

March 1, 2021

The Honorable Carolyn B. Maloney  
Chairwoman  
Committee on Oversight and Reform  
2157 Rayburn House Office Building  
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Chairwoman Maloney,

I am pleased to transmit the 117<sup>th</sup> Congress Oversight Plan for the Committee on Foreign Affairs, along with Additional and Dissenting Views. I look forward to coordinating with you on important matters of oversight in the weeks and months ahead.

Sincerely,

/s/

**GREGORY W. MEEKS**  
Chairman

## **Committee on Foreign Affairs**

### **Oversight Plan**

### **117th Congress**

#### **1. INTRODUCTION**

Pursuant to the requirements of clause 2(d) of House Rule X, the Chairman of the Committee on Foreign Affairs (“the Committee”) has prepared this oversight plan for the 117th Congress, which will be submitted to the Committee on Oversight and Reform and the Committee on House Administration. This plan summarizes the Committee’s oversight priorities for the next two years, subject to the understanding that new developments will undoubtedly affect priorities and work assignments in the months ahead.

Agency and program oversight are key responsibilities of the legislative branch. Committee Rule 15 requires each Subcommittee to hold regular oversight hearings that, according to usual practice, include an annual hearing on the portions of the Administration’s budget request within that Subcommittee’s jurisdiction. Oversight activities will be coordinated between the Committee and the Subcommittees in order to facilitate comprehensive and strategic review of the programs and agencies within the Committee’s jurisdiction.

These Committee activities may include hearings, briefings, reports, and investigations, Member or staff-level meetings, correspondence, fact-finding and oversight travel, reports, and public statements. They may also include effective use and review of reports by the Government Accountability Office and by statutory Inspectors General, as well as Congressional Notifications submitted by executive branch agencies. The Committee will consult, as appropriate, with other committees of the House that may share jurisdiction over relevant issues and activities.

The Committee’s authorization and oversight activities will emphasize:

- effectiveness of U.S. foreign policy;
- effective implementation of U.S. law;
- the review of agencies and programs in the Committee’s jurisdiction;
- effective management and administration, and institutional modernization;
- appropriate resourcing of U.S. foreign policy and programs.
- How the Committee’s work will address issues of inequities on the basis of race, color, ethnicity, religion, sex, sexual orientation, gender identity, disability, age, or national origin.

## 2. PRIORITY OVERSIGHT MATTERS

*a. Russia:* The Committee will address the impact of Russia's foreign and domestic policy on U.S. security, political, and economic interests, as a result of its continued aggression and related hostile actions regarding NATO, the EU, Ukraine, Georgia, Belarus, the United States, and other countries. It will also examine Kremlin-driven efforts to undermine western democratic governments and institutions through cyber intrusions and attacks, disinformation campaigns, malign influence activities, propaganda, and other hybrid warfare tools. The Committee will examine the range of options available to the United States to respond to these actions. The Committee will also review the deteriorating domestic situation in Russia regarding democracy, civil society, the rule of law, the free exercise of fundamental freedoms, and human rights, including its attacks on opposition leader Alexei Navalny and other prominent critics of President Putin and the Kremlin. In addition, the Committee will closely assess strategic stability and related arms control agreements with Russia to reduce the risk of nuclear conflict. The Committee will consult widely with experts and allies to inform the measures the U.S. Government should pursue on these matters.

*b. Ukraine/Georgia:* The Committee will closely monitor Russian-supported separatist activity and other aggressive actions aimed at undermining Ukraine's sovereignty, including the forcible and attempted annexation of Crimea. The Committee will continue to examine the U.S. response to this aggression in light of the long-standing U.S. foreign policy doctrine of non-recognition of territorial changes effected by force alone. The Committee will assess Russia's ongoing aggression in Georgia and consider measures the U.S. Government can take to continue to promote effective, democratic governance in these while turning back Russian intrusion. In addition, the Committee will actively oversee efforts of the U.S. Government, working alongside allies and partners, to assist these countries in strengthening their defense capabilities, promoting economic growth, combating corruption, and promoting an effective and democratic government.

