheen's question, I think that that conversation has to be a wide-ranging one that includes all of the hybrid war threats and not only military equipment.

Senator JOHNSON. Is it your sense that the Government of Poland is satisfied with our response? Is there going to be mounting pressure to do more?

Ambassador JONES. I think the government is satisfied with our response to date. But obviously the threat is evolving, and our response to it continues to grow. So as that goes on, I look forward, if confirmed, to participate in that conversation.

Senator JOHNSON. Mr. Melia, you mentioned human trafficking. Can you just make a few comments on that?

Mr. MELIA. Thanks for the question, Mr. Chairman.

It remains one of the scourges of the region, human trafficking and forced labor, sex trafficking. It is a widespread problem. Some of the governments are beginning to pay more attention to it and take our exhortations more seriously.

USAID has several programs in five countries in the region, specifically working either with government agencies to increase the ability of the justice sector to address this as a criminal matter and prosecute offenders, and also with civil society to increase social service provisions to victims of trafficking.

Senator JOHNSON. Can you talk about where the real problem regions are?

Mr. MELIA. I confess I do not have the numbers at the tip of my tongue. Ukraine is the biggest country with the largest population. It is centrally located. It is a big problem there. There are other countries that are both sources and transit points for trafficking. A number of these countries have large portions of their laborers working in Russia, where they are often subject to atrocious working conditions.

So there are a number of countries that have different aspects of this problem. The programs that the U.S. Government has been supporting address both the government efforts in those cases where we have willing partners but also then supporting social service and advocacy organizations in a number of the countries to press their governments to be more active on this.

Senator JOHNSON. Okay, thank you.

Again, I just want to wrap up and thank all of the nominees for your willingness to serve this Nation.

As Senator Menendez mentioned, I also want to thank your families. This is a full commitment on the part of yourself and your families. Thank you very much.

I, certainly, wish you the best in what I am sure will be your appointments to the posts.

So with that, the record will remain open for questions until noon on Monday, July 27.

This hearing is adjourned.

[Whereupon, at 3:41 p.m., the hearing was adjourned.]

ADDITIONAL MATERIAL SUBMITTED FOR THE RECORD

RESPONSES OF JAMES DESMOND MELVILLE, JR., NOMINATED TO BE AMBASSADOR TO THE REPUBLIC OF ESTONIA, TO QUESTIONS FROM MEMBERS OF THE COMMITTEE

AMBASSADOR-DESIGNATE MELVILLE'S RESPONSES
TO QUESTIONS FROM SENATOR MENENDEZ

Question. The OIG gave our Embassy in Tallinn a "D" grade last month, citing serious concerns about maintenance and security issues, finding that it does not meet—and cannot be retrofitted to meet—even the most basic security standards. Despite this, the Embassy was taken off the "Top 80" OBO Capital Security Construction Program.

◆ Please explain why that is the case. If confirmed, how will you make securing our Embassy in Tallinn a priority of the U.S. Government?

Answer. If confirmed, keeping personnel safe and secure will be one of my highest priorities. Based on its security risk rating relative to other posts, Tallinn did not score high enough on the Department's September 2013 Risk Matrix to be placed on the Department's Top 80 List. Hence it is not scheduled for a New Embassy Compound (NEC) on the current Capital Security Construction Program (CSCP) schedule. The Bureau of Diplomatic Security is currently conducting its annual

update to its Risk Matrix, which will be the basis for a revised Top 80 List and CSCP schedule. The Department does, however, have projects underway and plans to improve Embassy Tallinn's physical and security infrastructure.

Understanding that the Department has a prioritization process, OBO continues to improve the security and physical infrastructure of Embassy Tallinn to the extent possible. If confirmed, I will work with my colleagues in the Department of State to keep U.S. personnel serving in Tallinn safe and secure.

RESPONSES OF KATHLEEN ANN DOHERTY, NOMINATED TO BE AMBASSADOR TO THE
REPUBLIC OF CYPRUS, TO QUESTIONS FROM MEMBERS OF THE COMMITTEE

AMBASSADOR-DESIGNATE DOHERTY'S RESPONSES
TO QUESTIONS FROM SENATOR MENENDEZ

Question. Is the Cyprus problem, at its core, one of invasion and occupation?

Answer. The Cyprus problem is rooted in a complicated history, which has resulted in the presence of U.N. peacekeeping forces; the division of the island, and the presence of Turkish troops in the north. Outstanding issues related to these events, including properties and the presence of foreign troops, must be addressed in the context of the settlement process. We remain focused on supporting efforts to achieve a just and lasting settlement. The U.S. Government has consistently sought to use language to describe these events that would enable us to play an effective role in support of that process. Like you, we believe that Cyprus is poised for tremendous economic growth and opportunity, and we look forward to working together to unlock the island's great potential.

Question. Do you support lifting the arms embargo on Cyprus?

Answer. I believe we should have normal trade and security relations with all of our European Union partners. The United States is actively supporting efforts to achieve a just and comprehensive settlement, which would obviate the rationale and statutory requirements for special procedures for arms exports to Cyprus. Until then, we will continue to license, on a case-by-case basis, exports to Cyprus of defense articles in accordance with the existing statutory framework.

