
**NATIONAL SECURITY
AND FOREIGN POLICY
PRIORITIES IN THE FISCAL
YEAR 2015 INTERNATIONAL
AFFAIRS BUDGET**

Tuesday, April 8, 2014

UNITED STATES SENATE COMMITTEE ON
FOREIGN RELATIONS
113TH Congress, Second Session

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WITNESS

HON. JOHN F. KERRY, Secretary of State, U.S. Department of State, Washington, D.C.

NATIONAL SECURITY AND FOREIGN POLICY PRIORITIES IN THE FISCAL YEAR 2015 INTERNATIONAL AFFAIRS BUDGET

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

1 The committee met, pursuant to notice, at 10:07 a.m. in Room SD-419, Dirksen
2 Senate Office Building, Hon. Robert Menendez, chairman of the committee, presiding.

3 **PRESENT:** Senators Menendez [presiding], Cardin, Shaheen, Udall, Murphy,
4 Kaine, Markey, Corker, Risch, Rubio, Johnson, Flake, McCain, Barrasso, and Paul.

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

5 **THE CHAIRMAN.** Good morning. This hearing of the Senate Foreign Relations
6 Committee will come to order.

7 Mr. Secretary, welcome back to Washington. I understand you have traveled to
8 44 countries, logged in over 855 hours in the air, which translates to an incredible 35
9 days of flying. So I imagine it feels good to have your feet on the ground in a familiar
10 place like this committee which you once chaired.

11 So we look forward to hearing your priorities for the State Department for the
12 coming year. As the situations in the Ukraine, Syria, and Venezuela demonstrate, never
13 has the need for American leadership and engagement in the world been greater.

1 We understand the limitations and constraints that govern the budgetary
2 environment and that getting our fiscal house in order at home is the wellspring from
3 which our national power flows. But in this complex and rapidly changing global
4 environment, we also know that our national security interests are priority number one
5 and they cannot be jeopardize.

6 The \$40.3 billion in base discretionary funding for the Department of State and
7 USAID, equal to the 2014 enacted level, provides solid footing after several years of
8 uncertainty for our international efforts. And the \$5.9 billion for overseas contingency
9 operations activities allow us to continue to address challenges in the Middle East and
10 north Africa, including the Syrian humanitarian crisis, in Afghanistan, and other
11 frontline states.

12 We also need to make sure this budget is structured so that our Nation is capable
13 of meeting the new challenges and opportunities of today's world. And we face many
14 challenging issues, most recently, the menacing threat by Russia in Ukraine, a challenge
15 to its very existence. We can and will continue to stand with the Ukrainian people who
16 by right will choose their own destiny.

17 In addition to authorizing \$1 billion in loan guarantees for Ukraine and other
18 assistance to strengthen civil society and security in the region, we have also given you
19 tools to respond to Russia in the form of sanctions. And our message to President Putin
20 and his cronies must be robust and swift.

1 On Syria, as we commemorate the third anniversary of the uprising, I am pleased
2 that the administration is prioritizing assistance both in humanitarian aid and support
3 for the Syrian opposition. That \$1.7 billion request sends an important signal to the
4 world and to the Syrian people of our commitment. But this leads to a broader
5 question, that we can demonstrate U.S. leadership on humanitarian assistance, but I
6 would like to hear from you, Mr. Secretary, how we are demonstrating and intend to
7 demonstrate leadership in ending this crisis.

8 On Afghanistan and Pakistan, let me say I support the administration's efforts to
9 right-size our investments in the overseas contingency operations account, but in this
10 year of transition, I was hoping that more of that budget could be shifted into the base
11 budget so we could begin to normalize the assistance for these frontline states.

12 We also should take special note of the elections held in Afghanistan this
13 weekend. In the face of intimidation by the Taliban, the Afghan people demonstrated
14 their desire to shape their destiny of their own country. The election was a historic
15 marker in our engagement in Afghanistan, and we are hopeful that the final result will
16 be credible and genuinely reflect the will of the Afghan people.

17 Now, there is a place that I am disappointed in the budget and that is in the
18 western hemisphere. The 2015 request is a \$358 million, or 21 percent, decrease from
19 the fiscal year 2013 budget. I am incredibly troubled that every other major account in

1 the western hemisphere is being cut and that where these programs are coming to an
2 end, there is not a reinvesting in those funds in the region.

3 I do not dispute the importance of other priorities laid out in the administration's
4 proposal, but I have seen year after year after year after year a continuous cut in the
5 hemisphere, and I believe that those cuts lead us to lack a comprehensive approach to
6 Latin America and the necessary resources to back it up. Whether in Central America
7 where nations are facing a crisis of criminal violence and major challenges to
8 governance and the rule of law where Honduras and El Salvador continue to have the
9 world's highest murder rates which undercut economic development in those countries
10 and, in turn, lead to high levels of emigration that directly affect our country, and then
11 threats to democracy, freedom of expression and human rights in our hemisphere from
12 Cuba to Venezuela and Ecuador should be a concern to us. As the volatile situation in
13 Venezuela has shown, undermining democracy can lead to a political crisis and
14 economic instability that has implications for the entire region.

15 So let me close simply by saying the overall budget sets a strong proposed
16 funding level, but along with my concerns about western hemisphere issues, I am also
17 concerned that there are significant reductions in humanitarian assistance and global
18 health accounts. There is a nearly 5 percent cut in global health, with the largest
19 reductions in the Global Fund to Fight AIDS, TB, and malaria.

1 So with those concerns and what I overall find a budget that I can support, I
2 want to thank you, Mr. Secretary, for coming back to the committee. We look forward
3 to hearing your views on all of these areas of concerns. I am sure many members will
4 have many questions outside of the budget as well. And with that, let me turn to
5 Senator Corker for his remarks.

**STATEMENT OF HON. BOB CORKER,
U.S. SENATOR FROM TENNESSEE**

6 **SENATOR CORKER.** Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

7 And I too want to extend my welcome back here. I know you have been doing a
8 lot of traveling.

9 And since we do not really pass budgets or reconcile them and since we have not
10 yet moved to authorizations, although I think we may soon, I am not going to address
11 the budgetary issues but talk about some other policy issues, if I could.

12 Mr. Secretary, we all appreciate so much your willingness to serve in the capacity
13 that you are right now. We all supported you. You had unanimous support of this
14 committee and everybody in the Senate to do what you are doing, and you have
15 certainly gone after it with a tremendous amount of energy.

16 I think there is probably not a person on this committee, in spite of their
17 appreciation for what you are doing, that does not have concerns someplace relative to
18 our foreign policy at present.

1 Syria. This committee strongly supported the authorization for the use of force.
2 The committee passed overwhelmingly support for the opposition. And I think all of us
3 understand today that the smartest thing Assad did for his own self-survival was to kill
4 1,200 people with chemical weapons. We ended up jumping in Syria's lap. We now sit
5 in the back of the bus as Iran and Russia really drive policy in Syria.

6 One of your assistants was up here a few weeks ago and made some really
7 reckless comments about a military strategy, if you will, in Syria and said that they
8 would brief us. We have had no briefing. It has been 2 weeks. And as the chairman
9 mentioned, instead of that, we read about something last night in the "Wall Street
10 Journal" relative to disputes between you and the Pentagon.

11 I do hope today that you will lay out clearly for us in this open setting what our
12 strategy is in Syria and hopefully it is not just allowing people to kill each other off.
13 Since the chemical weapons were used, another 50,000 people have been killed. Barrel
14 bombs are being dropped indiscriminately on populations there. Assad is dragging his
15 feet on alleviating the chemical weapons because he knows that prolongs his survival
16 and continues to allow us, Russia, and Iran to prop him up.

17 So I know there are a lot of concerns about our Syria policy. We have no policy
18 from what I can tell other than, again, allowing people to kill each other off and us
19 making commitments to the opposition that we do not honor and leaving them in

1 refugee camps and basically stranded without the support that we committed to on the
2 front end.

3 In Ukraine, you know, here we have a 40,000 troop buildup. We know per
4 public records Russia is basically paying people to foment violence in the eastern part of
5 the country. I hope that you will address when we will implement the executive order
6 relative to sectoral sanctions. And hopefully that will be this week if they continue to
7 have the buildup that they have. I am confused by the policy. We castigate them on
8 one side. On the other hand, we are exchanging paper with them. I am confused about
9 what our policy really is.

10 In Iran, this is the first administration ever to agree that Iran will enrich uranium.
11 That has never happened in the history of our country, and yet this administration has
12 agreed to that.

13 In Afghanistan, I am concerned that because of a monster that we have created,
14 Karzai, and his actions which are certainly incoherent, I am afraid that we are going to
15 pull out and not do the things that have been so strongly recommended by the
16 Pentagon and others.

17 And in China, in the Senkakus, we have a situation where we have unresolved
18 disputes. We have skirmishes that are occurring. These are the kind of things that
19 create world wars. And yet, our allies are concerned about where our support is. Japan

1 is continuing to move ahead with ways of creating their own abilities to defend
2 themselves.

3 So, Mr. Chairman — Mr. Secretary — excuse me — I have a lot of questions. My
4 sense is that the administration in so many ways, through rhetoric and persuasion,
5 seems to think that people like the leaders of Russia and China and other places
6 respond to nice rhetoric. I do not think that is the case. I am concerned about our
7 policy, and I hope today, due to questioning that I am sure many will have, including
8 me, I hope you will lay out very clearly what our policies are in these areas.

9 Mr. Chairman, I thank you for calling the hearing, and I look forward to our
10 witness.

11 **THE CHAIRMAN.** Thank you, Senator Corker.

12 With that, Mr. Secretary, the floor is yours. Your full statement will be entered
13 into the record, without objection. And we look forward to your statement and then to
14 engaging in a dialogue.

**STATEMENT OF HON. JOHN F. KERRY, SECRETARY OF STATE,
U.S. DEPARTMENT OF STATE, WASHINGTON, D.C.**

15 **SECRETARY KERRY:** Well, thank you, Mr. Chairman, very much, Ranking Member
16 Corker and members of the committee. I am very happy to be back here and appreciate
17 enormously the committee's indulgence to have shifted this hearing because it came at a
18 critical moment just before I was asked by the President to meet with Lavrov relative to
19 Ukraine.

1 And so I also want to thank everybody on the committee for working so hard to
2 move the nominations, which obviously is critical. I think it is not the fault of the
3 committee, but with the combination of the vetting process and public process and so
4 forth and the combination of the slowdown on the floor of the Senate, I think we are
5 averaging something like 220-some days and some people at 300 days and some over
6 365 days. So I literally only in the last month have gotten my top team in place 1 year
7 in, and I am very grateful to the committee. Mr. Chairman, you have worked really
8 hard to make that happen and the ranking member. Great cooperation. Senator McCain
9 and others helped to intervene on that. And I want to thank you all for that.

10 A lot of questions, Senator Corker, that you raised, and I really look forward to
11 answering all of them because there is a cohesive approach. We are living in an
12 extremely complicated world, unlike anything most of us grew up with. And we can
13 talk about that here today because it really is critical to the question of how we deal as
14 the United States in our budget, in our own politics here, and in the choices we make.

15 Obviously — Senator Corker just brought it up — the intense focus on Ukraine
16 continues, and everything that we have seen in the last 48 hours from Russian
17 provocateurs and agents operating in eastern Ukraine tells us that they have been sent
18 there determined to create chaos. And that is absolutely unacceptable. These efforts are
19 as ham-handed as they are transparent frankly, and quite simply what we see from
20 Russia is an illegal and illegitimate effort to destabilize a sovereign state and create a

1 contrived crisis with paid operatives across an international boundary engaged in this
2 initiative.

3 Russia's clear and unmistakable involvement in destabilizing and engaging in
4 separatist activities in the east of Ukraine is more than deeply disturbing. No one
5 should be fooled — and believe me, no one is fooled — by what could potentially be a
6 contrived pretext for military intervention, just as we saw in Crimea. It is clear that
7 Russian special forces and agents have been the catalyst behind the chaos in the last 24
8 hours. Some have even been arrested and exposed. And equally as clear must be the
9 reality that the United States and our allies will not hesitate to use 21st century tools to
10 hold Russia accountable for 19th century behavior.

11 We have stated again and again that our preference and the preference of our
12 friends and allies is de-escalation and a diplomatic solution. But Russia should not for a
13 single solitary second mistake the expression of that preference as an unwillingness to
14 do what is necessary to stop any violation of the international order.

15 At NATO last week and in all of my conversations of the past weeks, it is clear
16 that the United States and our closest partners are united in this effort despite the costs
17 and willing to put in effect tough, new sanctions on those orchestrating this action and
18 on key sectors of the Russian economy, in energy, banking, mining. They are all on the
19 table. And President Obama has already signed an executive order to implement these
20 sanctions if Russia does not end its pressure and aggression on Ukraine.

1 Now, let me make an equally important statement. It does not have to be this
2 way, but it will be this way if Russia continues down this provocative path.

3 In my conversation yesterday with Foreign Minister Lavrov, we agreed to meet
4 soon in Europe, next week, with Ukraine and our European partners to discuss de-
5 escalation, de-mobilization, inclusivity, support for elections, and constitutional reform.

6 And it is not in our judgment a small matter that Russia has agreed to sit in this four-
7 party status with Ukraine at the table in an effort to try to forge a road ahead.

8 Between now and then, we have made it clear that Russia needs to take concrete
9 steps to disavow separatist actions in eastern Ukraine, pull back its forces outside the
10 country, which they say they have begun to do with the movement of one battalion, and
11 demonstrate that they are prepared to come to these discussions to do what is necessary
12 to de-escalate.

13 So Russia has a choice: to work with the international community to help build
14 an independent Ukraine that could be a bridge between East and West, not the object of
15 a tug of war, that could meet the hopes and aspirations of all Ukrainians, or they could
16 face greater isolation and pay the costs for their failure to see that the world is not a zero
17 sum game.

18 Ukraine, and so many other ongoing, simultaneous challenges globally, reinforce
19 what I said a moment ago to all of you. I think the members of this committee have
20 long appreciated it. That is, that this is not the bipolar, straightforward choice of the

1 Cold War. We are living in an incredibly challenging time where some of the things
2 that the East-West order took for granted most of my life are suddenly finding a world
3 in which American engagement is more critical and in many ways it is more
4 complicated because of nation state interests, balance of power, other kinds of issues
5 that are on the table.

6 You all travel. All the members of this committee do that. And you see what I
7 see in every place that I travel as Secretary. On issue after issue, people depend on
8 American leadership to make a difference. That has been reinforced to me more than
9 perhaps any other single thing in the year that I have been privileged to be Secretary,
10 whether it is South Sudan, a nation that many of you helped to give birth to and now a
11 nation struggling to survive beyond its infancy, or Venezuela where leaders are making
12 dangerous choices at the expense of the people, or in Afghanistan where this weekend
13 millions defied the Taliban and went to the polls to choose a new president, or on the
14 Korean peninsula where we are working with our allies and our partners to make sure
15 that we can meet any threat and move towards the denuclearization of the Korean
16 peninsula. I think I have had five meetings with President Xi this year and five trips to
17 Asia already in furtherance of our efforts to — and two of those meetings were with the
18 President with President Xi in an effort to further our goals there.