*c. Europe/Eurasia:* The Committee will review U.S. relations with the European Union, individual European countries and relevant regional groupings and multilateral bodies such as the OSCE, and NATO. Key issues include continued reassurance and support the security of our NATO allies, particularly in Central and Eastern Europe; rule of law and border security; U.S.-European cooperative efforts to combat terrorism, white nationalism, anti-Semitism, and other forms of extremism; and diversification of energy sources to reduce reliance on Russian energy. The Committee will focus on strengthening our important strategic and economic relationships with allies and partners in order to bolster American security and promote greater economic growth across the transatlantic community. The Committee will also scrutinize the nexus of populism, alignment of far left and far right political forces and increasingly autocratic governments. Similarly, the Committee will continue to work with the European Union, the United Kingdom, Canada, and other allies and partners to hold the illegitimate Lukashenko regime accountable for its theft of the August 2020 presidential election in Belarus and its continued crackdown on peaceful protestors. The Committee will also continue oversight of U.S. political, security and economic policy in Central Asia and Western Balkans, with a particular focus on strengthening partnerships to advance mutual security interests and European integration where appropriate, including countering violent extremism, as well as efforts to promote economic development with the DFC, human rights, and good governance.

*d. Turkey:* The Committee will examine Turkey's evolving foreign policy orientation and its domestic political trends – including but not limited to its crackdown on domestic freedoms and the rights of minorities, the LGBTQ community, and others; its persecution of U.S. Embassy and Consulate staff in Turkey; its efforts to combat ISIS and the spread of extremism; its role as it pertains to conflict and refugees in Syria; its aggression against the Kurds and in Nagorno-Karabakh; its purchase of the Russian S-400 air defense system; its relationship with the European Union; its continued occupation of the Republic of Cyprus and aggressive actions in the Eastern Mediterranean; and the health of the long term U.S.-Turkey strategic relationship.

*e. Afghanistan:* The Committee will comprehensively review U.S. policy toward Afghanistan. Particular focus will be paid to the Administration's efforts to bring the war in Afghanistan to an end through an intra-Afghan dialogue. The Committee will also pay close attention to the Afghan government's various reform efforts related to addressing corruption, improving governance, electoral reforms, and strengthening security. This review will assess the effectiveness of international aid and U.S. assistance programs, the broader political-military and associated counterterrorism strategies, and the full range of policies related to the post-2020 US-Taliban peace framework agreement.

*f. Pakistan:* The Committee will review all elements of U.S. policy toward Pakistan, including efforts to eliminate safe havens for violent extremists and establish a stable, democratic country. This review will encompass both U.S. civilian and security assistance to Pakistan, in order to assess the extent to which such programs effectively advance U.S. national interests. The Committee will also conduct ongoing oversight of matters relating to Pakistan's nuclear program, including issues relating to nonproliferation, such as the legacy of the A.Q. Khan network and Pakistan's advancing of tactical nuclear weapons

*g. North Korea:* The Committee will review and work to address the threat posed by North Korea. Particular focus will be paid to North Korea's nuclear, chemical and biological weapons programs, its ballistic missile program, and the possible proliferation of these weapons and delivery systems. The Committee will also examine North Korea's conventional weapon sales, other illicit activities, cyber-attacks, human rights violations, as well as U.S. efforts to assist North Korean refugees. The Committee will review U.S. diplomatic efforts, U.S. information dissemination efforts, the implementation of U.S. and international sanctions, the impact of current negotiations on U.S. alliances in Asia, whether the executive branch is keeping the legislative branch fully informed of regional developments and U.S. policy toward North Korea, and consider next steps in U.S. policy to address the North Korean threat.