Question. What will the U.S. position be if Turkey isn't willing to honor an agreement between Greek Cypriots and Turkish Cypriots to have Turkish troops leave? Will the United States pressure Turkey to honor that agreement?

Answer. The United States would support a settlement that is agreed to by both Greek Cypriots and Turkish Cypriots. We believe Cypriot leadership of the settlement process is critical to its success. Thus, we would actively urge Turkey, and all stakeholders, to respect and support a solution welcomed by both sides, including one in which the sides agreed to address the withdrawal of troops from the island.

RESPONSES OF THOMAS O. MELIA, NOMINATED TO BE ASSISTANT ADMINISTRATOR OF
THE U.S. AGENCY FOR INTERNATIONAL DEVELOPMENT, TO QUESTIONS FROM MEMBERS
OF THE COMMITTEE

ASSISTANT ADMINISTRATOR-DESIGNATE MELIA'S RESPONSES
TO QUESTIONS FROM SENATOR MENENDEZ

Question. Europe and Eurasia Bureau.—With the rise of a belligerent Russia, the E&E Bureau has taken on new prominence, yet the E&E Bureau offices at USAID are offsite. This sends a bad message. If you are confirmed, will you commit to working to move this now much more important bureau to offices within the USAID headquarters building?

Answer. If confirmed, I will work with agency officials to ensure that the E&E bureau's space needs are adequately addressed consistent with the challenges of finding appropriate space for all the agency's personnel.

ASSISTANT ADMINISTRATOR-DESIGNATE MELIA'S RESPONSES
TO QUESTIONS FROM SENATOR PERDUE

Question. Please describe your top three priorities for your role, if confirmed.

Answer. As I mentioned in my testimony, the Europe and Eurasia region faces heightened political, economic, and energy challenges at present. If confirmed, I will bring the Europe & Eurasia (E&E) Bureau's considerable expertise to bear as the

United States elevates its support for Ukraine, Moldova, and Georgia to counter Russian aggression and continue to advance a Europe whole, free, and at peace.

I will continue to prioritize the E&E Bureau's work across the region on Democracy, Human Rights and Governance, Economic Growth, and Energy Security. All three of these areas are mutually reinforcing and are critical to the short- and longer-term development of countries across the region, helping to make them more stable and resilient to external pressure.

If confirmed, I will also continue to advance USAID's new model of development by leveraging partnerships with the private sector, universities, and civil society; promoting science, technology, and innovation; and focusing on sustainable results through rigorous monitoring and evaluation of our work. In addition, if confirmed, I will seek closer partnership with like-minded partners, including support for countries in the region seeking further Euro-Atlantic integration.

Question. If confirmed, what could Congress do to help USAID Europe and Eurasia better meet your goals and mission?

Answer. Congress has long played a critical role in helping to advance the U.S. objective of a Europe whole, free, and at peace—and particularly during the crisis of the past 2 years as Russia's aggressive behavior has obliged us to reinvigorate our efforts to assist the countries transitioning from communism.

As I stated in my testimony, having worked for more than 5 years for Senator Daniel Patrick Moynihan, I understand and appreciate the important role that Congress plays in the development and execution of U.S. foreign policy. The Congress is the democratic fulcrum that ensures our international policies are leveraged to properly protect American values and remain focused on core national interests. Congress has long played a critical role in helping to advance the U.S. objective of a Europe whole, free, and at peace. If confirmed, it will be a priority for me to work closely with members this committee and with others in Congress to address the challenges we face in Europe and Eurasia.

Question. The Foreign Relations Committee is working to draft legislation to help tackle corruption in Ukraine and assist in their economic recovery. What recommendations would you have for this legislation, pertaining to USAID efforts?

Answer. As I noted in my testimony, I am grateful for the strong bipartisan support that the Congress has shown Ukraine and for the consistently strong position regarding the need for the Ukrainian Government to take concrete measures to address corruption. If confirmed, I look forward to working closely with the committee and others in Congress to identify additional tools and resources to support the Government of Ukraine's efforts to address endemic corruption.

It is important to recognize the whole-of-government approach required to tackle corruption. USAID, along with colleagues across the U.S. Government, is working closely with the Ukrainian Government, the Verkhovna Rada and Ukrainian civil society to address the long-standing challenge of combating corruption in Ukraine. The impact of corruption on Ukraine's economy over the past two decades has been far reaching and has left Ukraine with a weakened economy, preventing sustainable growth and prosperity for the Ukrainian people.

USAID's efforts are closely linked to State Department and Justice Department efforts to support the Prosecutor General's Office (PGO) and National Anti-Corruption Bureau of Ukraine (NABU) to ensure the Government of Ukraine prosecutes corruption, as a real deterrent to corrupt practices. USAID also continues to support civil society actors as they hold the Government of Ukraine accountable and advocate for reforms.

It is also worth noting that the new Ukrainian Government has taken steps to put in place a strategy and laws to fight corruption, including setting up a new independent National Anti-Corruption Bureau, ensuring that politicians and government officials disclose their assets and recently standing up new patrol police in Kiev. To support this effort, since the Maidan, the U.S. Government has provided \$38 million in assistance including: technical assistance; support to establish new agencies; and support for civil society and media engagement on passage, enactment, and implementation of anticorruption measures and key reforms.