19 U.S. presence and leadership does matter, and that is why our rebalance to the
20 Asia-Pacific has been supported and welcomed by people throughout the region.

1 We also have great allies, great partners, but the fact remains that no other nation
2 can give people the confidence to come together and confront some of the most difficult
3 challenges in the same way as we are privileged to do. I say that without arrogance. I
4 say it as a matter of privilege. We have this ability. And I hear this from leaders all
5 over the world.

6 I particularly hear it about the Middle East peace process. I read some who
7 question why the Secretary of State is engaged or as intense, as he might be, or why the
8 United States should be doing this if the parties do not want to do this. Well, the truth
9 is the parties say they want to continue these talks. The truth is the parties are actually
10 still talking to each other in an effort to try to see if they can get over this hurdle and
11 make that happen.

12 But I have one certainty in my mind. I have yet to meet any leader anywhere in
13 the world who argues to me that it is going to be easier next week or easier next month
14 or easier next year or easier in the next 5 years to achieve a long sought after goal if the
15 United States is not engaged now. There is no foreign minister anywhere that I have
16 met with, no leader. You know, when I visited recently at the Vatican with His
17 Eminence, the Secretary of State, Cardinal Parolin, this is first and foremost of people all
18 over the world. Prime Minister Abe, the Prime Minister of Indonesia. They ask you, do
19 we have a chance of making peace in the Middle East, because everywhere it is a
20 recruitment tool, everywhere it is a concern, everywhere it has an impact. And the fact

1 is that everybody volunteers gratitude for the fact that the United States is engaged in
2 that effort.

3 So whether it was NATO this past week or the G-7 last week or the Vatican itself,
4 I have heard from minister after minister just how much the global community has
5 invested in this effort. Japan just committed several hundred million dollars to the
6 Palestinians for assistance. The Saudis, the Qataris, the Emiratis have each responded to
7 our request and committed to \$150 million each to assist the Palestinians going forward.

8 So this is something that has an impact on everybody, and believe me, it has an
9 impact on life in the United States too. So we will continue to the degree that the parties
10 want to. It is up to them. They have to make decisions, not us. They have to come to
11 the conclusion that it is worth it.

12 The same is true on Iran where every country understands the danger that a
13 nuclear-armed Iran would pose to our national security and to the security of our allies.
14 And that is why we have been so focused, along with all of you, on forging an
15 unprecedented coalition to impose the sanctions. From day one, this administration has
16 made it a foreign policy goal to prevent Iran from acquiring a nuclear weapon. To
17 achieve this goal, we have been clear that we will use all the elements of our national
18 power, including direct negotiations with Iran, the very kind that we are engaged in as I
19 speak. We are approaching these talks seriously and with our eyes wide open.

1 That is why, as we negotiate, we continue to enforce sanctions on Iran, not
2 affected by the Joint Plan of Action, not just, incidentally, over its nuclear activities but
3 also because of its support for terrorism. And we will press the case on human rights
4 and its record wherever we can. And we will continue to urge Iran to release our
5 American citizens, Amir Hekmati, Saeed Abedini, and we will work to help find Robert
6 Levinson. All three should be home with their families and that is consistently raised
7 by us with any Iranian official when we engage.

8 These are just some of the biggest issues that we are focused on each and every
9 day simultaneously, my colleagues. They are not the only ones.

10 Senators Corker and McCain, you have both been to the Syrian refugee camps on
11 the border. You have seen the horrors firsthand as I have. And this committee has
12 focused on the moral and security imperative that is Syria. And I am particularly
13 grateful for the fact that you voted the way you did, the one body in the Congress that
14 took that vote, and it was a courageous and important vote.

15 We are focused on this every single day, and we are currently routing increased
16 assistance to the moderate opposition. I know we will talk about this in the course of
17 this hearing. We are wrestling with these tough challenges, even as we are moving the
18 State Department ahead to help our businesses succeed in a world where foreign policy
19 is economic policy.

1 One of the things that I want to emphasize. When I became the nominee, I said
2 to everybody on the committee that foreign policy is economic policy. Economic policy
3 is foreign policy in today's world. And so we have set ourselves up in the State
4 Department to be increasingly geared towards helping American businesses and
5 towards creating new partnerships in an effort to also promote our foreign policy goals.
6 We are focused on jobs diplomacy and shared prosperity. That is why Embassy
7 Wellington just helped a company in New Jersey land a \$350 million contract to lay
8 fiber optics across the Pacific. It is why our consulate in Shenyang has been so engaged
9 to reverse tariffs against American agricultural products. It is the challenge of the
10 modern State Department in a modern world, and that is to wrestle with the challenges
11 and opportunities that come at us faster than ever before. It is a challenge balanced also
12 against security in a dangerous world, which is why this budget implements the
13 recommendations of the Independent Accountability Review Board and makes
14 additional investments that go above and beyond what the review board
15 recommended.

16 So I want to thank you, all of you, for everything you have done for the security
17 of our missions, and I want to thank you for the way this committee stands up for an
18 active, internationalist American foreign policy that is in our interests.

19 I spent enough time here in this room, as well as in the Senate, to know that you
20 do not call anything that costs billions of dollars a bargain. But when you consider that

1 the American people pay just 1 penny of every tax dollar for the \$46.2 billion in this
2 request, I think it is safe — and if you add OCO, it is \$50.1 billion. I think it is safe to say
3 that in the grand scheme of the Federal budget when it comes to the State Department
4 and USAID, taxpayers are getting an extraordinary return on their investment.

5 So I thank you for your partnership in these efforts, and I look forward to our
6 conversation today. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

[The prepared statement of Secretary Kerry follows:]

[COMMITTEE INSERT]

7 **THE CHAIRMAN.** Thank you, Mr. Secretary, for that comprehensive review of both
8 our challenges and the opportunities and the daily mission of the men and women of
9 the State Department.

10 I want to go to Iran. I read an article yesterday that is entitled, in the “Wall Street
11 Journal,” “Obama Administration Shows Optimism on Iran Nuclear Talks.” And
12 despite significant political hurdles and vastly different stated positions with reference
13 to Iran’s nuclear programs, in public comments there is the sense of progress and
14 optimism. And I am trying to glean where that is from.

15 And I am worried when I read this and other articles where it says, quote, some
16 officials who have worked on developing the Obama administration’s negotiating
17 position towards Tehran have acknowledged that major concessions are needed by both
18 sides for a deal to be reached. The complete dismantling of Tehran’s uranium
19 enrichment facilities and the Iraq reactor, initial demands of the West, is no longer

1 achievable. The West is unlikely to get a complete accounting from Tehran of the secret
2 nuclear weapons work the West believes it conducted in the past.

3 And it goes on to say that the suggestion is that the P5 Plus 1 should instead
4 focus on extending the time it would take for Iran to break out and produce nuclear
5 weapons to between 6 and 12 months.

6 Now, I do not think that we did everything that we have done to only get a 6 or a
7 12 months' lead time because a deal that would ultimately unravel the entire sanctions
8 regime for a 6- to 12-month lead time is not far from where we are today. And with no
9 sanctions regime in place and understanding that every sanctions that we have pursued
10 have needed at least a 6-month lead time to become enforceable and then a greater
11 amount of time to actually enforce, that the only option left to the United States to this
12 or any other President and to the West would be either to accept a nuclear-armed Iran
13 or to have a military option.

14 So I want to hear from you, Mr. Secretary, whether that is where we believe
15 success lies, or is the success, as outlined by a letter by 83 Members of the Senate to the
16 President, where we say that we believe that we need to dismantle Iran's nuclear
17 weapons program and preventing it from having either a uranium or plutonium path to
18 a nuclear bomb, where we believe that there is no enrichment facility needs like Fordow
19 and Iraq, and where we must get evidence of what happened in Parchin. I am trying to
20 get a sense of these parameters because, to the extent that the administration has asked

1 for forbearance, part of it is going to have to be based on having an understanding of
2 what is the parameters.

3 And I would assume — and I ask you this question specifically. Does the
4 administration, if it strikes a deal, ultimately believe that it needs to come back to the
5 Congress for the approval of such a deal in terms of the elements of the law that exists
6 today that would have to be repealed?

7 **SECRETARY KERRY:** Well, Mr. Chairman, good questions, all, and entirely
8 appropriate for us to try to dig into that a little bit.

9 Let me begin by saying, first of all, I am not expressing optimism one side or the
10 other. I remain agnostic and questioning even as we are just about halfway through. I
11 talked with our team on the ground in Vienna yesterday. They are having serious
12 expert, in-depth, detailed conversations about what it takes to achieve our goal, proving
13 that this is a peaceful program. I think it is fair to say that I think it is public knowledge
14 today that we are operating with a time period for a so-called breakout of about 2
15 months. That has been in the public domain. So 6 months to 12 months is — I am not
16 saying that is what we would settle for, but even that is significantly more.

17 Remember, “breakout” means that they make a decision to race, to sort of move
18 out of the regime that has been put in place and overtly move to enrich sufficiently to
19 create enough material for one weapon. That is what breakout means. It does not mean
20 they have gotten to a warhead or to a delivery system or even a test capacity or

1 anything else. It is just having one bomb's worth, conceivably, of material but without
2 any necessary capacity to put it in anything, to deliver it, to have any mechanism to do
3 so and otherwise.

4 We have amazing capacity that is being built into this system to understand what
5 they are doing. During just the JPOA implementation, we are inspecting in Fordow.
6 We have never been in there before. We are inspecting in Natanz. We have not been in
7 there. We are occasionally, I think several times a month, once or twice a month,
8 inspecting in the Iraq facility. They cannot move anything into the Iraq facility to
9 complete its commissioning. We are inspecting their storage of centrifuges. We are
10 inspecting their mining and their milling and so forth. We have a huge track here of
11 what they are doing.

12 And so the greater likelihood is at the end of this, we hope to be able to come to
13 you with an agreement that has the most extensive and comprehensive and accountable
14 verification process that can be achieved in order to know what they are doing.

15 So when we talk about the number of months, we do not know what they are
16 yet, but if you know — I mean, you have to think about this. If they make a decision to
17 break out, sanctions are not going to be what make the difference. If they are overtly
18 breaking out and breaking an agreement and starting to enrich and pursue it, they have
19 made a huge, consequential decision. And the greater likelihood is we are going to
20 respond immediately.

1 **THE CHAIRMAN.** I gather what we are doing now — I have to be honest with you.
2 If the end result is a 6- or 12-month window for which the sanctions regime will have
3 fallen — and it is true that if they decide to break out. But the only question is the
4 reason they are at the table is because of the sanctions regime. The reason that they,
5 depending on how we act, will calculate as to whether or not to make that decision is
6 the consequences internally to their economy and the concerns that the Ayatollah has
7 about regime change either from without, which is his constant concern, or from within
8 because of the economic catalyst that can be created in Iran.

9 And so if 6 to 12 months is where we end up — I know that you have not said
10 that, but since you said that would still be more significant than 2 months, the bottom
11 line is it is not, I would hope, where we end up because with their research and
12 development capacity still moving forward as we speak, which only allows them to
13 create more sophisticated centrifuges which closes the window for them even more
14 quickly with their missile development as well, these are all elements of a worrisome —
15 it is far different from where we started off and what we were told to where I believe
16 we are heading.

17 And this is why so many Members joined us in staking out a ground so that the
18 administration understands. Does the administration intend to come back to the
19 Congress if you have a final deal for ultimately lifting some of the elements that would
20 be needed to be lifted under law?

1 Secretary Kerry: Well, of course, we would be obligated to under the law, Mr.
2 Chairman. We would absolutely have to. And so clearly, what we do will have to pass
3 muster with Congress. We well understand that.

4 But let me just say very quickly all of the things you just raised are very much
5 contemplated. I mean, these are all part of the conversation, the research, what kind of
6 research, warheads particularly. There has to be a huge level of transparency.

7 Now, you mentioned the Iraq reactor. We have been very clear that there is no
8 legitimacy to a full-on heavy water plutonium reactor, none whatsoever, in any scheme
9 that they have articulated for private sector use. So that has to be dealt with in the
10 context of the negotiations. It will be.

11 **THE CHAIRMAN.** I agree. But originally we were told that is going to be dismantled.
12 Now we are told we are going to find a different purpose for it. It continues to morph
13 into different areas.

14 Let me ask you one final question.

15 **SECRETARY KERRY:** Actually, let me just clarify, Mr. Chairman. First of all, it is
16 written in the Joint Action Plan.

17 **THE CHAIRMAN.** Nothing is agreed to —

18 **SECRETARY KERRY:** Correct. Nothing is agreed until everything is agreed. This is a
19 mosaic that is going to have to be put together, and I can assure you that we are going
20 to strive to get the longest period we can get in terms of breakout. There are a number

1 of different options as to how it can be managed. But the important thing is that it is not
2 a heavy water plutonium reactor. That is critical.

3 **THE CHAIRMAN.** One final question. The Russians — we have seen consistent
4 iterations of a barter deal which clearly, if it was consummated, would be sanctionable.
5 So my question is, number one, if such a deal actually comes into fruition, is it the
6 administration's intention to sanction those actions? And I look at this in our
7 engagement with Russia, and we meet with Russia to broker a deal over Syria in
8 September. We have a worsening humanitarian disaster and the delay on chemical
9 weapons. We meet with Russia over Iran and there is an "oil for goods" deal with
10 Russia and Iran that sources say could be worth \$20 billion. Russia annexes Crimea and
11 destabilizes the Ukraine.

12 I mean, I am beginning to wonder what it is — at what point in this relationship
13 with Russia, particularly vis-a-vis Iran, but even beyond, is it going to be clear that there
14 are consequences? I understand that Russia is an entity that we are going to have to
15 deal with, but by the same token, right now they seem to act in ways that are contrary
16 to just about all of our interests.

17 **SECRETARY KERRY:** Mr. Chairman, the hard reality is that the relationship with
18 Russia produces both moments of consternation and conflict, as well as cooperation and
19 effect. We did, in the course of the last years, the START treaty, and in the course of the

1 last years, we have cooperated on Afghanistan. We have cooperated on Syria. We have
2 cooperated on P5 Plus 1 on the Syria chemical weapons.

3 I talked yesterday to Foreign Minister Lavrov, and I also talked to the Director
4 General of the OPCW. Currently 54 percent of the chemical weapons are out of Syria,
5 and we have major shipments that are planned at two sites near Damascus. They
6 should take place in the next days. But there is a general sense that we are concerned
7 about the slowdown, but we still believe we could be on schedule or close to schedule.
8 We are pushing for that. And the Russians have indicated they are prepared to
9 continue to push and to try to achieve that. They have an interest in achieving it.

10 So, you know, there are pluses and, yes, there are minuses obviously. We do not
11 have the luxury as a country of being — you have got to deal at this point. In one time
12 or another, Reagan dealt with Gorbachev. Nixon dealt with Mao. It is a reality of the
13 world that we try to move forward even as —

14 **THE CHAIRMAN.** I appreciate that, and I understand the challenge.

