

## Committee Statement of Senator Lugar

### Opening statement by Sen. Dick Lugar at Senate Foreign Relations Committee Hearing on Foreign Assistance Programs

Wednesday, March 26, 2003

It is a pleasure to welcome Assistant Secretaries of State William Burns, Christina Rocca, and James Kelly, as well as USAID Assistant Administrator Wendy Chamberlin to the Committee. We look forward to your testimony and to our discussion of the role that U.S. foreign assistance can play in three strategic regions of the world: the Near East, South Asia, and East Asia.

Since the mid-1980s, Congress has not fulfilled its responsibility to pass a Foreign Assistance Authorization Act. In the absence of such legislation, the job of providing guidance on foreign assistance has fallen to the Appropriations Committees. I am hopeful that our Committee will work together during the coming months to pass a thoughtful Foreign Assistance Authorization bill that carefully examines existing programs and addresses emerging needs.

We appreciated very much the testimony of the Secretary of State last month on the Administration's request to fund the Department's domestic and overseas operations. Understandably, many questions at that hearing focused on broader U.S. policy toward Iraq and North Korea. Today we will probe foreign assistance programs in much greater detail.

In the midst of the current conflict, we hope to learn how the Administration's Fiscal Year 2004 budget request will support U.S. foreign policy interests, including a successful foreign assistance strategy for post-war Iraq. We also must probe how foreign assistance should support efforts to reconstruct Afghanistan, to mitigate the threat of weapons of mass destruction on the Korean Peninsula, to bolster our public diplomacy, and to ensure the security of Americans who travel overseas, including those serving in our embassies.

Today is the first of two hearings the Committee will hold in advance of our deliberations on re-authorizing foreign assistance. I am very pleased that Senator Chafee has agreed to lead the first two segments of our discussion, which will address foreign assistance for the Near East and South Asia. As the subcommittee chair for Near Eastern and South Asian affairs, he has responsibility for those two regions. Senator Brownback, our East Asia and Pacific Subcommittee Chairman, had an unavoidable conflict this morning, so I will preside over the third panel.