Question. What progress has Ukraine made under President Poroshenko on fighting corruption? How is USAID helping with this effort?

Answer. Corruption is a central challenge for Ukraine, and it must be addressed in order for Ukraine's reforms and progress to be sustainable. Eliminating opportunities for corruption is an overarching and cross-cutting focus of all of USAID's programming in Ukraine from agriculture, to energy, to health. For example, USAID works with Ukraine's judiciary to promote greater transparency and accountability of judicial institutions and reduce opportunities for corruption. USAID supports the

development and implementation of merit-based judicial selection and standardized judicial discipline procedures and monitoring by civil society organizations of judicial selection and discipline processes. USAID also works with Ukraine's Parliament to advance an anticorruption framework and legislation, and to increase understanding of the national budget process for both parliamentarians and the public.

USAID's support to civil society fosters citizen activism and participation in policymaking, and helps civil society organizations monitor the government, which directly ties into anticorruption efforts by enhancing government accountability. I understand that USAID has promoted reforms through a broad coalition of civic activists and experts, who have played a significant role in driving many of the government's major anticorruption achievements to date. These achievements include the creation of a national anticorruption strategy, reform of the public procurement system, the creation of a National Anti-Corruption Bureau and National Agency for the Prevention of Corruption, strengthened antimoney laundering regulations, official asset disclosure laws, and partial judicial reform, including reform of the Prosecutor General's office. USAID also works to improve the quality of local media and investigative journalism to promote government accountability and enhance the transparency of public activities.

The Group of States against Corruption (GRECO), the Council of Europe's corruption watchdog, said Ukraine had fulfilled 20 of 25 recommendations the group made, marking considerable progress over the past year. However, full implementation of these anticorruption reforms will be critical to Ukraine's long-term success.

Question. What conditionality would you recommend to ensure that Ukraine's anticorruption efforts are successful?

Answer. It is my understanding that the United States and international partners are working closely with the Ukrainian Government and civil society to incentivize Ukraine's efforts to address corruption. A key element is conditionality on U.S. and international financing (macroeconomic support) to Ukraine. Major structural reforms required for IMF, U.S., and other international support include: governance reforms, including anticorruption and judicial measures, deregulation and tax administration reforms, and reforms of state-owned enterprises to improve corporate governance and reduce fiscal risks. Broader energy sector reforms, including Naftogaz's restructuring, are intended to increase energy efficiency and foster energy independence. The loan guarantees signed by the United States and Ukraine also included conditionality focused on two new Ukrainian anticorruption agencies, the establishment of the National Agency on Prevention of Corruption (NAPC) and ensuring that the Ukraine's National Anti-Corruption Bureau (NAB) has the necessary startup resources to begin investigations and operations to combat corruption. To fulfill loan guarantee conditionally Ukraine also passed a new State Procurement Law to strengthen governance and checks and balances, including by reducing exemptions from competitive processes.

Question. How long do you think that the United States and EU will need to commit to ensure Ukraine develops the proper rule of law and sufficient economic growth?

Answer. The United States is strongly committed to support Ukraine's short, medium, and long term reform efforts in the area of rule of law. The United States partners with the European Union and other international donors to work collaboratively in support of these reforms. Over the past year, the Government of Ukraine (GOU) has achieved some progress in this area—such as instituting merit-based tests for judges. However, there is still significant work to be done to reform the judiciary and establish a credible rule of law in Ukraine. Both the U.S., EU, and international community understand that reforming the rule of law in Ukraine is a long-term process given the deteriorating effects of more than 20 years of entrenched corruption in the rule of law sector and of longer term legacies from the Soviet era that continue to distort the justice system in Ukraine.

USAID is well-positioned to support the GOU in developing the rule of law in Ukraine, and has provided key technical support in informing the GOU about the lustration efforts and models that were developed in Eastern Europe after the fall of communism in the early 1990s. For example, USAID rule of law efforts established objective reappointment criteria that are being used to vet judges. The Agency also works with civil society organizations and media professionals to engage various audiences outside of the judiciary and justice sector to build demand for the rule of law in Ukrainian society.

The United States is similarly engaged, taking short, medium, and longer term steps to strengthen Ukraine's economy. Ukraine has suffered from decades of economic mismanagement and corruption and its economy has been severely impacted

by the eurozone crisis. More recently, Russian aggression, including the use of energy, trade, and finance as weapons, has led to further economic contraction. Given these challenges, USAID, as part of the broader U.S. Government effort, is committed to working with the GOU, and partners like the EU, to take steps to strengthen the Ukrainian economy today and into the future.

Question. What safeguards are in place to ensure that U.S. foreign assistance to Ukraine is not diverted into the pockets of corrupt officials? Do you believe more could be done on this front?

Answer. My understanding is that the majority of U.S. assistance to Ukraine is given in the form of technical, or advisory, assistance rather than direct assistance to the Government of Ukraine. I have been assured that when assistance is, in fact, provided to the GOU, it is accompanied by rigorous oversight measures on the part of the USAID mission, including funding for independent civil society watchdogs to ensure greater accountability and transparency. If confirmed as Assistant Administrator, I will place a premium on safeguarding all taxpayer investments in the region through robust oversight, including strong fiduciary controls, and rigorous monitoring and evaluation.