15 **SECRETARY KERRY:** But let me say —

16 **THE CHAIRMAN.** But on the barter deal, will we sanction if — such a deal would
17 clearly violate the regime that has been set up. And I assume that we need to make it
18 very clear to the Iranians, as well as to the Russians, that such a deal would be
19 sanctionable if it happened.

1 **SECRETARY KERRY:** Mr. Chairman, we have made it clear to both sides our deep
2 concerns about the reported “oil for goods” deal. It would raise serious concerns, as
3 you have said. It would be inconsistent with the terms of the P5 Plus 1 Joint Plan of
4 Action, and yes, it could trigger U.S. sanctions against the entities or individuals that are
5 involved in that deal.

6 **THE CHAIRMAN.** Senator Corker?

7 **SENATOR CORKER.** Mr. Chairman, I appreciate your questioning and I am glad you
8 took the time you did. I did want the Secretary to see the concerns that we have about
9 foreign policy are very bipartisan and very sincere and very deep.

10 I am going to move to Syria.

11 I will say that it is hard for me to discern the good things that have occurred
12 relative to our negotiations with Russia, although I hope over time we will be able to see
13 those.

14 When the President talked about his red line back in August of 2012, 30,000
15 Syrians were dead. Today 150,000 Syrians are dead. We continue to talk about this
16 shiny object, the chemicals, but people daily are being killed with barrel bombs. And I
17 would just like for you in front of everyone, since you are up here asking for a budget
18 request — I would like for you to explain to us what our Syria policy is right now.

19 **SECRETARY KERRY:** Sure, I would be happy to, Senator.

1 **SENATOR CORKER.** And let me say this. We did not create the Syrian problem. I
2 understand that. We did not create it. But our lack of attention in dealing with it has
3 caused it to fester to a point where now it is a national security threat to our Nation.
4 That is what certainly our leaders are saying in that area, that the amount of extremists,
5 which we all said, I might add — I think you even said on the front end. But I would
6 like for you just to explain to all of us again what our strategy towards Syria is today in
7 detail, if you would.

8 **SECRETARY KERRY:** I would be delighted to explain what it is, but I also want to
9 explain what it is not because I have heard people suggest many things. I mean, you
10 just said the word. Inattention to it has led it to be where it is today and so forth. I just
11 do not agree with that, Senator. I really do not agree with that.

12 The fact is we have paid enormous attention to it. By absolute consensus in the
13 United States Congress last year, I do not think there was a Member here who
14 suggested there was a military — maybe one or two who suggested there was a military
15 solution to Syria.

16 **SENATOR CORKER.** No, but we did suggest arming, training —

17 **SECRETARY KERRY:** Senator, I am delighted. We are doing a lot of things and we
18 are deeply engaged with the opposition. We are more engaged than we have ever been
19 before right now and more successfully right now.

20 **SENATOR CORKER.** Would you be willing to tell us about that?

1 **SECRETARY KERRY:** Not in an open session.

2 **SENATOR CORKER.** Well, would you commit right now to tell us every detail of our
3 Syrian strategy in a classified setting?

4 **SECRETARY KERRY:** I have always felt — as the chairman knows, in my years as
5 chairman of this committee, I thought one of the great anomalies of the United States
6 Senate was that the Foreign Relations Committee, which has to authorize and create
7 foreign policy, is not part of the chain that —

8 **SENATOR CORKER.** So you will not commit to sharing.

9 **SECRETARY KERRY:** No, I will. I will.

10 **SENATOR CORKER.** You will commit to sharing every detail of what our strategy is.

11 **SECRETARY KERRY:** To the degree I am allowed to under the process of the law, I
12 will do that. But if there are any limitations that I am aware of, I am not sure. But we
13 always have these briefings down in CVC and I am happy to go through with you.

14 But let me explain what I can here in open session. I want people to understand
15 what we are doing.

16 I came into this role in February, February 1st of last year. We immediately had
17 a meeting with the foreign ministers of the so-called London 11 Support Group. We
18 met in Rome. We met in Amman, and we began to coordinate our efforts with the
19 opposition.

1 Then in April — I think it was April — I went to Russia, met with President
2 Putin, met with Foreign Minister Lavrov, and made the argument that we needed
3 together to try to work towards a political solution. At that point in time, President
4 Assad was not faring so well, and there was a great sense of insecurity in Syria. The
5 Russians agreed that we needed to try to negotiate this.

6 Subsequently, after agreeing to the concept of a Geneva II meeting where you
7 would try to have a negotiation, the opposition began to have its own infighting,
8 nothing we could control, just the nature of the beast. And while they began to have
9 their infighting, large numbers of jihadists began to be attracted to the effort to get rid of
10 Assad because he was killing Sunni, and many of them are Sunni-based.

11 **SENATOR CORKER.** All of which everyone said was going to happen on the front
12 end. Very predicted.

13 **SECRETARY KERRY:** But what was the plan to not have that happen, Senator? I did
14 not notice Congress racing to the barriers saying we are going to do something. I do not
15 think the American people who are going to send American —

16 **SENATOR CORKER.** Well, let me ask you this. Do you agree with the President's
17 comments on CBS just recently that the authorization for force that you asked for, that
18 had we done that, it would have had no effect in Syria? Do you agree with those
19 comments? It would have no effect after you came in and told us the effect that it was
20 going to have.

1 **SECRETARY KERRY:** That is not what the President said. What the President said, it
2 would not have had the effect of changing the calculation or the course of the war. It
3 would have had an effect on precisely what he was asking for it for, which was to send
4 a message to Assad about the use of chemical weapons.

5 **SENATOR CORKER.** So the authorization you asked for was not to degrade his
6 capabilities?

7 **SECRETARY KERRY:** Of using chemical weapons, correct. If you go back and read it,
8 it was precisely targeted to reduce his capacity to use chemical weapons.

9 **SENATOR CORKER.** Let me ask you this.

10 **SECRETARY KERRY:** But let me just finish the thought here. Everybody up here was
11 saying we do not want to go to war.

12 **SENATOR CORKER.** Not everybody. This committee voted to go to war.

13 **SECRETARY KERRY:** No. They did not vote to go to war. They voted to have a
14 limited strike for the sole purpose of degrading his capacity to deliver chemical
15 weapons. Guess what.

16 **SENATOR CORKER.** Did you not share with us that that degrading would have a
17 definite effect on his ability to carry out against the opposition? You did not tell us that?

18 **SECRETARY KERRY:** I think it would have had some effect on that, Senator, but it
19 would not have had a devastating impact by which he had to recalculate because it was
20 not going to last that long. We all know that. It took 30,000 sorties and 30 days in

1 Bosnia to have an impact. Here we were going to have 1 or 2 days to degrade and send
2 a message.

3 And guess what. Senator, we came up with a better solution, to get all of them
4 out by working through the diplomatic channel with Russia, and we have an agreement
5 which is now working out with 54 percent removed and we are moving to more.

6 So what is your take? Would you rather drop a few bombs, send a message, and
7 then have him still with the weapons and capacity to deliver them, or would you rather
8 get all of them out?

9 **SENATOR CORKER.** Let me ask you this question. Instead of meeting with us and
10 laying out strategy, I have noticed the administration is really good at leaking things to
11 newspapers. The chairman alluded to that 2 weeks ago when one of your assistants
12 was making the most reckless comments that have been said before this committee.

13 But let me just ask you. Apparently there is some debate occurring relative to
14 military action or not. The "Wall Street Journal" reports that you are for it. We got a
15 letter from Julia sitting right behind you. It was undated, but it said we do not believe
16 that there is a military solution to the Syrian crisis.

17 But I would like for you to share. Do you think there is or is not? Is there a
18 debate that is occurring right now about military action or not? Clear it up. I would
19 love to know whether Anne Patterson was making something up or something is
20 actually occurring there.

1 **SECRETARY KERRY:** Well, Senator, let me do that. I ask you to give me the time to
2 do it because I do want to clear it up. But I also just want to finish quickly the notion.

3 If there is no military solution — and everybody at the Pentagon would tell you
4 there is no military solution.

5 **SENATOR CORKER.** But apparently you think there is.

6 **SECRETARY KERRY:** No. I do not think there is a — I think there is a capacity to
7 change Assad's calculation, and so does the President.

8 **SENATOR CORKER.** Which is what we discussed last August.

9 **SECRETARY KERRY:** We will discuss in a classified session exactly what those things
10 are. But let me come back for a minute because I want to answer your question.

11 The reality is that if you are going to have a negotiated solution, you have to
12 have a ripeness to the ability to be able come. Last May, there was more ripeness. Then
13 the situation changed on the ground. Today Assad feels fairly secure in Damascus and
14 in some of the corridor going north to the ports, and that has been his strategy. But
15 around him in the south particularly, in the east, and in the north, there is not that kind
16 of security. In fact, the opposition has made some gains recently.

17 And so the key here is how do you get the parties to a place where they both
18 understand that there is not going to be a military solution that does not destroy the
19 country absolutely and totally but which ultimately could be negotiated. There has to

1 be a recognition by both of the ripeness of that moment. It is not now. We all
2 understand that.

3 So the question is can you do something in order to create that, and that is a
4 legitimate question for the Congress, a legitimate question for the administration. And
5 we talk about that. Of course, we do.

6 **SENATOR CORKER.** What is the answer?

7 **SECRETARY KERRY:** But there is no difference in our policy. I support the choices
8 the President has made. We need to have a classified briefing. You need to understand
9 where we are and what we are doing, and I look forward to having that conversation.

10 **SENATOR CORKER.** Well, Mr. Chairman, I appreciate you having this hearing.

11 And, Secretary Kerry, I guess, will tell after, when you write your memoirs,
12 whether you support the policy of the administration or not. But we certainly get a lot
13 of conflicting reports. I look forward to that classified —

14 **SECRETARY KERRY:** I am happy to be the recipient of some good advice. What do
15 you believe would make the difference right now in order to get a negotiated solution?
16 Or do you believe there is a military solution?

17 **SENATOR CORKER.** So I actually strongly supported what we passed out of
18 committee on both occasions, which was arming the vetted moderate opposition — I
19 strongly supported that — with training, doing it under the Defense Department

1 auspice not potentially other areas. I strongly supported that. I kind of thought you
2 supported that actually.

3 I strongly supported the limited strike that you asked for. Instead, we took
4 another path and we have had another 60,000 people dead there. No doubt the
5 dynamics on the ground have changed. We have got 10,000 al Qaeda folks on the
6 ground, which we did have at the time.

7 And yes, it is a lot more complicated now. It is destabilizing Iraq. It is
8 destabilizing other places. And we are in a very different place. And we did not take
9 actions at a time when we could have made a difference. So many on this committee
10 wanted us to do that. So, yes, we are in a very complicated place.

11 It is likely interesting that we are going to end up in a place where our interests
12 with Russia align because very soon we are going to get to a point where, because of the
13 extremists on the ground there, it is a threat to their homeland and to ours.

14 But actually you are the Secretary of State, and I would love to hear — you have
15 to be disappointed by what has happened there. You have to be disappointed by the
16 lack of action. You have to be disappointed by the indecisiveness. And candidly, we
17 keep hearing about these things that are coming forth that are going to change the
18 dynamic.

19 **SECRETARY KERRY:** Well, Senator, I would say to you the fact is we are doing more
20 than we have ever been doing. And you do need to be briefed. I am not sure I

1 understand why you are not. We have had all Senator briefings historically on issues of
2 the top level security. We ought to do that. I am ready to try to make that happen. The
3 sooner, the better because if you had that, a lot of these questions would be answered.

4 **THE CHAIRMAN.** Senator Cardin?

5 **SENATOR CARDIN.** Thank you, Mr. Secretary. I very much appreciate not only you
6 being here but the work that you are doing globally for U.S. interests.

7 On Syria, let me just follow up one question where I would hope there would be
8 strong agreement. I have been very vocal in the human rights violations that have
9 occurred in Syria. During war, people get hurt, but there has been an intentional
10 targeting of civilians by the Assad regime. 10,000 children have already died in Syria.

11 At previous hearings, we have talked about the U.S. role in making sure that
12 those who are responsible for these gross violations of international human rights are
13 going to be held accountable. And yet, I still do not see a game plan to bring to justice
14 those who have targeted innocent civilians for horrible outcomes, including the use of
15 chemical weapons.

16 So can you just share with us what steps the United States is taking to make sure
17 that we will have preserved the record and people will be held accountable? Because I
18 tell you the only way that we can try to reduce this type of action in the future is to
19 make it clear those that are responsible are, in fact, held accountable by the international
20 community.

1 **SECRETARY KERRY:** I could not agree with you more, Senator. And all of those
2 incidents are being chronicled and completely packaged, in a sense, ready for that
3 prosecution. There are countless entities that are preparing those cases. There is no
4 question in my mind or in anybody's mind I think who watches this closely that war
5 crimes have been committed purposefully, intentionally, ordered at the highest level.
6 We saw that in the case of the gas, but it goes well beyond gas. The indiscriminate
7 bombing of civilians, the use of starvation as a tool of war against civilians, blockades.
8 The torture, documented, of more than 11,000 individuals. It is a human disaster
9 beyond many words in the world.

10 The only other place I can think of on the face of the planet where things may be
11 worse is North Korea. We had the UN report recently on North Korea. But that is a
12 level that is unfathomable since the days of Hitler.

13 But Syria's aggression against its own people — there is no question in my mind
14 it has to be held accountable, and we have said that we will.

15 **SENATOR CARDIN.** Will you keep us totally engaged on a regular basis as to what
16 progress is being made in this area?

17 **SECRETARY KERRY:** Absolutely. Part of the difficulty right now, obviously, is access
18 to the country and to those individuals. But within the course of time — that is
19 probably one of the reasons some of them are fighting the way they are fighting. But

1 over time, we have historically proven we can bring people to accountability and we
2 will.

3 **SENATOR CARDIN.** You have spent a great deal of time in regards to working with
4 the Palestinians and Israelis on getting the peace talks started. In the meantime, the
5 Palestinians have taken unilateral action dealing with recognition that is contrary to the
6 peace negotiations that makes it difficult. Yet, they will not acknowledge the right of a
7 Jewish state.

8 Can you just bring us up to date as to the prognosis of where we are in regards to
9 the peace discussions?

10 **SECRETARY KERRY:** Sure. First of all, you know it is our position the Government
11 of the United States and the President supports the notion of Israel being defined as a
12 Jewish state, and he has said that in many speeches and it is in our policy. And we
13 believe that that should happen.

14 But when it happens and how it happens has to be part of the negotiation,
15 obviously. It is not going to happen in the beginning, Senator. It is really going to be
16 one of those narrative issues that gets resolved towards the end.

17 **SENATOR CARDIN.** I would just point out that the acknowledgement of a Palestinian
18 state is up front. It seems to me that the U.S. position is a clear — as part of the
19 outcome, the international recognition of a Jewish state. That is not a negotiable point.

1 So I do not quite understand when you say that that will not be acknowledged up front
2 when the establishment of a Palestinian state is acknowledged up front.