*h. Indo-Pacific:* The Committee will review the U.S.'s significant political, economic, and security interests in the Indo-Pacific, including East and Southeast Asia, South Asia, and the Pacific Islands. The Committee will conduct oversight of U.S. relations with countries in the Indo-Pacific, including foreign policy, foreign assistance, human rights and democracy, the strength of U.S. relationships with and among alliances and partners, security cooperation, territorial disputes, influence operations and trade. The Committee will evaluate the State Department's participation in multilateral organizations such as the Asia-Pacific Economic Cooperation (APEC) forum, the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN) and the East Asia Summit, and closely monitor any discussion of future trade agreements in Asia. The

Committee will monitor the totality of the U.S. relationship with Taiwan as provided for in the Taiwan Relations Act.

*i. India:* The Committee will review U.S. policy towards India and the continued expansion of bilateral cooperation. Particular attention will be paid to the U.S.-India security relationship, including cooperation on counterterrorism efforts and developments since the 2015 defense framework agreement and India's designation as a "Major Defense Partner." The Committee will also focus on efforts to enhance U.S.-India economic and trade relations, and collaboration on efforts to address global climate change and support for human rights and the international rules-based order, stalled efforts to initiate civil nuclear cooperation and the implications of India's rapidly growing energy demands will also be reviewed.

*j. China:* The Committee will examine China's role in the Asia-Pacific region and beyond. Particular focus will be placed on China's influence operations globally, its assertiveness in territorial disputes, military modernization, and human rights abuses, including treatment of Tibetans, Uyghurs and other religious and ethnic minorities. The Committee will review U.S. export controls related to China. The Committee will also continue to examine policy options with respect to Hong Kong given China's violation of its international obligations under the Sino-British Joint Declaration and commitments enshrined in the Basic Law. In addition, the Committee will examine China's use of economic coercion and role in the global economy, including trade, technology, energy, infrastructure, and its approach to development and foreign assistance, including through China's Belt and Road Initiative. The Committee will review China's cooperation on international nonproliferation efforts against North Korea. The Committee will investigate China's increasing use of cyber and economic espionage to affect foreign trade, and other policy outcomes.

*k. Sub-Saharan Africa:* The Committee will review political, economic and security developments on the African continent, including the rise of geopolitical competition with Russia, China, and among the Gulf Arab States on the continent, and risk of democratic backsliding. Key issues will include efforts to strengthen democratic institutions, advance human rights, promote peace and security, and stimulate investment and equitable economic growth – including through the implementation of the African Growth and Opportunity Act and the Electrify Africa Act. The Committee will also focus on strengthening ties to the African Union and its regional economic communities, which are key partners in facilitating regional economic integration, protecting human rights, and advancing peace and security on the continent. Particular attention is to be paid to developments in the Democratic Republic of the Congo, Nigeria, Sudan, Zimbabwe, South Sudan, Somalia, Ethiopia, South Africa, Kenya, Uganda, Cameroon, Mali, and Niger.

*l. Western Hemisphere:* The Committee will assess the effectiveness of U.S. policy towards the countries of the Western Hemisphere and the strategic importance of a positive U.S. agenda in the Americas, including for those who have been typically excluded including Afro-descendant and indigenous populations. Special emphasis will be placed on developments in political, security and economic cooperation with our partners in Canada and Mexico. Efforts for further collaboration with Argentina and Brazil will also be explored. The Committee will address the security challenges posed by transnational criminal organizations and other illegal armed actors. Challenges to democracy, human rights, the rule of law, anti-corruption efforts and press

freedom in the Americas also will be examined. The Committee will closely monitor the humanitarian crisis in Venezuela and its impact on the Venezuelan people and countries throughout the region, as well as U.S. efforts to hold government actors in the country accountable. In the Northern Triangle countries of Central America, the Committee will assess the conditions that drive child and family migration and the appropriate response from the State Department, USAID and other international affairs agencies. In Nicaragua, the Committee will assess appropriate actions to continue to hold the country's government and security forces accountable for human rights abuses. In Colombia, the Committee will evaluate the implementation of the country's peace accords and ongoing counternarcotics efforts. The Committee will continue to closely monitor U.S. – Cuba relations and the health incidents impacting U.S. government personnel serving in Cuba. In Haiti, the Committee will continue its oversight of State Department and USAID assistance for reconstruction efforts, as well as investigate concerns of human rights abuses and help support efforts towards free, fair, and inclusive elections with buy-in from both the Haitian government and opposition. In the Caribbean, the Committee will continue efforts to enhance U.S. energy, security and diplomatic cooperation with the countries of the region.