Question. What USAID programs can be used to help in President Poroshenko's "de-oligarchization" effort?

Answer. Improvements to economic governance are the key to curbing the influence of oligarchs in the economy. This includes removing barriers to business start-ups; increasing transparency and uniform enforcement of laws and regulations that govern the business sector; and adopting and enforcing strong antimonopoly, competition policy, and antitrust legislation. Changes to the legal and regulatory regime are important but the creation and strengthening of the institutions that implement and enforce the rules is a more difficult task that requires changing the attitudes and behavior of underpaid and poorly trained civil servants at all levels.

I understand that USAID has received a request from the Government of Ukraine (GOU) to provide technical assistance in privatizing state-owned companies, and is exploring ways to support this request. USAID personnel have deep expertise in this area and could provide technical assistance working with the GOU to ensure that tender documents reflect accurate valuation and that competitions are free and fair. Other municipal entities in Ukraine have requested USAID assistance in "de-oligarchizing" unfair concession agreements so that contracts provide value to citizens, rather than funnel money uniquely to oligarchs.

Question. What effect, if any, have U.S. Sanctions against Russia had on Ukraine? What could be done to mitigate negative effects?

Answer. As I understand the situation, an important part of the U.S. assistance program is aimed at helping Ukraine reorient its trade and become less reliant on the Russian market and therefore less vulnerable to Russia's abrupt and punitive cutoffs of trade with Ukraine, a tactic Russia has frequently used to pressure Ukraine before and since the imposition of international sanctions against Russia for its aggression against its neighbor. This includes not only the considerable work with European nations to provide reverse flow of natural gas to assist Ukraine during the winter seasons, but also assistance to help Ukrainian firms meet Western product standards and improve their productivity and competitiveness; building business linkages and relationship in new markets; helping the government develop and implement a sound export promotion strategy; improving trade policy, including better capacity to utilize understanding of WTO rules and procedures; and enhancing trade facilitation to reduce the time and cost of getting goods across borders.

Question. What efforts, specifically, is USAID taking to spark or support FDI by the private sector both from the EU and other developed nations? What industries or economic sectors do you see as the best potentialities for these efforts?

Answer. The most important step that any country in this region can take to attract foreign direct investment (FDI) is to make meaningful and visible improvements in the business enabling environment. Potential investors need to know that the host country government truly welcomes investors and protects their rights. A significant focus of the U.S. assistance program in the Europe and Eurasia region is aimed at improving economic governance. While there are significant differences between countries, the most promising sectors in the region include agriculture and agro-processing, energy, information technology, light manufacturing, and tourism.

For example, in Ukraine, the sectors with the greatest potential for FDI are agriculture production and processing, energy, information technology, health, and transportation infrastructure roads, highways, rail, ports, and commodity storage. With a focus on small- and medium-sized enterprises in the agricultural sector, I

understand that USAID supports partnerships in developing Ukraine's agriculture sector to spur economic growth that increases competitiveness, productivity, employment, and incomes. USAID's goal is to work with private sector partners to promote agricultural development by leveraging the expertise of commercial partnerships to benefit small- and medium-sized enterprises in productive and profitable ways.

Question. How is/does USAID (intend to) work with the EU, the IMF, and DOS to insure that USAID funds are not allotted in a duplicative manner? To what extent does USAID work in conjunction with the EU, the IMF, and DOS to prevent duplication of efforts and funds?

Answer. USAID participates in broad donor coordination, including the EU, IMF, multilateral organizations, and bilateral donors in the field across Europe and Eurasia. This is done regularly on a sector-by-sector basis to ensure complementarity and effective use of resources. For example, with respect to coordination with the Department of State and the broader interagency, coordination on assistance and funds in Ukraine is done in Washington through the State Department's Assistance Coordinator for Europe and Eurasia (State/EUR/ACE) and in Kiev through the U.S. Embassy's special coordinator for assistance, retired ambassador Clifford Bond. USAID's guidance for developing Country Development Cooperation Strategies (CDCS) and project design documents includes mandatory sections on donor cooperation to promote collaboration and guard against duplication.

Question. The Department of State's 2014 Trafficking in Persons report cites Ukraine and other E&E countries in the Tier 2 and Watch List categories, meaning they have made commitments to pursue significant efforts to reduce trafficking. What USAID programs are helping to combat human trafficking and verify these efforts? In your opinion, what more could be done by USAID to address this problem?

USAID has committed to playing a vital role in international efforts to counter all forms of human trafficking. Through the adoption of its code of conduct in compliance with Executive Order 13627, USAID has pledged to incorporate a standard trafficking in persons clause into all of its acquisition and assistance instruments.