3 **SECRETARY KERRY:** Well, it is and it is not. They do not have a state yet. You have
4 to have borders. You have to have a defined solution to other issues before you have a
5 state. You have to resolve issues of demilitarization and other kinds of things.

6 But here is what is really important, Senator. Both sides, whether advertently or
7 inadvertently, wound up in positions where things happened that were unhelpful.
8 Clearly, going to these treaties is not helpful, and we have made that crystal clear. And
9 we need both sides to find a way to create the level of compromise necessary to do what
10 they both say they want to do, which is continue the talks because they both view it as
11 important to the future.

12 Now, the irony, bitter irony, is that at this particular moment, this fight is over
13 process. It is not over the substance of a final status agreement. It is over how do you
14 get to the discussion of a final status agreement. So our hope is that we can work a way
15 through this.

16 But in the end, the parties are going to have to make that decision. It is not our
17 decision. We can cajole. We can leverage. We can offer one thing or another to try to
18 be helpful. They have to make the fundamental decision. And in my judgment, both
19 leaders have made courageous and important decisions up until now.

1 You know, for Prime Minister Netanyahu to release prisoners is a painful,
2 difficult political step to take, enormously hard. And the people of Israel have been
3 incredibly supportive and patient in giving him the space to be able to do that in
4 exchange for the deal being kept of the release of prisoners and not going to the UN.
5 Unfortunately, the prisoners were not released on the Saturday they were supposed to
6 be released. And so a day went by, day 2 went by, day 3 went by, and then in the
7 afternoon, when they were about to maybe get there, 700 settlement units were
8 announced in Jerusalem and poof. That was sort of the moment.

9 So we find ourselves where we are. My hope is the parties will find a way back.
10 We are working with them to try to do so. Again I repeat. They have to make that
11 fundamental decision, and I hope they will. I believe if they do, there is a way to get
12 into substantive discussions now. A lot of groundwork has been laid over the last 8
13 months. We do not talk about it publicly. I am not going to go into the details here.
14 But there has been a narrowing of differences. Are there gaps? Yes, of course, there are
15 gaps. But the narrowing of where they are and of different options of how one might
16 deal with them is real. And I hope the parties will be able to find a way back.

17 But we have an enormous amount on our plate. There are limits to the time the
18 President and I, obviously, can commit to this, given the rest of the agenda, if they are
19 not prepared to commit to actually be there in a serious way.

1 So we will see what happens in the next days. Our teams are still having some
2 discussion on the ground. There was a long meeting yesterday between Palestinians
3 and Israelis. And I am not going to suggest anything is imminent, but one always has
4 to remain hopeful in this very difficult, complicated process. If it were easy, it would
5 have happened a long time ago. Plenty of Secretaries of State and Presidents have tried
6 to help make this happen.

7 Why is this moment perhaps different? Because at the back end, the
8 consequences are more stark and clear than they have been before, and there is less
9 space for mistakes. I hope they will make it.

10 **THE CHAIRMAN.** Thank you.

11 Senator Risch?

12 **SENATOR RISCH.** Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

13 Mr. Secretary, I do not envy the position you are in here today. This is supposed
14 to be a budget hearing where the American people find out what they are getting for
15 their money. After the discussion we have had here today, I think anybody who would
16 come in here would have an impression that after we have looked at the issues with
17 Russia and Iran and North Korea and Afghanistan, Pakistan, China, the peace process,
18 and all the difficulties with every one of these — I appreciate your view that there are
19 some things happening which are positive. But I tell you you cannot help but get the

1 impression that our foreign policy is just spinning out of control and we are losing
2 control in virtually every area that we are trying to do something in.

3 You know, we have got such limited time here to talk about all of these
4 problems, but probably what I want to talk about briefly are just a couple of them.

5 One of the best examples is the one that is on the front pages today, and that is
6 the Russian issue. You know, this administration said they were going to hit the reset
7 button, and I cannot help think that somebody hit the wrong button because things
8 have not gone well during this administration.

9 You know, the Russians today are misbehaving worse than they have in decades,
10 and nothing seems to change that. When you look at what they did in Georgia and still
11 remain occupying part of Georgia, when they even agreed not to, what they have done
12 in the Ukraine, what they have done in Syria and are continuing to do in Syria, plus we
13 all know about the cheating that is going on on the treaties that have been entered into,
14 I am very disappointed at what is going on. You cannot help but be discouraged about
15 it.

16 I am interested to hear your thoughts about this meeting coming up next week
17 because you talked about what happened in Syria and you had a very similar meeting
18 in Syria where you sat down with Lavrov and supposedly you forged a road forward,
19 and that road forward has been a disaster. You have heard the people talk about how

1 many tens of thousands of people have been killed since then. The dismantling of the
2 chemical weapons has slowed down.

3 What makes you think you are going to be able to make better progress on the
4 Ukraine? I mean, we have seen this movie over and over and over again with the
5 Russians. They misbehave. Then we sit down at the table. We make some kind of an
6 agreement and they misbehave even worse after the agreement. So maybe you could
7 give us a little taste of what you are going to tell Lavrov when you meet with him next
8 week.

9 **SECRETARY KERRY:** Well, let me give you what I consider a taste of reality, Senator,
10 about our foreign policy and the realities of the world.

11 Georgia happened under George Bush. Georgia happened under George Bush,
12 and he did not even bring a sanction. President Obama has brought sanctions and it is
13 having an impact.

14 **SENATOR RISCH.** It is having an impact?

15 **SECRETARY KERRY:** Yes, it is having an impact. And the fact is that it will have a far
16 more serious impact if they cross over or continue what is happening in east Ukraine.

17 Now, I do not know anybody in the United States of America that said we ought
18 to go to war over Crimea. Is there any members of this committee who believes that? I
19 do not think so.

1 So what are we doing? We are using 21st century tools, which are the tools of
2 diplomacy to bring people together in other countries to put sanctions in place. And we
3 now have announced the possibility of using sector sanctions. Now that is serious
4 business. Serious business. It is banking. It is energy. It is mining. It is arms. It is other
5 things. And if you start going down that road, it is not just them who feel it, we will
6 feel it too. So you have to approach these things with some sense of responsibility. It is
7 not just a speech. It is a policy and it has implications in what happens. And the fact is
8 that we believe they take that seriously.

9 Now, their economy is not that strong. They do not make a lot in Russia. They
10 extract from the ground and sell it. And so if we start changing energy policy and we
11 start moving with respect to LNG and we start moving with respect to these sanctions,
12 it can have a profound impact. And I think Russia knows it. It is not the preferred way
13 to go.

14 But when you say, you know, something like our foreign policy is spinning out
15 of control, those are great talking points. They make for good sound bites on TV
16 nowadays. But I have to tell you, Senator, that is just not true. We have helped
17 negotiate a truce in South Sudan and helped to pull that country back from the brink of
18 civil war. We have helped to create a framework for the disarming of M23 in the Great
19 Lakes region of Africa. We are engaged in helping the French to quell the Boko Haram
20 and other people in the region of Mali and elsewhere. We are engaged with the Chinese

1 very directly in helping to change their policy, which they have done, to put greater
2 pressure on North Korea and to deal with their route to denuclearization. We have
3 moved vessels into the region. We have sent clear messages of our need and
4 willingness to defend the United States of America and our interests in the region. We
5 are the force that has been helping to bring parties together to defend our interests in
6 the South China Sea with respect to Chinese claims in that region. We have been
7 engaged in our peace efforts in Somalia and other parts of the world in our
8 peacekeeping. We are engaged in Syria, as I told you, leading nation in terms of
9 humanitarian assistance, and we are doing more than any other country with respect to
10 what is happening on the ground now with the opposition. In the Middle East peace,
11 we are leading the effort. In the Gulf, we are leading the effort.

12 I just do not agree with you. We are living in a complicated world where there is
13 more sectarianism, there is more religious extremism. There are more young people.
14 You know, 60 to 65 percent of countries are under the age of 30. 50 percent are under
15 the age of 21. What is the American policy for being able to help them to be able to
16 develop jobs in the future and not go be extremists? There is so much we need to do
17 that depends on the budget, on the Congress, on our engagement in the world, and we
18 are more engaged than ever before, which is why my travel schedule is what it is.

19 **SENATOR RISCH.** Well, Secretary Kerry, the one thing I really agree with you is the
20 results of foreign policy are not speeches. It is the results. It is the perception of the

1 American people. And you heard list we have gone through of the problems we have,
2 and I agree that you have certainly done some good things in some of the areas that you
3 have just indicated. But the major issues, the major initiatives that affect the national
4 security of this country are in a very desperate situation in some places, and they are
5 deteriorating. I understand the speeches. But I am telling you the American people
6 believe that in these areas that we have talked about, particularly in Russia, our
7 situation has deteriorated.

8 Before the chairman cuts me off, I want to talk just briefly about Iran. I have got
9 a constituent and that is Pastor Abedini who is in prison. John, you have got to do
10 something about this. You sit across the table from these people. There is no reason he
11 should be in prison today. You cut loose hundreds of millions of dollars to those
12 people. You have relaxed some of the sanctions. Please help these people. Tell them
13 you are not going to do anything more. Tell the Iranians you are not going to do
14 anything more for them until they release him and the two other people that they are
15 holding against all international law, against all human rights, and against any
16 definition of morality that you have.

17 And my time is up, and thank you, Mr. Chairman.

18 **THE CHAIRMAN.** Senator Kaine?

19 **SENATOR KAINE.** Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

20 Thank you, Mr. Secretary. So much to talk about.

1 Let me just offer one thank you. I recently returned from a trip with Senator
2 King to Israel, the West Bank, Lebanon, and Egypt. And in direct discussions with both
3 Prime Minister Netanyahu and Mahmoud Abbas, their personal praise of you for your
4 efforts in trying to put the United States in the appropriate position to try to find a
5 difficult peace deal — they said almost exactly the same thing about you. They were
6 very praiseworthy of your efforts, unprompted. And they comments that they made
7 are comments that I have heard from our allies and partners in Egypt, Bahrain, the
8 UAE, Jordan, Turkey, Saudi Arabia.

9 This is a very difficult thing. It is a holy grail in international diplomacy to try to
10 find a solution to a problem as vexing as this without venturing a thought on the
11 potential outcome. I just want to thank you for your efforts to try to do something that
12 would be so important in the world.

13 I want to ask you about Syria. Syria is complicated partly because there is not a
14 real consensus in this body about military action. When we had a debate here in
15 August, there was a very narrow committee vote authorizing military force for a limited
16 purpose. The odds makers basically said had that been taken on the floor of the House,
17 it would have failed. In the Senate, it might have been close. But clearly, there was
18 division.

19 But let me ask you about something where there is not division in this body, and
20 that is humanitarian aid to Syrians. The United States is the largest provider of

1 humanitarian aid in the world to Syrians outside Syria, Lebanon, Jordan, and Turkey
2 especially. And that is not by accident. That is because we want to do it and it is a
3 bipartisan priority.

4 Now what we need to do is focus upon the delivery of humanitarian aid to the 9
5 million Syrians inside Syria who need it. After many efforts to stonewall humanitarian
6 resolutions, Russia finally acceded to one, and on the 22nd of September, UN Security
7 Council resolution 2139, which demanded that all parties, in particular the Syrian
8 authorities, promptly allow rapid, safe, and unhindered humanitarian access to provide
9 humanitarian access to Syrians, including — and it is specified — access across conflict
10 lines and across borders.

11 Last week, the Senate, after action by this committee, unanimously approved a
12 Syrian humanitarian aid resolution that was sponsored by myself and Senator Rubio.
13 And in part, that resolution indicated that the Senate — and it passed unanimously on
14 the floor — supports the immediate and full implementation of UN Security Council
15 resolution 2139 which calls for unimpeded access of humanitarian assistance to all
16 Syrians.

17 The 30-day report after the UN Security Council resolution says 30 days in, there
18 is not unimpeded access. What is the United States going to do to help carry out the
19 unimpeded access provision of the UN Security Council resolution that we fought for
20 months to see pass?

1 **SECRETARY KERRY:** Well, we are very disappointed in that, obviously. And you are
2 absolutely correct. It has not been successfully implemented. We are pushing in the
3 region to see if we can get a consensus about ways in which we might approach that,
4 and that is part of the consideration of what we should talk about in classified session.

5 **SENATOR KAINE.** I view that as important. Again, just to underscore the point,
6 where you have division here over something like what is the right military step, that is
7 going to make it complicated. But where you have unanimity that we want to be the
8 largest provider of humanitarian access and we want to do what we can to provide
9 unimpeded access in the country, that is a place I think where much can be done. So I
10 look forward to that discussion.

11 The next question I will ask and my last question is when you were here a year
12 ago, I asked you a question that is a budgetary matter but also a policy matter. For a
13 number of years, the State Department had assessed that the training of embassy
14 security personnel needed to be done in a more thorough way with better facilities and
15 better coursework.

16 Prior to the horrible attack on Benghazi in September of 2011, the State
17 Department had identified a training facility on a BRACed Army base in Virginia, Fort
18 Pickett, and it indicated that was going to be the training facility for embassy security
19 personnel needs.

1 After the attack in Benghazi, the ARB report recommended as a key
2 recommendation, recommendation 17, that security training had to be improved. The
3 State Department in response to that recommendation said we are going to do it and we
4 have identified the site. We have looked for it for years. It is going to be at Fort Pickett,
5 and we are going to get moving on it.

6 Last winter, February or March, largely in sort of a back and forth between the
7 State Department and the OMB, that plan to proceed in Fort Pickett was slowed down.

8 I asked you about it a year ago. We are here a year later, and there has not been
9 any appreciable movement on the proposal to upgrade the security training in this
10 instance of State Department personnel.

11 If an enhanced security training facility at Fort Pickett was a good idea before
12 Benghazi, my assessment is in the aftermath of Benghazi with an ARB recommendation,
13 it is a better idea. Why have we not moved forward on this with more dispatch?

14 **SECRETARY KERRY:** Well, we are moving forward. The reason it did not go forward
15 as rapidly as you would have hoped or I would have hoped was from somewhere — I
16 am not even sure of the details — there was a suggestion of an alternative site that had
17 to be evaluated. It was properly evaluated. Due diligence was done. The Department
18 is 100 percent determined that Fort Pickett is the best site. It is the site that we want to
19 work with you to go forward on. There is no question of that. And we want to try to do

1 that as fast as we can. There was coordination with the Defense Department and the
2 intelligence community, et cetera. Fort Pickett is the site.

3 **SENATOR KAINE.** Thank you, Mr. Secretary.

4 Mr. Chair, I would just say in our travels, when I see these foreign security
5 officers like in Lebanon living on a compound and they get 6 hours a week and that is
6 all they get off compound, and they have to be accompanied by security, I do not think
7 we should be penny wise and pound foolish on security training for our FSO's. I think
8 it is an important initiative, and the ARB report recommends with an underline and an
9 exclamation point that we ought to be moving more quickly. Thank you, Mr.
10 Chairman.

11 **THE CHAIRMAN.** I agree with the Senator. As you know from our embassy security
12 bill, there are provisions as it relates to this. And you have been the most successful
13 member today. You got a very direct, specific, positive answer.