*m. Syria:* The Committee will scrutinize U.S. efforts to address Syria's ongoing civil war, the war crimes committed by the Assad regime and other parties, and the role of Iran, Russia, Turkey and our Kurdish partners in the conflict. Particular attention will be paid to the Administration's new strategy for Syria including regional diplomacy, security coordination, and humanitarian assistance. The Committee will also examine the lasting consequences of the Trump Administration's decision to suspend stabilization assistance in Syria and evaluate U.S. efforts to prevent international reconstruction funds from assisting the Assad regime until a sustainable political solution is achieved and the regime allows for the safe, dignified and voluntary return of the outstanding six million displaced Syrians. The Committee will examine the impact of Syria's refugee crisis on regional states including Turkey, Jordan and Lebanon and the continued pattern of human rights violations by the Assad regime, ISIS and its affiliates, and Turkish-supported militias.

*n. Countering Violent Extremism:* The Committee will examine the current status of al-Qaeda and its affiliates, with a specific focus on recruitment efforts, evolving safe havens, and efforts to obtain WMDs. The Committee will also scrutinize the Administration's efforts to defeat ISIS in the Middle East and around the world, including authorizations for such efforts, leveraging other countries' commitments, evaluating U.S. leadership in the Coalition to Defeat ISIS, and determining the success of U.S. policies that seek to address the socio-economic challenges that led to the initial establishment and growth of ISIS. The Committee will conduct oversight of the State Department's various counterterrorism programs, including those designed to counter violent extremism (CVE), as well as agreements with foreign governments relating to the transfer of detainees from Guantanamo Bay.

*o. U.S. Policies and Actions in the Arabian Peninsula:* The Committee will evaluate the U.S. role in the Gulf, particularly the role that the United States plays in Yemen, as well as ways that the United States can help bring the conflict to an end and address the serious security and economic concerns that have plagued Yemen for decades. The Committee will also review the U.S. relationship with members of the Saudi-led coalition in Yemen as well as U.S. policy options to build leverage with the Houthis in order to encourage compromise and a lasting

resolution to the conflict. The Committee will also critically evaluate ongoing U.S. arms transfers and security cooperation with Gulf governments and the extent to which changes in U.S. policy in these areas can support an end to the Yemen conflict. The Committee will examine the status of rights of women, journalists, political dissidents and bloggers in the Gulf, and the extent to which current U.S. policy prioritizes human rights, the core of U.S. values.

*p. Iran:* The Committee will continue to closely review U.S. policy toward Iran, with a special focus on evaluating how the U.S. withdrawal from the JCPOA impacts the interests of the United States and our allies and how re-engagement in the JCPOA would tangibly benefit U.S. national security and that of our allies. The Committee will also review and work to address the threat posed by Iran's ballistic missile development, state sponsorship of terrorism and growing influence in Iraq, Syria, Yemen, and Lebanon, as well as the regime's ongoing human rights abuses, including the continued prolonged detention of Americans.

*q. Israel and Palestinian Issues/Middle East Peace:* The Committee will evaluate the lasting consequences of the Trump administration's efforts to advance peace between Israelis and Palestinians and will examine the current Administration's strategy and recent policy changes in light of a needed return to work towards a two-state solution. The Committee will examine the enduring consequences of changes to U.S. assistance to Palestinians and the implications of these decisions for our allies and interests as well as the basic human rights of the Palestinian people. The Committee will look at the various ways that the Administration can continue building cooperation with Israel in an effort to expand this mutually beneficial relationship.