My understanding is that missions are expected to support the implementation of the Countering Trafficking in Persons (C-TIP) Code of Conduct and to identify opportunities to strengthen anti-TIP efforts in their respective missions. Especially in Tier 2 Watch List and Tier 3 countries, missions are encouraged to develop anti-TIP strategies across all technical areas and integrate anti-TIP components into ongoing programming. To support these efforts, the Europe and Eurasia Bureau has developed a Toolkit for Integrating C-TIP into Cross-Sectoral Programming in Europe and Eurasia.

At the regional level, USAID has projects in five countries: Azerbaijan, Belarus, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Moldova, and Ukraine:

In Azerbaijan. USAID provides assistance victims of human trafficking and forced labor, through the provision of technical and financial assistance to NGO-run shelters for female, male, and child victims of human trafficking and forced labor.

In Belarus. USAID works to strengthen government agencies and civil society organizations to counter TIP. The project has two objectives: (1) containing TIP through prevention and protection activities; (2) and capacity-building for domestic stakeholders. The project is also supporting civil society organizations to strengthen their role in countertrafficking efforts.

In Bosnia and Herzegovina. USAID supports the Ministry of Security and the Department for Combating Trafficking in Human Beings to carry out their strategy and action plan. The goal of the assistance is to strengthen the capacities of C-TIP institutions and organizations to adopt and implement more effective policies, laws, and regulations to provide better protection and assistance to the TIP victims. USAID's support will help Bosnia and Herzegovina implement 18 out of 33 strategic goals of the strategy.

In Moldova. USAID addresses trafficking issues by working to strengthen and improve the capacity of justice sector institutions to respond to the needs of victims in a more transparent and accountable manner. USAID support has improved the knowledge of judges and prosecutors to investigate and classify trafficking as well as assisted the National Institute of Justice to develop a C-TIP curriculum for in-service training of judges and prosecutors.

In Ukraine. USAID and the Department of State work to strengthen the Government of Ukraine's capacity to undertake countertrafficking work, including prosecution and prevention and reintegration assistance to victims of trafficking under the institutionalized framework of the National Referral Mechanism (NRM). Additionally, U.S. Government programs work to build local capacity and support for tar-

geted prevention programs and strengthen the capacities of law enforcement to investigate and prosecute trafficking crimes.

Question. What current USAID missions in Ukraine have been affected by Russian aggression in the past year? Have these instances affected project design for future missions? If so, how would you address these interruptions?

Answer. Following the Maidan, USAID has strategically refocused several programs in Ukraine to respond to the rapidly changing environment in Ukraine which has been impacted by increased Russian aggression, the conflict in Ukraine's east, and the severely weakened Ukrainian economy.

For example, I understand that the USAID economic growth programming for the financial sector was affected by conditions on the ground and as the GOU reprioritized its most pressing needs. USAID has strategically considered the priorities for the current and anticipated environment and needs of the GOU, not only for the financial sector, but across sectors to ensure that assistance programs are impactful and well targeted. My understanding is that USAID has been addressing such interruptions by assessing how other programs may be able to extend assistance, considering headquarters (Washington, DC)-managed regional mechanisms, and using other tools to fill gaps and address short-term assistance needs.

Question. What role is USAID playing in providing humanitarian assistance to those areas of eastern Ukraine affected by the war? What are the biggest problems? Is more funding needed?

Answer. The presence of more than 1 million registered internally displaced persons (IDPs) in Ukraine is a major potential source of instability. Tensions emanate from competition over resources and economic opportunity, social integration of IDPs, and diminishing morale and confidence in the Ukrainian state. The lawless environment, unstable security situation, and bureaucratic restrictions have severely disrupted freedom of movement into and out of the nongovernment controlled areas (NCGAs) of Eastern Ukraine, affecting civilians' access to critical services, income, and basic goods. The elderly, persons with disabilities, families with children, and people in institutional care, many of whom are unable to flee, are extremely vulnerable. Hospitals and clinics are only partially operational due to lack of medicines, medical supplies, and personnel, as well as damage and destruction.

Although some international organizations and NGOs are currently able to operate in NCGAs, their status is precarious, in part due to the security situation and new registration requirements by separatist authorities' increasing interference by separatist authorities. The needs of the displaced population outside of the conflict zone have outstripped the response capacity of the local government and civil society and volunteer groups. IDP reception centers and local governments are overwhelmed, under-resourced and under-prepared for possible high levels of new arrivals. Burdensome administrative processes, challenges in replacing lost documentation, the poor state of the economy, and competition over limited resources continues to restrict the ability of IDPs to get jobs, housing, and access government IDP benefits. Further, there is a near total lack of direct service provision for survivors of gender-based violence.

To respond to these challenges, the U.S. Government has provided \$61.5 million in humanitarian assistance in FY 2014 and FY 2015, including \$27.4 million from USAID.

USAID has provided food, shelter, water supplies, cash resources for local procurement of food, psychosocial support, and livelihood assistance to the most vulnerable conflict-affected populations, including children, the elderly, and female-headed households.

Before the humanitarian response was fully operational, USAID helped catalyze assistance to communities responding to the displacement crisis and has since committed \$10.2 million to help communities and government at the local and national level to mitigate deepened social tensions in conflict-affected communities in the east, and to increase access to information and inform public debate on the crisis. The Agency is also committing \$3 million to support help Ukraine's health sector efforts in addressing psychosocial trauma and support physical rehabilitation for people with disabilities.