14 [Laughter.]

15 **THE CHAIRMAN.** Senator Rubio?

16 **SENATOR RUBIO.** Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

17 Thank you for being here, Mr. Secretary. I appreciate it very much.

18 I also want to thank you in your written testimony for mentioning the crisis in
19 Venezuela. I wanted to talk about that briefly.

1 As you know, they had elections about a year ago in Venezuela where there were
2 credible reports of irregularities, but even leading up to the election, the government
3 controls all the modes of communication, denying the opposition airtime, meanwhile
4 dominating the airtime for the government. Of course, the government there has
5 invested heavily in these armed militias called colectivos, which are basically these
6 neighborhood groups armed by the government who go out intimidating and in fact
7 shooting and killing protestors in the current protests that are going on. They have
8 jailed members of the opposition. They control the courts. About 90 percent of the
9 judges in Venezuela or a significant percentage of the judges in Venezuela serve on a
10 provisional basis, which means at any point they could be removed by President
11 Maduro if he chose to do so. In fact, they recently removed a member of their national
12 assembly because she, according to them, had the gall of appearing at the Organization
13 of American States and traveling abroad to condemn what is happening within that
14 country.

15 In addition, as you are well aware, in July of 2009, the General Accounting Office
16 found that the so-called Bolivarian National Guard, the Venezuelan National Guard, is
17 deeply involved in the trafficking of illicit narcotics. And as you know, our
18 Government has significant concerns about senior Venezuelan Government officials
19 being involved as well in transnational criminal activities, including people like Mr.
20 Hugo Carvajal, Mr. Henry Rangel Silva, the former defense minister and now is the

1 governor of Trujillo State. Mr. Tarek el-Assami, who was the governor of Aragua State,
2 a congressman by the name of Freddy Bernal, and last but not least, the President of
3 their own congress, Mr. Diosdado Cabello. All of these are people we have concerns
4 about in terms of their engagement in transnational criminal activity.

5 So here is my question. Why can we not just say what is obvious to anyone who
6 sees these facts that the Government of Venezuela is not and does not comport itself as
7 a democracy and in fact, because of all of these activities and others and violence against
8 their own people, have lost the legitimacy of a government? Are we prepared to say
9 that as a matter of stated policy of the United States?

10 **SECRETARY KERRY:** Senator, first of all, let me thank you for and congratulate you
11 for your leadership on this because it is important. I appreciate enormously the clear
12 message in Senate resolution 365 that deplores the repression and the violence against
13 the people of Venezuela. And we have spoken out against it and criticized their
14 ridiculously contrived attacks on us as somehow being engaged in doing things that we
15 have not been engaged in and so forth.

16 Right now, we are very supportive of third party mediation efforts that are
17 aimed at trying to end the violence and see if we cannot get an honest dialogue to
18 address the legitimate grievances of people in Venezuela. Even as we are sitting here
19 today, I think the UNASUR delegation is meeting in Caracas, and for the first time, the
20 government and the opposition is going to be meeting today as we meet here. So this is

1 a very delicate time in the possibility of a negotiation, and I do not think we should — I
2 do not want to do something today that provides cannon fodder for them to use me or
3 us as an excuse to say this is why they have to do things.

4 **SENATOR RUBIO.** And I understand that concern.

5 I mean, my bigger concern is that our interests in stability, which is what the
6 hope of this negotiation would be, somehow takes precedent over our stated foreign
7 policy of standing always on the side of liberty, freedom, democracy, respect for human
8 rights, all of which are being systematically abused. And I think it is important for the
9 people in Venezuela to know that the United States condemns these acts of violence that
10 are going on and all the other things that I have mentioned. And I just do not
11 understand why we cannot look to this and say, by the way, just because you had an
12 election does not make you a democracy. There are other aspects of democracy, and
13 this government in Venezuela does not behave like a democracy.

14 **SECRETARY KERRY:** They are putting that to the test. There is no question about it,
15 Senator, and I do not disagree with you. We have spoken out. I have issued statements
16 personally. I called the foreign minister some time ago to weigh in. We have had our
17 people, as you know, on the ground speaking out. So I do not think there is any
18 question for the people of Venezuela where we stand.

19 The question is, is there a way to protect those people and earn for them the
20 ability to be able to get out of jail, express their rights in the political process, and fight

1 for the future of their country? I think let us let this meeting take place. Let us see what
2 happens. And there is time for me and you and others to work on this and see if we
3 have to go a different road forward.

4 **SENATOR RUBIO.** I have one more question about another part of the hemisphere.

5 Last summer, the Cuban regime was caught smuggling over 240 tons of weapons
6 to North Korea in violation of international law. The United Nations has confirmed
7 this. In fact, it is the largest interdiction of weapons to or from North Korea since the
8 UN sanctions were imposed. What has been the United States' reaction to that? What
9 have we done in reaction to this violation of UN sanctions?

10 **SECRETARY KERRY:** We are working directly with the DPRK Sanctions Committee
11 at the UN in order to ensure a vigorous response, to shine a light on this activity, and to
12 get accountability for what has happened. In our dialogue with them, we have thus far
13 focused on the individuals who have been involved in this and the entities involved in
14 it. So in March, along with likeminded states, we pushed to make the Panel of Experts
15 report public on the incident. That was released. It is the first time the Panel of Experts
16 report has been made public since June of last year. And we have made clear that this
17 violates the sanctions, and Cuba's interpretation of the UN Security Council resolution
18 is incorrect. So we intend to review the results of the UN process and try to see if we
19 can get a united multilateral response.

1 **SENATOR RUBIO.** Would you agree that this evidence that is now out there before
2 the public is strong evidence of the fact that Cuba remains a state sponsor of terrorism?

3 **SECRETARY KERRY:** Well, in this sense, they have exported weapons, and that is
4 certainly would contribute to that judgment. But in other respects, it is a question —
5 you know, it still does not fit the legal definition, Senator. But you and I in a common
6 sense point of view would say this is —

7 **SENATOR RUBIO.** What about holding an American hostage like Mr. Alan Gross?

8 **SECRETARY KERRY:** It is an act of personal terror. It is not international terrorism
9 under the sense of the definition that fits for the designation.

10 I will tell you that I think just today Alan Gross announced that he is going to
11 engage in a hunger strike. We are deeply involved in this. I met with his family just a
12 few weeks ago, a month ago or so. We have a number of efforts underway, which I
13 would be happy to talk to you about privately. But we are very, very focused on trying
14 to get Alan Gross out of there. His treatment is inhumane, and he is wrongfully
15 imprisoned.

16 **THE CHAIRMAN.** Mr. Secretary, let me just add on selling weapons to North Korea
17 in violation of Security Council resolutions, the only country in the western hemisphere,
18 the largest such violation of the Security Council resolution by any country is in my
19 view a pretty significant terrorist act.

20 Senator Shaheen?

1 **SENATOR SHAHEEN.** Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

2 Mr. Secretary, thank you very much for being here and for all of your efforts to
3 address so many conflicts and hotspots around the world.

4 I understand that nobody has yet mentioned today the recent election in
5 Afghanistan, and while we do not have a full report in, the early reports are that that
6 election was significant, that the turnout was over 60 percent. And it is a real tribute to
7 the people of Afghanistan that they came out in defiance of threats from the Taliban. It
8 is also a tribute to all of the military efforts on the part of the United States and the
9 international community and the diplomatic efforts and the economic assistance
10 programs that the United States has provided to Afghanistan. So let me congratulate
11 you and everyone at the State Department who has worked so hard to support the
12 people of Afghanistan.

13 One of the programs that the State Department is currently engaged in that I
14 have worked on is the Afghan special immigrant visa program. And as we are
15 preparing for the transition in Afghanistan, I believe that there is still a continued need
16 for us to ensure that all of those Afghans who have helped our men and women on the
17 ground there who are threatened — they and their families are threatened — have the
18 opportunity to try and come to this country to rebuild their lives.

19 And I wonder if you can update me on the status of the program. There were
20 some issues that were not working very well with the program last year that I know the

1 State Department has been addressing. Can you give us an update on how those are
2 going?

3 **SECRETARY KERRY:** I would be delighted to, Senator. Thank you for your
4 comments at the beginning of your question.

5 Let me just say quickly about the Afghan election. I want to join you. A couple
6 of people did mention sort of in passing that it happened.

7 But this is very significant, but I do not want to over-blow it because it is the first
8 one and you have to get through the runoff and there are still challenges. But
9 nevertheless, millions of Afghan men and women went to the polls, and they voted for
10 their next president. It is something that was unfathomable not so long ago. People
11 wondered if this could be achieved.

12 The last couple of months in Afghanistan, there was a full and open, flourishing
13 debate in Afghanistan as people listened to the candidates. And I think what is really
14 important to understand is this was owned and operated, managed, run by Afghans. It
15 was their election commission. It was their rules. They put this together. They made
16 this happen. And I give great credit to President Karzai who appointed the
17 commission, played by the rules, helped make this happen, to all the people who have
18 been invested in this. And their army helped provide the security. We helped with the
19 planning and laid out some of the thoughts about it, but they helped execute it. So it is
20 very important. It is a critical step forward.

1 There will be challenges ahead. I do not want anybody to suggest this smoothes
2 the way completely at all. There are big challenges. But this is important.

3 Now, on the special immigrant visas, we have improved the processing times.
4 We have expanded the outreach to current and former employees who may be eligible.
5 We have issued more special immigrant visas in Afghanistan and in Iraq, incidentally,
6 than at any time in any previous year. Since October of last year, more than 2,000
7 Afghans, interpreters, their family members, have received special immigrant visas.
8 There were over 700 principal applicants and more than 1,300 of their dependent family
9 members. And in the first 5 months of this year, we have issued more SIV's to Afghans,
10 to their dependents than in all of last year. So I think there is a lot of work being done,
11 even as we are maintaining the standards that you want and other people want with
12 respect to the program itself. And I think the current allocation of visa numbers, the
13 3,000 that are allocated, should get us through this year, but it will not be enough to
14 handle the cases in the pipeline. We are going to have to expect that new applications
15 are going to have to be approved as we go forward.

16 **SENATOR SHAHEEN.** Well, thank you. I certainly look forward to continuing to
17 work with the State Department on that program.

18 On a note that is not so positive, last week it came to light that the State
19 Department's Office of Inspector General has discovered that over the past 6 years,
20 contracts worth more than \$6 billion have lacked complete and in some cases no records

1 and that many of the files for contracts supporting our U.S. mission in Iraq could not be
2 located. So I wonder if you could tell us what actions the State Department is taking in
3 response to the concerns that have been raised by the Inspector General.

4 **SECRETARY KERRY:** Well, let me begin by saying that we had not had an Inspector
5 General at the State Department for 3 and a half years or more. There was no Inspector
6 General.

7 **SENATOR SHAHEEN.** And I appreciate your swift action to try and finally get one
8 hired.

9 **SECRETARY KERRY:** I decided that needed one. It is important. It is an important
10 part of oversight. And so I hired Steve Linick who is our current Inspector General who
11 came from FHFA, but who also has been a former Federal prosecutor. He is an
12 outstanding attorney and a good person for the job.

13 And I welcome the oversight. That is number one.

14 Number two, I began this process looking at the possible sort of liabilities. It
15 came from my time here on the committee. When I traveled to Afghanistan, I saw the
16 contracting and recognized the corruption that existed in Afghanistan itself and other
17 problems. So when I first came in, I told folks we got to really get a handle on what is
18 happening here.

19 What we found is and what this Inspector General report confirms is there have
20 been some problems in just paperwork management. No \$6 billion has been lost. The

1 money is accountable. But it is keeping up with the paperwork. And part of the
2 problem is, I have learned — and this is important to the budget process — every single
3 entity of Government where we are managing contracting is under-resourced, under-
4 staffed, and it is hard to be able to keep up with the paper. Now, you say why not go
5 electronic. Well, in some of these places, electronic is not exactly an option in
6 Afghanistan or other places. But it takes people. And so we are under-resourced with
7 respect to that.

8 But we are on it. The Deputy Secretary of State for Management is pursuing this
9 completely. We will have a report to the Inspector General showing exactly where they
10 are and where they are going. And this is a good process. I think people should
11 welcome this kind of oversight and accountability. It helps us get on top of things.

12 **SENATOR SHAHEEN.** Thank you.

13 **THE CHAIRMAN.** Senator Johnson?

14 **SENATOR JOHNSON.** Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

15 Mr. Secretary, welcome back. You left this committee and took on your new role
16 at the same time I joined this committee, and it has been a rather momentous time in
17 history. I think most Americans would really like to concentrate on the enormous
18 domestic challenges, but reality is pretty well smacking us all in the face. Like Senator
19 Risch, I do not envy you or the President's tasks having to grapple with these enormous
20 challenges, kind of evidenced by this hearing.

1 I would like to concentrate on what I think is right now the most pressing of all
2 these problems, and it really is going back to Ukraine and our relationship with Russia.
3 I was part of the bipartisan delegation that was there the day before they took the vote
4 in Crimea. And certainly as we were meeting with Prime Minister Yatsenyuk, you
5 could see the stress in his face. It was pretty sobering. I think we could also sense the
6 disappointment that the United States was not even willing to offer small arms and
7 ammunition to support the courageous people of Ukraine.

8 In response to my question, I was asking, well, what can we do. What can we do
9 to support Ukraine? And Prime Minister Yatsenyuk, first of all, made the statement
10 that Vladimir Putin will not respond to words. He only responds to action.

11 Now, in your testimony here, you say you have made it clear about our deep
12 concerns and we will not hesitate to use 21st century tools. I just want to ask what are
13 we going to do. What actions are we going to take to change the calculus of Vladimir
14 Putin who will only respond to action? What are we going to do to make the price high
15 for Vladimir Putin if he continues the provocations? You are saying it is a contrived
16 crisis, contrived pretexts.

17 Bottom line. The reason we heard from this administration they were not willing
18 to provide arms is we thought it would create a provocation. Well, he does not need
19 provocation. What Vladimir Putin needs is deterrence. What are we going to do to
20 deter Vladimir Putin from going further in Ukraine?

1 **SECRETARY KERRY:** Well, we are doing it.

2 **SENATOR JOHNSON.** Just a minute. They mocked at our last set of sanctions.

3 **SECRETARY KERRY:** I beg your pardon?

4 **SENATOR JOHNSON.** They mocked our last set of sanctions.

5 **SECRETARY KERRY:** The last set were not mocked. The first round met with some
6 — because I think people’s expectations were higher.

7 But, look, Senator, you know this, in dealing with human nature and with
8 problems, that you want to aim before you shoot. And I think it is clear that we have
9 huge capacity to have an impact. You know, they are not incapable of analyzing
10 America’s capacity here with respect to banking and finance and movement of people
11 and so forth.

12 So what we wanted to do initially was make it clear there is going to be action.
13 And the Europeans have marched together with us in partnership here in unanimous
14 form. And that has a profound impact because Europe does a lot more business with
15 Russia than we do.

16 **SENATOR JOHNSON.** But Vladimir Putin, as you say, he is creating this provocation.
17 They are moving into cities in Ukraine. He is setting up the exact same circumstances as
18 he did in Georgia, as he did in Crimea.

