

Senate Committee on Foreign Relations
Senator Richard Lugar
Statement for Hearing on U.S. Foreign Assistance
June 12, 2007

I join in welcoming Undersecretary Fore. I appreciate the cooperation she has shown to the Committee during her tenure at the State Department. I look forward to her insights related to her new role as the Director of U.S. Foreign Assistance and as the President's nominee to head the United States Agency for International Development.

The Director of U.S. Foreign Assistance is a new position at the Department. It was created by Secretary Rice to oversee and coordinate our government's multi-faceted outreach to countries where poverty, disease, displacement, and other challenges create both a humanitarian imperative and a security risk. Americans have long supported their government's work to save lives and alleviate human misery. Since September 11, 2001, we have acquired new insights into how failing states can provide fertile ground for terrorism.

The Bush administration has expanded U.S. commitments to international economic development. It has increased foreign aid spending and created new funding mechanisms. It has boosted America's focus on crises -- such as the HIV-AIDs epidemic -- that can undermine the fabric of developing societies. And it has sought to promote good government, sound economic policies, and strong social programs focused on human development in poor nations around the world.

Secretary Rice's instinct to seek greater coordination and clarity in the new firmament of foreign assistance is well founded. We should prioritize our goals and design our strategies in ways that are transparent to aid recipients and U.S. taxpayers, alike. We must ensure that we are able to measure the impact of our assistance. Every dollar of foreign assistance should count toward the realization of a more peaceful and prosperous world.

Our witness today is taking over the crucial task of foreign aid coordination that Secretary Rice initiated a little more than a year ago. We will be looking for leadership that strikes the appropriate balance between the need to maintain focus on policy priorities, while at the same time allowing for the flexibility required to address unique challenges in each recipient country.

Because of the importance of this topic to the success of U.S. foreign policy, I have directed the Republican staff of the Senate Foreign Relations Committee to undertake a field-based study of our foreign assistance efforts. Now ongoing, we are examining assistance funded by the State Department, USAID, the Defense Department and other agencies in more than twenty countries in Africa, Asia, Eastern Europe, and Latin America. We are paying particular attention to the new coordination process to see whether and how it is mirrored in the field. We are looking at USAID programs, Section 1206 security assistance, the Millennium Challenge Corporation, the Middle East Partnership Initiative, and the President's Emergency Plan for AIDS Relief. We are also studying how programs run by other U.S. government departments, such as Agriculture, Treasury, and Homeland Security, are coordinated at the embassy level.

In 2006, the Committee staff produced a report entitled: Embassies as Command Posts in the Campaign Against Terror. The report recommended that all security assistance, including Section 1206 funding, be included under the Secretary of State's authority in the new coordination process for rationalizing and prioritizing foreign assistance. I am particularly interested in knowing how Undersecretary Fore views her own role in making certain that our security assistance is properly coordinated and supported by both civilian and military agencies.

I thank Senator Menendez for holding this hearing, and I look forward to the insights of our witnesses.

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