If confirmed, I will work with my team, and with the Congress, to assess the needs on the ground and mobilize the requisite resources.

Question. What role do you foresee USAID playing in helping Ukraine hold free and fair elections later this year? Under what conditions would USAID be able to help separatists?

Answer. I understand that USAID intends to provide assistance in training election commissions and educating voters and other stakeholders on an entirely new

system for local elections. The Agency's programming will also support robust election oversight, including comprehensive monitoring by Ukrainian civil society. In the lead up to the elections, USAID has assisted and supported civil society engagement in improving election legislation and is supporting efforts to reform political and campaign finance. USAID programs encourage political parties and candidates to be more responsive to citizens and to engage more constructively with civic organizations and local officials between elections. I understand that USAID is providing approximately \$3.1 million in assistance related to the upcoming local elections. Any local elections in the nongovernment controlled areas in the east would have to be conducted according to Ukrainian law and OSCE/ODIHR standards.

Question. How is USAID working to help Ukraine achieve an independent and effective judicial system?

Answer. USAID has been working with the Government of Ukraine (GOU) to develop an independent and efficient judicial system, by supporting judicial self-governance in Ukraine to help insulate the judiciary from political influence. This includes budget independence, disciplining of judges, judicial education, as well as the development of court administration functions. I understand that USAID has supported amendments to the Law on the Judiciary and the Status of Judges and the Law on the High Council of Justice. Additionally, USAID supports efforts to strengthen the institutional capacity of the High Qualifications Commission by supporting clear standards for transferring judges; automating the judicial qualifications exam; training judicial inspectors and establishing standards for adjudicating judicial misconduct; and developing an integrated system for managing judicial selection and discipline procedures. All of these efforts are aimed at helping Ukraine develop an independent and effective judicial system.

In 2015, several notable achievements have occurred in the sector, many of which were directly supported by USAID assistance: the Verkhovna Rada passed the Law on Fair Trial, signed into law in March 2015; the GOU passed the Justice Sector Reform Strategy in May 2015; the High Council of Justice is now operational again as of June 2015, after being blocked for over a year, and is proceeding to consider a backlog of cases regarding approval of transfer, reprimand, and dismissal of judges; and the judiciary amendments to the constitution have been drafted and the Venice Commission issued a preliminary opinion on July 24 positively assessing the judicial amendments to the constitution with some key recommendations to further improve these amendments. The success of these current interventions will be both the foundations for genuine rule of law reform, and serve as indicators for progress, such as judiciary amendments to the constitution, and the GOU's ability to reform core judicial functions and roles, including lustration of judges and limiting judicial immunity.

Question. Given that Ukraine's current natural gas exchange with Gazprom, as well as imports from Poland, Hungary, and Slovakia, is a temporary solution at best, what is USAID doing to address the short-term "reverse-flow" supply shortage of natural gas?

Answer. USAID support to Ukraine is part of a broad U.S. interagency and multidonor effort that balances near term priorities with longer term development needs, focusing on areas of greatest impact. The Department of Energy and the State Department Energy and Natural Resources Bureau are focused on improved natural gas production and alternative supply arrangements.

USAID continues to focus on near term activities to lessen external energy market pressure on Ukraine, specifically through the stabilization of Ukraine's power sector in light of external pressure on fuel supply; and providing legal regulatory support to move Ukraine into European Union energy markets and offering protections associated with inclusion in a larger market.

My understanding is that medium- to long-term activities focus on setting the groundwork for Ukraine to upgrade its energy sector to modern standards, specifically through improving the investment environment necessary for energy supply diversification and energy efficiency; and improving energy sector governance to help curb corrupt practices and wasteful mismanagement.

Question. In the latest USAID-Department of State (DOS) joint strategic plan, USAID and DOS list Strategic Goal 3 as promoting a transition to "low-emission, climate resilient" energy projects. Considering the dire economic situation in Ukraine, Kosovo, Bosnia, and Herzegovina and others, as well as the precarious energy situation in light of Russian energy dependence and aggression, do you see this as a viable economic goal for these countries? What research is USAID doing to compare the immediate cost-benefit and investment necessary for pursuing "green" tech-

nologies over other more cost-effective sources of power that could help jumpstart these economies?

Answer. USAID seeks to support the mutually reinforcing goals of enhanced energy security, EU integration, and accelerated transition to a sustainable, clean energy economy throughout the region, following five key tenets:

1. Diversification of energy imports and domestic supplies is essential to reduce vulnerability to potential disruptions.
2. Integrated regional electricity and gas networks and markets are needed to enhance security, foster energy development, and tap economies of scale.
3. Rational energy pricing and harmonized, transparent energy regulatory frameworks are required to attract private investment to modernize energy infrastructure and develop new supplies.
4. Improved energy efficiency and renewable energy development can contribute to enhancing energy security as well as increased competitiveness, sustainable economic growth and GHG emissions reduction.
5. Addressing the energy needs of low income and vulnerable populations is a necessary component of an overall energy reform program.