*r. Middle East and North Africa:* The Committee will carefully review overall U.S. policy toward the Middle East and North Africa, to include: the extent to which U.S. foreign assistance is being utilized in Iraq to help address the inequities that brought about the initial rise of ISIS; the democratic transition in Tunisia; the status of political negotiations in Libya; the impact of Chinese economic and diplomatic investment in the Middle East; the consequences of low oil prices for various oil-producing states; human rights and challenges to the rule of law throughout the region; and United States policies, programs, authorities and funding to address these challenges.

*s. State Department and U.S. Agency for International Development Oversight, Authorization, and Modernization:* The Committee will seek to pass a State Department Authorization bill as one has not been enacted since 2002. Emphasis will also be placed on modernizing personnel systems and practices, increasing workforce flexibility and improving recruitment, retention, and promotion processes, with a focus on ensuring that Department of State personnel better represent the diversity of the United States. The Committee will continue to monitor and examine the operations, budget, programs, planning, workforce training, building, and security policies with an eye toward authorization for Fiscal Year 2021. In addition to hearings with the Secretary of State and other Administration officials regarding their budget proposals for the upcoming year, such efforts may include: revisions to the Foreign Service Act; the Foreign Assistance Act; efforts to improve diversity and inclusion, with an emphasis on addressing barriers to retention and promotion at the mid and senior levels, consideration of reforms to Executive Branch reporting requirements; and a reduction or consolidation of offices with duplicative mandates and overlapping responsibilities. In the wake of increasing threats to U.S. personnel serving overseas, the Committee will continue to evaluate the security of our

embassies and consulates, along with proposed reforms to the State Department's diplomatic security service to promote the personnel safety in the context of appropriate evaluation of risk.

*t. Employee Retaliation:* The Committee will pursue legislative changes to address the results of its investigation during the 116<sup>th</sup> Congress into politically-motivated retaliation against State Department and USAID employees during the Trump Administration, including individuals who have alleged they were subjected to prohibited personnel practices on account of their national origin, sexual identity, perceived political views, or in response to whistleblowing.

*u. Foreign Assistance:* The Committee will review the underlying authorities for U.S. foreign assistance with an eye towards reducing duplication, increasing transparency and effectiveness, and modernizing the foreign assistance workforce. It will also review issues related to the implementation of U.S. foreign assistance programs and projects, including the role of U.S. missions and embassies in overseeing grants, contracts, and cooperative agreements. In addition, the Committee will review issues related to coordination between the U.S. Agency for International Development (USAID) and other U.S. Government agencies and departments involved in carrying out U.S. foreign assistance. Among a broad range of issues, the Committee will review U.S. foreign assistance initiatives aimed at providing life-saving humanitarian assistance, catalyzing economic growth, supporting sustainable development approaches, reducing state fragility, and addressing food security and global health challenges, and increasing resilience of developing communities to weather shocks and stresses, including climate change. The Committee will also exercise oversight over the initial investments and growth of the newly created International Development Finance Corporation. Assistance provided through the Millennium Challenge Corporation will also receive close scrutiny.

*v. Global Health:* The Committee will examine key global health issues, in particular the ongoing effects of COVID-19, both directly and on broader global health efforts. The Committee will also conduct oversight on global health security efforts, including infectious disease surveillance and control and strengthening of health care systems. Additionally, the Committee will examine the impacts of the previous Administration's reimposition of the Global Gag Rule and elimination of funding to UNFPA on women's health services and access to reproductive health. Additionally, the Committee's oversight will include reviewing PEPFAR's efforts to date, as well as, progress on global malnutrition elimination, support for maternal and child health, and the U.S. engagement with the Global Fund to Fight AIDS, TB and Malaria.

*w. Climate Change, Energy, and the Environment:* The Committee will examine the effectiveness of U.S. policy on climate change, including the impact of the past Administration's withdrawal from the Paris Climate Accord on our diplomatic relations, our development assistance, and multilateral engagement. We will explore the impacts of climate change on national security, its contributions to displacement and social unrest across the globe, and how we can advance a path toward climate stabilization. We will consider the evolution of the global energy landscape, emphasize good governance of existing resources, and work to assure energy security for the US and our allies. The Committee will also oversee engagement on environmental issues including wildlife trafficking, international conservation efforts, and the role and safety of environmental activists across the globe.



