

BUSINESS MEETING

Thursday, April 15, 2021

U.S. SENATE
COMMITTEE ON FOREIGN RELATIONS
Washington, D.C.

The committee met, pursuant to notice, at 11:07 a.m., in Room SD-106, Dirksen Senate Office Building, Hon. Bob Menendez, chairman of the committee, presiding.

Present: Senators Menendez [presiding], Cardin, Shaheen, Coons, Kaine, Merkley, Schatz, Van Hollen, Risch, Johnson, Romney, and Cruz.

OPENING STATEMENT OF HON. BOB MENENDEZ, U.S. SENATOR FROM NEW JERSEY

The Chairman: This business meeting of the Senate Foreign Relations Committee will come to order.

This morning, we will consider the nomination of Ambassador Samantha Power to be the administrator of the United States Agency for International Development.

As I stated at her hearing, I believe Ambassador Power's prodigious public service experience and her dedication to the advancement of humanitarian principles make her impeccably qualified to be the next administrator of USAID.

U.S. SENATE COMMITTEE ON FOREIGN RELATIONS
Business Meeting
Thursday April 15, 2021

Upon confirmation, I trust that she will appropriately prioritize and elevate this indispensable and often overlooked development arm of U.S. foreign policy.

This nomination comes before the committee at a crucial time in the agency's tenure. USAID will play a crucial role in directing the U.S. response to some of the most important issues of our time, including COVID-19, global forced migration, climate change, and human and resource-driven conflicts.

Upon confirmation, Ambassador Power will also be charged with strengthening a weakened agency. The past four years have taken their toll on USAID.

Internal morale is wounded. Relationships with implementing partners are increasingly strained, and the politicization of aid has tarnished the United States' reputation as a trustworthy partner.

I am confident that Ambassador Power has the capacity and the capability to address these issues, and I am pleased by her commitment, if confirmed, to engage in frequent and open consultation with Congress.

With that, I would like to recognize our distinguished Ranking Member, Senator Risch, for his comments.

U.S. SENATE COMMITTEE ON FOREIGN RELATIONS

Business Meeting

Thursday April 15, 2021

**STATEMENT OF HON. JAMES E. RISCH,
U.S. SENATOR FROM IDAHO**

Senator Risch: Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

And today, globally, we are in the midst of the worst global pandemic of our generation. Conflict, displacement, hunger, and corruption continue to plague vulnerable populations. Now, more than ever, we need a U.S. development agency that is efficient, effective, and accountable.

Whoever leads USAID must ensure that U.S. foreign assistance is results driven, that it leverages other donors, promotes self-reliance, and creates opportunities for private sector-led growth, and, most importantly, that it ultimately aligns with the national security interests of the American people.

My staff and I have discussed these principles with Ambassador Power at great length. I believe she understands the task at hand. There is no question she has significant qualifications that qualify her for this job.

And while I was not completely satisfied by some of her responses to direct questions, including the need to eliminate cargo preference requirements from emergency food aid, I am reasonably assured she will uphold her promise to work in a bipartisan manner with Congress on this and other issues and as a result, I will be voting for Ambassador Power.

Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

U.S. SENATE COMMITTEE ON FOREIGN RELATIONS
Business Meeting
Thursday April 15, 2021

The Chairman: Thank you, Senator Risch.

Are there any other members wishing to make any comments on this nomination?

[No response.]

The Chairman: Seeing none, we are going to have to wait until we get a sufficient number of members to vote.

So we will hold that in abeyance and I will turn to our next hearing and open up with some introductory comments, and at the appropriate time when we have enough members here we will call the roll when it is appropriate and staff will -- is that enough?

I understand we need one more person. So let me start off making a preparatory comment that has nothing to do with either these nominees or the issue at hand but I think it is compelling to do so.

I understand that we have a quorum now. So based upon that, we will turn to the matter at hand.

All debate has been taken on the nomination of Ambassador Samantha Power to be the administrator of USAID.

U.S. SENATE COMMITTEE ON FOREIGN RELATIONS

Business Meeting

Thursday April 15, 2021

Is there a motion to favorably report the nomination of Ambassador Power to be administrator of the U.S. Agency for International Development by voice vote?

Senator Coons: So moved.

Senator Shaheen: Second.

The Chairman: So moved and seconded. The question is on the motion to favorably report the Power nomination.

All those in favor will say aye.

Those opposed will say nay.

And with it, the ayes have it and the Power nomination is agreed to and will be reported to the full Senate and with a positive recommendation.

That completes the committee's business as it relates to the Power nomination. I thank our colleagues for being here.

[Recess.]

U.S. SENATE COMMITTEE ON FOREIGN RELATIONS

Business Meeting

Thursday April 15, 2021