USAID works toward these objectives through support of the Energy Community Treaty, which seeks to harmonize energy and environmental practices and regulations of the Contracting Parties of the Balkans and Eastern Europe countries with those of the European Union. Accomplishing this goal would modernize energy governance in the E&E region and link E&E countries to the EU internal energy market, enhancing energy security and encouraging investment, regardless of the chosen electric generation technology.

Question. Kosovo has suffered from shortcomings in the rule of law, including corruption and organized crime. What role is USAID playing to help Kosovo in this area? What results have been achieved?

Answer. USAID has been supporting Kosovo's justice sector since Kosovo gained its de facto independence from the former Yugoslav Republic. USAID helped establish the Kosovo Judicial Council (KJC) and worked to support the Kosovo Prosecutorial Council, Kosovo Judicial Institute, Ministry of Justice and other justice sector institutions. The Agency played a key role in the process of judicial reappointments and vetting of judges in Kosovo. Through its efforts with the KJC, USAID has helped the Kosovar judiciary develop objective and transparent performance criteria to allow judges to do their work more effectively and efficiently. The Agency has also been working to reduce the backlog of cases in Kosovo, introduce more effective case management techniques, and professionalize the cadre of court administrators and managers. By introducing more transparent and streamlined court and case management techniques, USAID has helped to reduce opportunities for corruption in the judiciary in Kosovo. For example, I understand that through one USAID program the KJC drafted and approved its first strategic plan since 2007, providing the courts a roadmap to improve the work and independence of the judiciary and implemented a backlog reduction strategy, including a case tracking database to register all current and pending court cases. Over 20,000 cases have been reviewed and over 5,000 cases have been closed. In addition, 18 courts have been refurbished in compliance with international standards, significantly increasing court staff efficiency, public accessibility, and accommodation for persons with disabilities.

Question. How do USAID programs help the nation of Georgia reduce its economic and energy dependence on Russia?

Answer. My understanding is that USAID's programs in Georgia are oriented around the goal of strengthening and sustaining a democratic, free-market, Western-oriented transformation in that country. Specific components of the Economic Growth program seek to improve the business enabling environment for trade and investment and strengthen ties with the West. This includes support for harmonization of Georgia's laws and regulations with its Deep and Comprehensive Free Trade Agreement (DCFTA) with the European Union, promotion of East-West trade via the New Silk Road linking the Black Sea to Central and East Asia, and development of policies and regulations in the energy sector to promote energy security and regional trade of electricity.

Contributions by USAID and other donors have helped Georgia to reduce its dependency on Russia in the areas of fossil fuels, oil and gas, through the establishment of the Southern Corridor for oil and gas. Over the last decade USAID/Georgia installed gas pipelines from Azerbaijan; built electricity infrastructure; leveraged hundreds of millions of dollars in private financing for hydropower generation; and built the capacity of the Ministry of Energy, the energy regulator, the Transmission System Operators and other stakeholders to assess, model, plan, and implement all

the steps necessary to set up an open electricity market. Current assistance is devoted to increasing energy efficiency.

In the gas sector, by laying pipeline to transport gas from Azerbaijan through Georgia, the country has already decreased its reliance on Russian exports. In 2013 Georgia imported 27 percent less gas from Russian and 1,052 percent more gas from Azerbaijan than it had in 2010 when USAID assistance began.

In the electricity sector, USAID is helping transition the country into an open-market system in which Georgia is able to trade freely with Turkey. By opening the Georgian market to Turkey, Georgia will be able to access the wider European market for exports of its native hydrogeneration resources, and in so doing, will invite increased foreign, likely European, investments in hydrogeneration within its borders—and decrease dependency on Russian trade. Increased hydrogeneration capacity within Georgia and a direct connection to European markets will significantly decrease, if not eliminate, the country's remaining reliance on Russian electricity markets.

Question. Is Georgia making progress in creating an independent judiciary? How is USAID helping Georgia develop a depoliticized judicial system?

Answer. I believe that Georgia is making progress to create a more independent judiciary, but challenges remain to further strengthen its judiciary. USAID has played a leadership role in supporting Georgia's efforts to develop an independent judicial system for more than a decade. Specifically, USAID efforts have strengthened the High Council of Justice (HCOJ), the High School of Justice (HSOJ), as well as the Ministry of Justice (MOJ), the Legal Aid Service (LAS), and the National Center for the Development of the Quality in Education (NCDQE). Institutional independence of the judiciary insulates judges from political influence and coercion. I understand that USAID has engaged with a number of prominent NGOs, such as the Eurasia Partnership Foundation (EPF) and its affiliate the Caucasus Resource Research Center (CRRRC), as well as the Georgian Young Lawyers Association (GYLA), and Transparency International (TI) to provide external oversight of the judiciary and make the system more transparent to the public and reduce opportunities for abuse and corruption. Most recently, the composition of the High Council of Justice was changed to bring in members of civil society, which reduces political control of the Chair of the Supreme Court.

Question. What lessons can USAID learn from programs in Georgia in the wake of Russian aggression that it could apply to Ukraine?