19 **SECRETARY KERRY:** Could be, but he could also not be. And I do not have the
20 answer to exactly what step he is going to take when. What I do know is that we are

1 sending a signal today of the clarity of our intention to use whatever sanction is
2 necessary if they continue. Now, that is clear. And that is taking full aim. And the
3 question is will that have an impact or will it not.

4 I think given the fact that yesterday at their initiation, they called us to suggest
5 that it was important to have a meeting to try to deal with this. I am not going to place
6 any stock in a meeting. I am not going to place it on words. It has got to be actions. But
7 you got to sit down and at least find out.

8 **SENATOR JOHNSON.** Of course, that is my point. What actions? The former
9 Governor of your State, Governor Romney, was pretty well mocked by this President
10 when he said that Russia was America's greatest geopolitical foe. He wrote an
11 interesting column. I just want to read part of it. Why across the world are Americans'
12 hands so tied? Which kind of seems like we are. A large part of the answer is our
13 leader's terrible timing. In virtually every foreign affairs crisis we have faced these past
14 5 years, there is a point when America had good choices and good options. There was a
15 juncture when America had the potential to influence the event, but we failed to act at
16 the propitious moment. The moment having passed, we were left without acceptable
17 options. And he went on to say it is hard to name even a single country that has more
18 respect and admiration for America today than when President Obama took office.
19 And now Russia is in Ukraine.

1 If you disagree with that, can you name a country that has greater respect for
2 America 5 years later?

3 **SECRETARY KERRY:** I can name lots of countries that have greater respect for us as
4 we are attempting to move people out of Guantanamo, as we end a war in Iraq, as we
5 are beginning to draw down in Afghanistan, as we stand up for human rights, as we are
6 the single greatest supporter of the humanitarian effort in Syria, as we do countless
7 things, as we save 5 million kids' lives in Africa with our program on AIDS. There are
8 many things that people admire about what we are doing.

9 Are there problems? Sure, there are problems. In different parts of the world,
10 there is greater sectarianism, greater religious extremism, greater radical Islam presence
11 in various places. Are you going to dump all of that on the United States of America? I
12 mean, please.

13 This is a complicated world, my friend. And the fact is the United States I think
14 is doing an amazing amount with some handicaps I might add. You know, a budget
15 that is getting smaller, not bigger, having to hold back on what we are doing in certain
16 countries, having to cut in certain places what we have been doing to try to help people
17 educate or change or provide health care or do some of the things we do.

18 So I think you need to look carefully at this kind of talk about the action that
19 produces the differential. President Putin did not decide to do what he did in Crimea

1 because of something the United States did or did not do. He decided to do it because
2 he could and it was in his interest.

3 **SENATOR JOHNSON.** And he did not feel he would pay a price. Trust me. I totally
4 blame Vladimir Putin. If there is blood shed, it is because of Vladimir Putin, but we
5 have to deter.

6 **SECRETARY KERRY:** You have to measure price in certain ways. Is he paying a
7 price? His oligarchs are not able to travel to various places. They are losing money.
8 The ruble has gone down 7 percent. There is an impact in Europe. I think he has had a
9 massive change in public opinion in Ukraine. People who once felt better about Russia
10 do not today. He has united many Ukrainians, even those who are Russian speaking,
11 against Russia.

12 **SENATOR JOHNSON.** But he is still sending in agents under the pretext for further
13 action. He has not been deterred.

14 **SECRETARY KERRY:** Yes, he is. No, he has not stopped doing that. That is accurate.

15 But there are, I think, legitimate questions, before you pull the trigger, that need
16 to be answered about what they may or may not be willing to do in the next days. They
17 are willing to meet with Europe, with Ukrainians. That is a step forward. They are
18 willing to sit with the interim government of Ukraine, with Europe, with the United
19 States in an effort to sort of plot a road ahead. And we have made it clear the
20 imperative to de-escalate, the imperative to demobilize, the imperative to move troops.

1 After my meeting in Paris, they did announce the drawback of one particular battalion,
2 not enough yet, not what we are obviously looking for, but a first signal.

3 And the question now is can some of their other legitimate interests be met in a
4 way that is appropriate, which does not invite illegitimate interests to also be mixed into
5 the batch. And that is the key. I do not know the answer to that question yet, and I do
6 not think we will until we meet.

7 But I do think that given the serious implication of the sector sanctions, we owe it
8 to ourselves and to everybody to exhaust the possible remedies that the diplomatic
9 process might provide. We have not done that yet, and we are going to find out.

10 Obviously, yesterday was a step backwards. No question about it. And we have
11 spoken out loudly and clearly as a consequence of it and made clear what our
12 determination is.

13 **SENATOR JOHNSON.** America must face reality, and hope is not a strategy. Thanks.

14 **THE CHAIRMAN.** Let me congratulate Senator Murphy on behalf of his State. He is
15 proudly wearing his UConn pin. I know there are other members of the committee who
16 will not feel — but we appreciate the excellent game of both sides, but we want to
17 congratulate Senator Murphy as he is beaming today. So, Senator Murphy.

18 **SENATOR MURPHY.** Thank you very much, Mr. Chairman. We wear our Huskies
19 allegiance on our sleeve and also on our lapel.

20 Secretary Kerry, thank you very much for being here today.

1 I think there are a number of guiding principles behind Putin's foreign policy.

2 One of them clearly is to reestablish control over what he calls the "near abroad."

3 But one of them also is to do whatever he can to poke a stick in the eye of the
4 United States. While I certainly understand some of the arguments and some of the
5 interests by Members of the Senate to arm the Ukrainian military, in a lot of ways that
6 plays directly into his hands by creating a military contest in Ukraine between the
7 United States and Russia. And if this is ultimately just a geopolitical battle between the
8 United States and Russia over Ukraine, we lose because we are playing in his back yard,
9 and we are not willing to play by the same rules that he is willing to play by.

10 And so, Mr. Secretary, I guess I want to ask you a question about how we take
11 steps to insert the Ukrainians back into this discussion about their future relationship
12 with Russia. I maybe want to ask that in sort of two ways.

13 One, how do we shift the diplomatic conversations from conversations between
14 you and Lavrov to conversations that truly make sure that the Ukrainians are part of
15 that discussion?

16 And second, what are the things that we can do, leading up to the May 25th
17 elections, to make sure that they come off in a free and fair manner and the Russians
18 have no ability between now and then to try to influence that choice? Clearly, we are
19 getting some really, really discouraging signals about some of the actions that Russians
20 are taking on the ground today to try to intimidate candidates, perhaps to try to

1 dissuade people from coming out to the polls. What we have heard over and over
2 again is that this is a revolution of dignity in Ukraine, that they want control over their
3 destiny. Again, how do we put them at the center of these political deliberations? How
4 do we support the upcoming elections to make sure that they actually get to register a
5 free and fair choice?

6 **SECRETARY KERRY:** Well, Senator, thank you. Terrific question. And
7 congratulations on the Huskies.

8 We have been really working — I mean, we have been very sensitive to and I
9 think proactive in our efforts to make certain that everything is emanating from the
10 Ukrainians. And so we have said very, very clearly that no decision will be made for
11 Ukraine without Ukraine.

12 I talk to Prime Minister Yatsenyuk regularly before I have a meeting, after I have
13 a meeting, and in between in order to make sure that we are listening very, very
14 carefully to what they need and do not want. But they do want us engaged, and they
15 do want us supporting them in the way that we are through these discussions.

16 Now, yesterday in my conversation with Foreign Minister Lavrov, I said it was
17 really important for him to have a conversation directly with the foreign minister of
18 Ukraine. And he said I intend to call him after we have talked, and he did. And they
19 had a good conversation from what I understand and agreed to sort of try to come to
20 this meeting and see if we can work constructively going forward.

1 Now, look, I have been around long enough to know that scheduling a meeting,
2 having a meeting does not solve the problem necessarily, and it cannot become a
3 camouflage for the realities that have to change on the ground. We all understand that.
4 But if you do not talk and you do not try to arrive at some understanding of what the
5 steps are that become the actions that are measurable, you are never going to get there
6 and things spiral out of control and become worse.

7 So what we are trying to do is manage the process going forward with a clarity
8 that things were professed before going into Crimea that were not upheld. Statements
9 were made about not violating the integrity of Ukraine, and they did. And so all of
10 these protests and/or proffers have to be taken with a grain of salt pending the process.

11 So we will continue to work very closely with Ukrainians. Our Ambassador on
12 the ground, Jeff Pyatt — you guys have met him — is terrific. He is very engaged. He
13 is listening carefully. And we are talking regularly with all of the members of the
14 interim government.

15 Now, with respect to the election, it is interesting that in our last meeting in Paris,
16 while not accepting the legitimacy necessarily, there was no effort to change the date of
17 the election. There was no sense that that is not going to go forward. Now, yesterday
18 raises some question marks about that, and they are concerning obviously. But we will
19 continue to try to work.

1 And I might add it is not just us. All of our European partners, countless other
2 people are invested in this notion that what has happened is a violation of the
3 international order, a structure by which we have dealt since World War II in
4 recognizing boundaries of countries and sovereignty and integrity of territory. And
5 that is a serious issue. And so that is all going to have to be resolved in the days ahead
6 going forward.

7 **SENATOR MURPHY.** Just a quick word, Mr. Chairman, about our ambassador there.
8 I do not think he has taken a day off or a half a day off or an hour off since this crisis
9 erupted. And I will just note that he was voted out of this committee and out of the
10 Senate expeditiously so that he was on the ground in time to know the country, learn
11 the players so that he was ready to go when this crisis erupted, having no idea at the
12 moment of his confirmation that he would be needed in this way. It is just another
13 advertisement for why the Senate needs to move with all deliberate speed on nominees
14 because you never know when they are going to be badly needed on the ground.

15 **SECRETARY KERRY:** Well, thank you, Senator. I appreciate that very much. And
16 you are right.

17 **THE CHAIRMAN.** Senator McCain?

18 **SENATOR MCCAIN.** I thank you, Mr. Chairman.

19 Secretary Kerry, I watched with great interest some of your comments. May I
20 say I think you are about to hit the trifecta? Geneva II was a total collapse, as I

1 predicted to you that it would be. The only tangible result is that people who went to
2 Geneva for the Free Syrian National Council — their relatives were kidnapped. The
3 Israeli-Palestinian talks, even though you may drag them out for a while, are finished.
4 And I predict to you even though we gave the Iranians the right to enrich, which is
5 unbelievable, those talks will collapse too. You can talk about Mali and you can talk
6 about other places in the world, but on the major issues, this administration is failing
7 very badly.

8 On the issue of Ukraine, my hero, Teddy Roosevelt, used to say talk softly but
9 carry a big stick. What you are doing is talking strongly and carrying a very small stick,
10 in fact, a twig. What has been done so far as a result of the Russian dismemberment of
11 Ukraine in violation of a treaty that they signed and returned for the nuclear inventory
12 of Ukraine, which was then the third largest nuclear power, some individual sanctions,
13 some diplomatic sanctions, suspension not removal from the G-8, and now more threats
14 to come.

15 I predicted that Putin would go into Crimea because he could not bear to give up
16 Sevastopol because he is what he is. And I am now very concerned, because of our lack
17 of response, whether he will foment discontent in the manner which he is now, which
18 will then demand autonomy for parts of eastern Ukraine.

19 And when the foreign minister of Russia lies to your face once, twice, three, four
20 times, I would be very reluctant to take his word for anything.

1 So here we are with Ukraine being destabilized, a part of it dismembered, and we
2 will not give them defensive weapons. I take strong exception to Mr. Murphy's
3 statement, we do not want to provoke. We do not want to provoke Vladimir Putin by
4 giving these people the ability to defend themselves after their country has been
5 dismembered and there are provocations going on? That I say to you, sir, is the logic of
6 appeasement. The logic of appeasement.

7 I want to know and I think the American people should know and, maybe most
8 importantly, the people of Ukraine should know why will we not give them some
9 defensive weapons when they are facing another invasion, not the first, but another
10 invasion of their country. It is just beyond logic. And frankly, when we do not give
11 people assistance to defend themselves then, just as the Syrian decision, it reverberates
12 throughout the entire world. I would like to know why it is not at least under serious
13 consideration to give them some defensive weapons with which to defend themselves.

14 **SECRETARY KERRY:** Well, Senator, let me begin with the place that you began with
15 your premature judgment about the failure of everything. I guess it is pretty easy to lob
16 those judgments around particularly well before the verdict is in on any of them.

17 Geneva II, my friend, I said will not succeed maybe for a year or 2. But if the
18 truth is there is no military solution and there is only a political solution, you have to
19 have some forum in which to achieve it. You know, the talks on Vietnam — you know
20 this better than anybody — went for how many years? Years. It took them a year to

1 design the table to sit around. So I had no expectations that Assad's calculation is going
2 to change in time for the first meeting or second meeting.

3 But what we learned is that the Syrian regime was completely unwilling to
4 negotiate in any serious way, which helps in terms of the opposition, and the opposition
5 showed itself to be quite capable and that was important. And 40 nations took it
6 seriously enough, Senator, to come in order to make it clear you needed a political
7 solution. Now, that is a beginning. That is all it is. I understand that.

8 But if Syria is ever going to be resolved, it is going to be through a political
9 process, and that political process, Geneva II, is now in place, though the moment is not
10 ripe because we still have to change Assad's calculation. And you know, as well as I do,
11 because you and I have talked about that, that that has yet to happen and it has to
12 happen.

13 Secondly, Israel-Palestine. It is interesting that you declare it dead, but the
14 Israelis and the Palestinians do not declare it dead. They want to continue to negotiate.

15 **SENATOR MCCAIN.** We will see, will we not, Mr. Secretary.

16 **SECRETARY KERRY:** I beg your pardon?

17 **SENATOR MCCAIN.** We will see.

18 **SECRETARY KERRY:** Well, yes, we will see.

19 **SENATOR MCCAIN.** It has stopped. Recognize reality.

1 **SECRETARY KERRY:** We will see where the reality is as we go down the road here.
2 There are serious problems. It is a tough issue. But your friend, Teddy Roosevelt, also
3 said that the credit belongs to the people who are in the arena who are trying to get
4 things done. And we are trying to get something done. That is a Teddy Roosevelt
5 maxim, and I abide by it. I think it is important to do this. Sure, we may fail.

6 And you want to dump it on me. I may fail. I do not care. It is worth doing. It
7 is worth the effort. And the United States has a responsibility to lead not always to find
8 the pessimism and negativity that is so easily prevalent in the world today.

9 And finally, on the subject that you raise about Iran, we are talking. The option
10 is you can go to war. A lot of people are ready to drop bombs all the time. We can do
11 that. We have the ability. But this President and this Secretary of State believe that the
12 United States of America has a responsibility first to exhaust every diplomatic
13 possibility to find out whether we could prove what the Iranians say, that their program
14 is peaceful. Before you ask the American people to go to war, we have an obligation to
15 exhaust the remedies that are available to us in order to legitimize whatever subsequent
16 action we might have to take.