*x. Economic Policy and Trade:* The Committee will oversee international economic policy, including U.S. leadership in trade, finance, energy, technology, and development policy to promote economic prosperity and national security.

*y.* The Committee will continue to oversee the administration of defense export controls under the Arms Export Control Act.

*z. U.S. Nonproliferation Policy:* The Committee will examine the effectiveness of U.S. nonproliferation policy and the international nonproliferation regime in preventing the spread of weapons of mass destruction. The Committee will address opportunities to strengthen existing nonproliferation organizations, especially the International Atomic Energy Agency, increase cooperation with other countries, and enhance international nonproliferation agreements and mechanisms including the international regulation of civil nuclear power and the potential spread of technology, equipment and material useful in the development of nuclear weapons capabilities. The Committee will closely examine proposed and existing bilateral nuclear cooperation agreements with other countries, including their potential to promote U.S. nonproliferation objectives and commercial interests.

*aa. Export Controls, Arms Transfers and Security Assistance:* The Committee will assess the effectiveness of export controls under the Export Control Reform Act, regulation of defense transfers under the Arms Export Control Act and security assistance programs authorized under the Foreign Assistance Act and the Arms Export Control Act in advancing U.S. national interests. In addition, the Committee will review those security cooperation programs funded by the Department of Defense, but which require concurrence of the Secretary of State, or otherwise give rise to the Committee's jurisdiction.

*bb. U.S. International Broadcasting:* The Committee will continue to actively monitor and review the operations and organization of U.S. government-supported, civilian international broadcasting to respond more effectively to the challenges presented by state and non-state actors using modern communication platforms. The Committee will closely oversee efforts by USAGM to rebuild from the brief, destructive tenure of former CEO Michael Pack, and return USAGM to its proper position of being independent and non-partisan.

*cc. Human Rights and Democracy:* The Committee will examine and monitor human rights abuses around the world and the deterioration of democracy and democratic norms globally. The Committee will also review the Administration's recentering of human rights and democracy as a key parts of U.S. foreign policy, with an added emphasis on addressing issues of inequities on the basis of race, color, ethnicity, religion, sex, sexual orientation, gender identity, disability, age, or national origin. The Committee will also assess U.S. involvement with multilateral human rights organizations, to ensure that U.S. diplomacy serves to promote human rights and freedoms.

*dd. United Nations and International Organizations:* The Committee will closely review all aspects of U.S. participation in international organizations and seek to ensure the US is accountable for its funding commitments, as well as advocating for equitable obligations from all UN member states. The Committee will closely monitor the work of the United Nations Department of Peacekeeping Operations and Department of Field Support, and particularly efforts to improve performance and enhance accountability. The Committee will seek to ensure America's engagement with UN institutions will support international diplomatic and

development goals, including the Sustainable Development Goals. The Committee will also assess and address foreign adversaries' attempts to expand influence in UN institutions to coopt these organizations in service of private political agendas. Close attention will be paid to the extent to which the Administration's strategies in international organizations has led to greater engagement and improved outcomes on human rights issues, as well as its support for and accountability of the World Health Organization, now that the United States has reentered.

*ee. Cyberpolicy:* The Committee will conduct oversight over U.S. efforts to examine and devise appropriate responses to cyber threats from foreign governments, non-state actors, and criminal networks that target the United States. The Committee will also examine efforts by U.S. adversaries to undermine the government, democratic and other institutions of the United States and other nations through cyber intrusions.

## **ADDITIONAL VIEWS**

Rep. Dina Titus (NV-1):

In addition to the oversight priorities outlined regarding Turkey, the Committee should also pay close attention to Turkey's continued persecution of religious minorities, in clear violation of its own Constitution, and to its antagonistic actions against Greece, a NATO ally, in the Aegean Sea.