Answer. My understanding is that USAID's efforts in Georgia have informed how USAID addresses similar challenges in Ukraine. In response to a crisis like we saw in Georgia in 2008 and in Ukraine today, timely, coordinated assistance, based on an assessment of needs can have powerful and lasting impacts. For example, USG contributions to economic stabilization in Georgia, combined with those of other partners, likely prevented a much deeper and more drawn out economic decline, in the face of both conflict and global recession. Years later, beneficiaries are aware and appreciative of U.S. emergency humanitarian and long-term development assistance.

One of the greatest challenges facing Ukraine is the legacy of corruption. Georgia has demonstrated that the best way to fight corruption is to get out in front of the problem and put in place systems for transparency and proactive disclosure of information. USAID has been instrumental in helping to put many of these systems into place. This includes strengthening the professionalism of the State Audit Office so that it can exercise its independence, working with the Ministry of Justice to enhance freedom of information requirements, expanding the use of open government data through Georgia's open data portal, helping the Competition and State Procurement Agency stand up a Dispute Resolution Board, and setting the stage for a new civil service legal framework based on open competition and consistent standards. Many of these activities were coupled with grants to civil society to monitor compliance and hold government accountable to its promises.

Question. What is your opinion of USAID Forward and other reform efforts? If so, how do you see these reforms being implemented in Eastern European and Eurasian nations specifically?

Answer. I understand that USAID has implemented a series of reforms over the last several years, known collectively as USAID Forward. By all accounts, these reforms have strengthened the Agency's focus on results, partnership, and innovation over the past 5 years. USAID now has in place a rigorous and transparent process for designing strategies and projects while evaluating their achievement of results in a more focused and selective manner. Its partnership agenda has grown substantially. USAID's direct partnering with local actors and local systems, which has al-

most doubled since 2010, reflects the Agency's commitment to creating processes whereby countries own, resource, and sustain their development. It has also increased its emphasis on innovative approaches through the use of science, technology and open innovation.

Regarding implementation of USAID Forward in Europe and Eurasia, I understand that efforts are furthering collaboration among external partners, leveraging additional resources, and increasing innovation through two Science, Technology, Innovation and Partnership (STIP) leader Missions. Public-private partnerships in the region are highly leveraged and direct support to local organizations has increased tremendously.

Additionally, USAID's development projects are designed with monitoring mechanisms at the forefront, allowing for objective evidence-based evaluations of development projects and for ensuring a responsible use of resources. Evaluations are used in the region to not only track progress and results, but to provide evidence that will inform management decisions for improvements that are needed, and to inform follow on or future programming.

Question. Specifically, what is your plan for implementing "local solutions" to promote country ownership while also ensuring reasonable accountability measures? Do you believe these two goals are compatible for Ukraine in its current state?

Answer. I understand that USAID is committed to enabling countries to lead, resource, and sustain their own development. This is a commitment I share and, if confirmed, will prioritize in Europe and Eurasia. I agree that country ownership should be at the core of how USAID does business. At the same time, USAID should and does exercise robust oversight and maintain appropriate fiduciary controls to safeguard taxpayer dollars and ensure prudent investments with an increased emphasis on solid project design with clear purpose and measures of progress and evidence-based monitoring and evaluation.

With regard to Ukraine specifically, my understanding is that USAID integrates anticorruption activities into every project design in Ukraine. For example, anticorruption measures are included in programs to support the judiciary, education, health/pharmaceutical procurement, e-governance, permitting, financial disclosure, and energy, agriculture, and economic development.

After many years of false starts, under the current government in Kiev, the world is beginning to see progress on implementation of anticorruption reforms in Ukraine. More than a dozen key pieces of legislation have been passed, including laws to establish the National Anti-Corruption Bureau (NABU) and the National Anti-Corruption Prevention Agency (NAPC). The Ukrainian government is in the process of standing up these two agencies, which are critical to fighting corruption.

USAID has bolstered monitoring and independent evaluations in the region by organizing monitoring workshops for implementing partner staff, and contracting for independent evaluations of its programs to ensure intended impact, including three such evaluations in Ukraine last year. If confirmed, I will build on these efforts to strengthen the monitoring and evaluation of Agency programming, including in Ukraine.

Question. Historically, some have cited tensions between USAID and the Department of State, stating that USAID efforts are often supplanted by the diplomatic imperatives of DOS. Do you feel this is the case? If so, other than publishing the joint strategic plan every 5 years, how else do you plan to work with DOS to ensure that USAID missions are not sidelined?

Answer. All agencies report to the President of the United States and seek to implement his articulated policies. While each agency has its distinct role to play, I believe that the inevitable tensions that emerge in large organizations can be effectively mitigated and minimized through personal diplomacy and a tone of collaboration and complementarity that is set by senior officials. During my time at the Department of State, from 2010 to 2015, I actively reached out to USAID and to other agencies—including the Department of Defense, the Department of Justice, and of course, the National Security Council staff—to ensure that funded programs and diplomatic initiatives were mutually understood and reinforced. This included joint missions to a number of countries in the E&E region, including with the previous Assistant Administrator, Paige Alexander, and other counterparts across the U.S. Government. These visits were, in my opinion, valuable in enhancing collaboration and finding an appropriate balance between diplomatic imperatives and development goals. If confirmed, I hope to continue this practice with colleagues at the Department of State and other U.S. agencies.