17 Now, we are engaged in eyes-open negotiations. We have no illusions about
18 how tough this is. I am not predicting success, Senator. I am not. But I know we have
19 an obligation to go through this process before we decide to go to war.

1 So that is where we are. You declare them all dead. I do not. And we will see
2 what the verdict is.

3 With respect to arming and providing assistance to the Ukrainians, the fact is that
4 we are currently working with Ukraine to determine their requirements across the
5 entire security sector, and based on those requirements, we are going to review the
6 options with the Congress and find out whether or not we are in a position to provide
7 assistance.

8 But let me tell you something. If we decided today to give them a whole bunch
9 of assistance, you got to train them. You got to do things. Which is the greater
10 deterrent?

11 We happen to believe right now that if the deterrence you are looking for is
12 going to have an impact, the greatest deterrence will come from Putin's recognition of
13 his own vulnerabilities in his economy and his recognition that if we bring sector
14 sanctions, Russia is going to really hurt. I think that is a strong deterrent even as we
15 consider what we do for the long term for military assistance, which will not make a
16 difference fast enough to change this calculation.

17 **SENATOR McCAIN.** Mr. Chairman, I appreciate the time. But facts are stubborn
18 things, as Ronald Reagan used to say. Geneva I, there were 50,000 dead. Geneva II,
19 there were 100,000 and some dead in Syria. Now there are 150,000 dead. Any objective
20 observer will tell you that Bashar Assad is winning on the battlefield from the time

1 when the President of the United States said it is not a matter of whether, it is a matter
2 of when Bashar Assad is going to leave. Nobody says that anymore.

3 Your view of what the Ukrainians need is vastly different from what the
4 Ukrainians think they need, which is a sovereign right to try to defend themselves,
5 which is something that we have done historically, helping people who are struggling
6 against overwhelming odds.

7 I thank you, Mr. Chairman.

8 **SECRETARY KERRY:** Well, John, if I can just say to you, I just said to you we are
9 evaluating with them exactly what their needs are, and we will come back here and ask
10 you —

11 **SENATOR MCCAIN.** They have said what their needs are a long time ago, and you
12 and I could sit down in 15 minutes, knowing what their needs are and that is defensive
13 weapons.

14 **THE CHAIRMAN.** I think you have both made your points.

15 **SECRETARY KERRY:** The greatest single need right now is to get their economy
16 moving and to be economically strong because they will not survive otherwise.

17 **THE CHAIRMAN.** Senator Markey?

18 **SENATOR MARKEY:** Thank you, Mr. Chairman, very much.

19 Mr. Secretary, you talked about the Russian-led unrest in eastern Ukraine. There
20 has now been an announcement that they are going to try to have a referendum in

1 Donetsk on May 11th in front of the presidential election on May 25th. Clearly, the goal
2 of that referendum is to say that part of the country wishes to secede and go back to
3 Russia.

4 Could you talk a little bit about that as it is unfolding as a strategy, a referendum
5 strategy, in Russia and what the administration is thinking about as a strategy to deal
6 with that?

7 **SECRETARY KERRY:** Well, thank you, Senator.

8 That may be the strategy, and if it is, it is very dangerous. And if they proceed
9 down that road, that will be a second swing at a completely illegal, unconstitutional,
10 internationally unsupportable effort to violate the territorial integrity of Ukraine. So
11 nobody has any illusions about what might come with that.

12 Now, the call for that I believe came from some paid individual in Donetsk, not
13 necessarily an announcement per se that that is what is going to happen. And so I think
14 it is unclear. There are representatives of the Ukrainian Government who have gone
15 out there to begin to negotiate the de-occupation of the buildings and the process
16 forward, and I think it is a moving target right now as to exactly what may or may not
17 happen. But the issue is whether the Russians are serious in this discussion that we
18 hope to have next week at resolving these kinds of questions.

19 Part of their complaint right now is that there is an inadequate representation
20 within the constitutional reform process in Ukraine, and they allege that if there is a

1 proper representation and listening to people in the east and the south that that is really
2 what they are after. I do not know the answer to that. If this is camouflage for this
3 other move, we are obviously going to watch extremely carefully, and the President is
4 completely poised to move forward with the sector or other sanctions necessary to
5 respond to this.

6 **SENATOR MARKEY:** So is the EU and the United States working together in terms of
7 pushing for a fair and democratic process in this election? And what concerns do you
8 have about the Russians trying to interfere with this electoral process? And what role
9 do you think we can play with the EU to make sure this next month —

10 **SECRETARY KERRY:** Well, the key is to flood the zone with observers, make sure we
11 have got OSCE. We have asked the UN. We are trying to get as many people in there
12 who can be the truth-tellers, the people who can inform as to exactly what is happening
13 and allow less maneuverability for the pretexts and the contrived situations to try to
14 provide a legitimacy. And I think that is one important thing.

15 The second is to work with the Ukrainians themselves to make sure that all of the
16 instruments for a legitimate, open, free, fair, accountable, accessible election are
17 available.

18 **SENATOR MARKEY:** And I would like, while you are here, just to add one more
19 subject, and that is climate change. It is worsening. The IPCC report actually has

1 shown a telescoped time frame for the dangers that the planet is facing. Could you talk
2 a little bit about that as you see this impact globally?

3 **SECRETARY KERRY:** Well, Senator, I appreciate your asking the question.

4 The impacts of climate change are growing enormously, not significantly, but just
5 enormously at a pace where you know, Senator, very well because you have followed
6 this for years and been a leader on it, all of the scientific analysis that suggested targets
7 that we need to meet in order to hold the carbon levels such that we can hold the
8 warming of the earth at 2 degrees centigrade — we are in excess of them. We are
9 moving beyond them. And we are moving beyond them at a pace that shows us
10 bringing more coal-fired power plants online, more methane being released, which is 20
11 times more potent than carbon, which is the consequence of the warming that is already
12 taking place, more carbon dioxide going into the oceans, which is changing the
13 ecosystem, more fires, more floods, more different weather patterns. I mean, there is
14 just a profoundly impactful, clear, scientifically proven pattern taking place. And all of
15 the predictions of the scientists are not just being met, they are being exceeded both in
16 the rapidity with which it is happening and the level to which it is happening.

17 So given the most recent IPCC report by the UN climate panel, really we have
18 got to respond and we have got to respond rapidly. The margin for error is
19 disappearing. And when I hear people say to me, well, you know, some people still
20 contest the evidence or they contest the science, without any science to contest it, by the

1 way, but they contest it nevertheless — and they say, well, why should we take these
2 measures? What if you guys are wrong? Well, as you know, Senator, better than
3 anybody, if what you are proposing or countless governments across the world are
4 starting to do is wrong, the worst that can happen is they have made themselves more
5 energy independent, they have got cleaner energy, there is less carbon dioxide, less
6 particulates in the air, people are healthier, there are more jobs created in the realm of
7 new energy, alternative energy, renewable energy, all for the better. If the other guys
8 are wrong, the people saying do not listen to it, what is the worst that can happen? The
9 worst that can happen is life as you know it on earth is over.

10 And so I think people in public life have a responsibility to employ the
11 precautionary principle that when you are weighing various concepts and they are
12 supported by science and fact and empirical evidence, there is a responsibility to take
13 action, and I hope we will.

14 **SENATOR MARKEY:** Thank you for your work on that issue, Mr. Secretary, and all
15 the other issues that we have been discussing here today. These are tough, tough
16 issues.

17 **SECRETARY KERRY:** Thank you, Senator. I appreciate it.

18 **SENATOR MARKEY:** They have to be resolved.

19 Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

20 **THE CHAIRMAN.** Thank you.

1 As I call upon Senator Paul, let me say that Kentucky played a really tough,
2 defensive, exciting game, and we appreciate them showing the Nation what Kentucky is
3 all about.

4 **SENATOR PAUL.** I know your consolation is sincere, and I wish I could accept it with
5 a better attitude.

6 [Laughter.]

7 **SENATOR PAUL.** But I am still unhappy with the outcome.

8 Thank you, Secretary Kerry, for coming today.

9 One of the first things or actions that I remember as you began your office was
10 that you reinstated the four employees that were involved and implicated by the review
11 board in Benghazi.

12 It has always, to me, been more of a concern about the decisions that were made
13 in the 6 months in advance of Benghazi than the talking points. In fact, I think the
14 talking points have drowned out some really important decisions we made. We are all
15 human. So these people I am not saying are bad people, but some really bad decisions
16 were made in the 6 months leading up.

17 Two of the big ones that were made I think were that there was a 16-person
18 security team led by Colonel Wood who said we wanted to stay in country and they
19 were not allowed to stay in country.

1 And there was also a request for a plane. And apparently that evening — you
2 know, for a DC-3 that was denied earlier, maybe about 6 months before the attack. That
3 plane would have been important. There was a struggle that evening, you know, to get
4 permission from the Libyans to get a plane. I think the C-30 they were trying to get on
5 was a Libyan plane.

6 So there really, I think, were some bad decisions made. And this does not make
7 the people who made the decisions bad people, but they were bad decisions that were
8 made. There were requests for security that were turned down.

9 Throughout the 6 months preceding the attack on Benghazi, though, a lot of
10 money was spent on things that I think most Americans would say are frivolous and
11 maybe not part of the immediate mission of the State Department. I will give you a few
12 examples.

13 \$100,000 was spent on sending comedians to India. It was the Make Chai Not
14 War tour.

15 \$100,000 was spent getting an electrical charging station in Vienna for the
16 ambassador so he could green up the embassy.

17 \$650,000 was spent on Facebook ads. These are all State Department expenses.

18 \$700,000 was spent on landscaping for the embassy in Brussels.

19 \$5 million was spent on crystal wine glasses and crystal glassware, barware for
20 the State Department for embassies.

1 You can argue the legitimacy of these but it is hard to argue that in the face of the
2 disaster in Benghazi. And it is hard to argue this in the face of people who say, well, we
3 did not have enough money.

4 The other criticism I think that ought to be considered with regard to Benghazi is
5 that — this is something I think the review board did not adequately address — is
6 whether or not in the midst of a country coming out of war, that really the State
7 Department should be in charge of security, whether they can adequately provide
8 security.

9 And I think one of the biggest mistakes in decision — these all happened from
10 your predecessor, not you. But the biggest decision mistake I think in Benghazi was
11 thinking that Benghazi was more like Paris than Baghdad. And had we treated
12 Benghazi as a fortress in the middle of a military base, I think we might have had a
13 better chance. Nobody can predict exactly what could happen with a different
14 outcome. But I think when we have a civil war raging, we have to consider whether or
15 not one of the errors in decision was how we chose to protect or not protect the
16 consulate.

17 Why is this still important? I think it is still important because I am concerned
18 another attack could happen like this in other countries that are under State Department
19 control. I know you are probably well aware of sort of the situation on the ground in
20 Libya, but I do not know that it is perfectly stable. I am concerned whether or not we

1 could have another attack of this magnitude in Tripoli at the embassy. I guess we no
2 longer have any consulate in Benghazi. Correct?

3 **SECRETARY KERRY:** We did not have one then, Senator. It was not a consulate. It
4 was not a consulate.

5 **SENATOR PAUL.** Okay.

6 But anyway, my concern is whether or not we are adequately protected, whether
7 the State Department can adequately protect, and whether or not maybe embassies in
8 war-torn countries or countries emerging from civil war would be better off treated
9 more as we did in the embassy in Baghdad, you know, with a much greater military
10 presence and a much greater military oversight of protection, and whether or not you
11 have looked at the expenses, and if you have not, you will look at some of these
12 expenses that many of us have seen in the press and are aghast that we spent \$100,000
13 sending some comedians to India, \$650,000 on Facebook ads, \$700,000 on landscaping,
14 \$5 million on crystal ware that really, in the face of the Benghazi disaster, we need to
15 reevaluate how we are spending our money at the State Department.

16 **SECRETARY KERRY:** When did the comedians go to India? I am curious.

17 **SENATOR PAUL.** It is all previous to your tenure. I am not blaming this on you.

18 **SECRETARY KERRY:** We could use a few right now.

19 [Laughter.]

1 **SENATOR PAUL.** I do not want to be frivolous about sending some comedians. I
2 mean, really, seriously. There are complaints we do not have enough money for
3 security.

4 **SECRETARY KERRY:** Senator, let me answer your question. It is a good question and
5 it is legitimate.

6 But let me dispel you of any — I keep hearing repeated again and again that
7 there was, quote, no accountability for these people who were involved. Two of them
8 were forced to retire. They retired. And the other two were essentially demoted and
9 took on lesser responsibilities. That is pretty heavy stuff for career people. So this
10 needs to end, this notion that there was no accountability, not just the lives that were
11 changed but the lives lost and the people who were a part of that, but these people
12 obviously paid a price and a significant one.

13 In addition to that, we have gone beyond what the ARB required in the 29
14 requirements. We have done even more with respect to our embassies. Every week I —
15 every meeting that we have every day, as a matter of fact, we start the morning with an
16 8:30 meeting. If I am here, I am there. If I am not, I am informed. But we have a review
17 of our threat levels, and we have too many places where there are threats.

18 We have done an incredible job under the hardest of circumstances hardening
19 sites where they can be, taking unbelievable precautions for our people. And we have
20 done a lot of different things. We have created a new Deputy Assistant Secretary for

1 High Threat Posts who is responsible for making sure they get the focused attention
2 necessary to keep people safe. We have ensured that the staff of diplomatic security go
3 to regular bureau meetings and regional meetings communicating on security issues.
4 We have adjusted work requirements. I am not going to go through all of it. We have
5 got 151 new security personnel. We have got countless Marine detachments slowly
6 going out to provide protection where we can. And all of this has budget implications,
7 obviously.

8 I am puzzled by some of these expenses. I am going to look at them, and I will
9 investigate it.

10 But I think there is an incredible effort underway at the State Department to both
11 tighten the belt but also upgrade our capacity to provide security to all of our people. It
12 is a paramount responsibility of mine and the Department.

13 **SENATOR PAUL.** Do you think it was a mistake to have the ambassador in Benghazi
14 without more significant military protection?

15 **SECRETARY KERRY:** Well, let me speak to — there was a request put in for
16 additional security for Ambassador Stevens, and it was given to him. He had additional
17 numbers of people that went out there with him. The problem is it was not adequate
18 obviously.

1 **SENATOR PAUL.** Well, and quite a bit of it was sort of unofficial militia. I mean do
2 you think it was a good decision to have unofficial militia who basically ran when the
3 time came?

4 **SECRETARY KERRY:** He actually had additional security personnel official within the
5 Department. There was an additional, I think it was, one or two people who were
6 assigned. So his number when he went out there met what he had requested in terms of
7 official State Department personnel. But, obviously, it was not adequate, as we all have
8 sadly learned, to the task of repelling what took place.

9 But the intelligence community has said they had no information about that kind
10 of attack. There was nothing operative on which to be able to make a decision.

11 **SENATOR PAUL.** Are we still using militias, or do we have more of our own people
12 doing protection?

13 **SECRETARY KERRY:** We have more of our own people. We have significantly
14 hardened up the embassy there. I am not going to go into the numbers, but we have a
15 very significant increase in American personnel on the ground. We have much more
16 significant emergency contingency plans, and we are working very, very hard with
17 other countries to work on the overall security issue.

18 I was just in Algeria and Morocco for the security dialogue in the last few days of
19 last week, and we discussed specifically the training of personnel for a rapid response

1 force in Libya and the ability to be able to provide greater training and capacity going
2 forward. I think everybody is concerned about Libya in the current status.

3 **SENATOR PAUL.** Thank you.

4 **THE CHAIRMAN.** Mr. Secretary, we are almost at the end here. I know that Senator
5 Corker has a few comments to make, and then I will close out and we will get you back
6 to the challenges that we all collectively face.

7 **SENATOR CORKER.** Mr. Chairman, thank you.

8 And, Mr. Secretary, thank you for being here.

9 I would like to ask permission that the testimony on September the 3rd be
10 entered into the record, especially as we have highlighted. It tells a very different story
11 about why the administration was asking for the military strike, the limited military
12 strike, that the Secretary alluded to. It is a very different story than the story that is now
13 being told by the administration.

[The information referred to follows:]

[COMMITTEE INSERT]

14 **SENATOR CORKER.** And, Mr. Secretary, I want to say that I know the issues in Syria
15 are very difficult, and I look forward to this detailed briefing we will have soon, one of
16 many that has been promised and has not occurred. And I do not think there are easy
17 solutions.

18 I do think that from a bipartisan standpoint, people are very concerned right
19 now about U.S. credibility, and Syria I think was the beginning of that. I think there are

1 concerns about Ukraine, our actual willingness to go forward and do something after
2 we lost so much credibility around the red line issue and so much credibility on the
3 ground with just people in the neighborhood regarding not following through on
4 commitments that were made. And I know that you know they were made.

5 So, look, I hope the chapter is not written, and I hope we have successes. I think
6 everybody on this committee wants our foreign policy to be successful, and I think
7 under Chairman Menendez's leadership, we have operated in a very bipartisan way.
8 But I will say to you that if things do not change, you in effect could be presiding over a
9 period time where more U.S. credibility is lost than anyone could have imagined and a
10 time when the world is becoming less safe as a result.

11 So I wish you well. I really do. I am very genuine in my thoughts that I am glad
12 you are in a position to try to affect these things, and I have said that over and over
13 again. But I will tell you I think there is genuine concern here about where we are on
14 both sides of the aisle. I think you sensed that today. I do hope that somehow the
15 people that we are dealing with get a sense that we are really willing to do the things
16 that are necessary.

17 And I hope the President will soon — we had a good conversation a few weeks
18 ago — look at sectoral sanctions. If we end up having the troops on the border there
19 much longer, it seems to me that would be a good place to start.

1 But again, a lot of concerns. I thank you for your work and I hope things turn
2 around because I do believe that right now our foreign policy efforts are not yielding
3 the kind of results that you would like to see or we would like to see, and yet, we all
4 want them to be successful.

5 **SECRETARY KERRY:** Well, Senator, if I can comment. Having spent 29 years on this
6 committee, I started way over there in that far end seat and worked my way up to
7 where Senator Menendez is. So I have seen the ups and downs. I have seen the merry-
8 go-round and the rollercoaster of American foreign policy up close and personal.

9 And I will tell you that we are living in a different time. I know the expectations
10 are very high, but at the end of World War II, there was only one country standing, so
11 to speak, and we were magnanimous enough to rebuild Germany and Japan. People
12 opposed it. Many people. Truman had the courage with Marshall to make it happen.
13 The fact is that we could make mistakes either in policy choices or in economy and still
14 win, and we did for a long time.

15 And ultimately in 1990-1991, things changed with the Soviet Union, and that
16 released an enormous amount of pressure in places like what was then Czechoslovakia,
17 now the Czech Republic and Slovakia. It unleashed all kinds of forces everywhere.

18 And so today we are living with a far more, almost 19th century/18th century
19 diplomatic playing field where interests and in some cases mercantilist interests, in
20 other cases just security interests or territorial interests, other kinds of things are raising

1 their head in ways that they did not during the Cold War because they were
2 suppressed.

3 And now with the rise of radical Islam and massive numbers of young people
4 who are filled with aspirations because they are in touch with everybody in the world
5 through the media, the social media, they know what is happening everywhere. I
6 mean, if you look at what happened in Tunisia, it was a fruit vendor who was tired of
7 being slapped around by the police and the corruption in the country and so he self-
8 immolated, and that ignited a revolution and a dictator of 30 years left.

9 In Tahrir Square, that was not the Muslim Brotherhood. It was not religiously
10 driven. It was young people looking for a future.

11 Syria, the same thing. Young people were looking for a future, and when their
12 parents came out to protest, the way they were put down, Assad started shooting them.

13 And that has brought us to where we are today.

14 You know, the United States has power, enormous power, but we cannot
15 necessarily always dictate every outcome the way we want, particularly in this world
16 where you have rising economic powers, China, India, Mexico, Korea, Brazil, many
17 other people, who are players. You know, 11 of the 15 people who used to receive aid
18 from IMF are now donor countries. We are living in a changed world. And governance
19 is not doing very well in many places. Might I add also here, regrettably.

1 So we need to do — all of us — a job of looking into the future and trying to
2 figure out how we are going to stand up for America’s interests and promote them
3 more effectively. And that includes in the budget for foreign policy and in the options
4 that we can put on the table.

5 Now, one final word, if you will permit me. On Syria where we hear this notion
6 that somehow there was a red line and then it was not enforced and somehow it is a
7 sign of weakness. I beg to differ. Facts are stubborn things. The President of the
8 United States made his decision. He said I am going to use military force but he
9 listened to people on the Hill who said if you are going to do that, you ought to come to
10 Congress. Now, maybe some of them were — you know, there were some crocodile
11 tears in that particular plea because when he came to the Congress to accede to the
12 constitutional process of our country and get them to affirm his prerogative to do what
13 he decided to do, there was a resounding reluctance and you fought it. This committee
14 was the sole exception. We know what the Senate floor might have done, and we know
15 what the House would have done. So the President made his decision to use force.

16 But out of my discussions with Lavrov — and, might I add, President Obama’s
17 discussions with Putin at the summit that they had, they talked about an alternative
18 way of doing it without use of force. And so we came to an agreement to remove all of
19 the weapons, not just to degrade some of his capacity over 1 or 2 days or whatever it
20 was going to be.

1 Now, that would have had an impact, yes, on people's thinking, but it would not
2 have changed the fundamental course I believe of what was going to happen. It might
3 have had an impact, though.

4 But I have to tell you the President made his decision, and he was ready to use
5 force. And we actually came up with a better solution, which is to get all of the
6 weapons out, all of them out. And that still leaves us with other options, folks.

7 So I think we need to depoliticize this a little bit and try to find a way forward for
8 us to —

9 **SENATOR CORKER.** Yes. I do not think when you have a bipartisan concern that
10 anybody is politicizing. I take tremendous offense at you making a comment that I
11 have concerns as some kind of political implications when both sides of the aisle have
12 expressed concerns.

13 But let me just say —

14 **SECRETARY KERRY:** When I say depoliticize —

15 **SENATOR CORKER.** Well, well, let me finish.

16 **SECRETARY KERRY:** Senator, I am not directing that at you personally. When I say
17 depoliticize, I mean this whole notion that — you know, I think there are some politics
18 involved in this notion that we are not pressing in enough places on enough things.
19 And I just think that the United States' interests are better served by us trying to find

1 the common ground to move forward on these things rather than falling prey to some
2 of these, I think, sort of stereotypes.

3 **SENATOR CORKER.** I do not think the President made the kind of effort that most
4 Presidents would make in shaping opinion within Congress, but we will let that go.

5 And I will just say in general I cannot imagine that you would feel differently
6 that our move to work with Russia in the way that we did has certainly changed the
7 dynamics in many places. And certainly Iran has been the beneficiary of that. Russia
8 has been the beneficiary of that. We have created an air of permissiveness. There is no
9 question. And I do not see how you can debate that. I mean, scholars on both sides of
10 the aisle understand that to be the fact, and facts are hard to overcome.

11 So, look, you got a tough hand. You have been dealt a tough hand. And I do not
12 know what kind of support you get or not support you get from the White House. But
13 we wish you well. We want to be successful in our foreign policy.

14 But right now I will say I think the steps that we took in Syria have affected us in
15 Iran. They have affected us in the peninsula. They have affected us in Ukraine. China
16 is watching us. It has affected us there. And I hope that somehow during the
17 remainder of your tenure, you are able to turn around our foreign policy in such a way
18 that the statements that have been made are not true but that we have some successes
19 because I think all of us are very concerned.

1 **SECRETARY KERRY:** Well, Senator, look, you have been a terrific help in keeping this
2 committee working with the chairman and cooperating in so many different ways. And
3 I thank you for that. And I know this comes from a genuine concern. I am not
4 suggesting otherwise, I promise you.

5 But I would say to you that I think Russia, with all due respect, is not acting out
6 of strength. I do not believe that Russia has particularly helped itself. Have they
7 accomplished a goal to protect Sevastopol for the time being and to, quote, secure
8 Crimea at least in a military concept if not legitimately in international law? Yes, but at
9 great cost. At great cost.

10 And over time, if you look at Russia's economy, there are real challenges. They
11 are running the risk clearly of isolating themselves further and of losing friends around
12 the world. They have already lost them in Ukraine where people who were once more
13 supportive now feel threatened and frankly abused by what has happened.

14 And if Russia were to come in, I tell you Ukrainians I believe will fight over the
15 long term. That will not be a pretty picture, and I suspect that President Putin
16 understands that.

17 So this is not a hand of strength, and I think we need to, all of us, stay focused on
18 a strategy, on a long-term strategy and recognize that Russia also has far closer ties to
19 Ukraine and far greater interests other than our interests in democracy and freedom,
20 which are huge, but in terms of history, that is where Russian religion comes from. That

1 is where Russian wars of liberation were fought. And they have interests that they are
2 trying to assert I think in the wrong way, but we have to, obviously, counter that and
3 we are. So my hope is that we can write a better chapter going forward, but I am not
4 sitting here telling you naively that that is automatically going to happen.

5 **SENATOR CORKER.** Yes, I would agree with you that Russia has tremendous
6 weaknesses. And I think our hopes are on this committee that their move into Crimea
7 ends up being one of the biggest geopolitical mistakes they could possibly have made. I
8 think our concern is will the administration carry out policies to ensure that that is the
9 case.

10 **SECRETARY KERRY:** I think you heard me pretty clearly today, and I do not doubt
11 this President's resolve one iota. He is clearly going to — he will continue. He has in the
12 last weeks been conversing with all of the leaders personally on the telephone, building
13 the support for this current level of sanctions and for what has yet to come. And we
14 hope it will not have to come because I think that is a challenge for all, but it is
15 something we are ready to effect if we need to.

16 **SENATOR CORKER.** Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

17 **THE CHAIRMAN.** I have listened with interest to the dialogue between you and
18 Senator Corker, and since I gathered the desire to engage in such a dialogue, I let it go
19 on for a while. And I appreciate that.

20 I have one final question and then a closing comment.

1 Mr. Secretary, I said at the very beginning of this hearing that the one part of the
2 budget that most worries me is the western hemisphere. Year after year after year after
3 year, we have seen cuts to the hemisphere even though it is our own front yard. We, in
4 doing so, I think, undermine taking advantage of the economic opportunities,
5 underestimate the security challenges stemming from international criminal
6 organizations, and do not do enough to promote development, educational exchanges,
7 and the consolidation of democracy and the rule of law. And when I look at Central
8 America and the crime rate, I see what is happening in Venezuela, in Ecuador, in
9 Bolivia, I see the challenges in Argentina, and I say to myself there is an enormous
10 agenda here to pursue.

11 So would you commit to working with me to figure out how we can better
12 position the western hemisphere in our budgetary priorities, sir?

13 **SECRETARY KERRY:** I would be delighted to, Senator. Some of the change is a
14 reflection of shifting circumstances, like Colombia is much more capable today and is
15 doing things it was not able to —

16 **THE CHAIRMAN.** I recognize in Colombia and Mexico it is a fact. The problem is
17 that we do not reinvest that money back in the hemisphere. We send somewhere else.

18 **SECRETARY KERRY:** That is a fair comment. That is true. There are choices that
19 have been made in the overall budget allocation process.

1 There are other places like, for instance, in Haiti there were some reductions, but
2 that is a reflection of money in the pipeline. When the money in the pipeline gets used,
3 we will be right back here asking for the same level or more.

4 So there are challenges, and nobody knows it better than you do. And we are
5 happy to sit down and work with you.

6 **THE CHAIRMAN.** Well, let me close the hearing by just making an observation.

7 I think, as you well know, Mr. Secretary, from your service here that the
8 members who choose on this committee are passionate about the views that they have,
9 as has been expressed here today from a wide range. And these views, I think,
10 generally are held in very principled positions. We may not always agree as to them,
11 but they are held in very principled positions. But I would hate for the hearing to end
12 without putting that in context.

13 This committee, on a bipartisan basis, has passed virtually every nomination that
14 the administration sends us from the Secretary all the way on down in a timely basis —
15 what happens on the floor is another challenge — but in a timely basis overwhelmingly.

16 Now, this committee took one of the most significant steps that any Member of
17 the Senate could ever take which is to vote in a bipartisan way for the authorization for
18 the use of force in Syria, which I think we all acknowledge was critical for the President
19 to get Russia to change Assad's calculation on the use of chemical weapons.

1 This committee, in the aftermath of Benghazi, passed in a bipartisan way
2 embassy security legislation.

3 This committee passed OAS reform, PEPFAR reauthorization, previous Iran
4 sanctions that have been vigorously pursued by the administration, most recently
5 legislation on Ukraine.

6 So even though there are very passionate views here in the midst of partisanship
7 on the floor, I am happy to say that we have had a wide breadth of bipartisanship in the
8 committee on the critical issues of the day, working with the administration.

9 And so let me close by saying I have one disagreement with my colleague who
10 said that our foreign policy is spinning out of control. We are facing some of the most
11 intractable challenges. And you, Mr. Secretary, and the administration have sought to
12 go after some of the most intractable challenges that others could have just simply
13 walked away from. And instead of walking away from them, you sought to try to
14 change the course of events for the better.

15 And so from the chairman, I want you to know that I have every confidence in
16 your intellect, in your tenacity, in your capacity to try to meet these challenges. That
17 does not mean we will be successful every time, nor does it mean that we will
18 necessarily agree every time on how to get there, although generally we always agree
19 on what we want to get to.

1 So with the gratitude of the committee for your service and for the time you
2 spent with us here today, I am going to leave the record open until the close of business
3 on Thursday.

4 And the hearing is adjourned.

5 **SECRETARY KERRY:** Mr. Chairman, could I just say you know what a fan I am of
6 this committee, and I appreciate enormously the bipartisan efforts. I really do. Thank
7 you.

[Whereupon, at 12:40 p.m., the hearing was adjourned.]