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6 FISCAL YEAR 2023 BUDGET REQUEST: USAID'S

7 FOREIGN POLICY AND INTERNATIONAL DEVELOPMENT

8 PRIORITIES

9 Tuesday, May 17, 2022

10 House of Representatives,

11 Committee on Foreign Affairs,

12 Washington, D.C.

13

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16 The committee met, pursuant to call, at 1:10 p.m., in Room

17 2172, Rayburn House Office Building, Hon. Gregory Meeks [chairman

18 of the committee] presiding.

19 Chairman Meeks. The Committee on Foreign Affairs will come
20 to order and, without objection, the chair is authorized to
21 declare a recess of the committee at any point, and all members
22 will have five days to submit statements, extraneous material,
23 and questions for the record, subject to the length limitations
24 in the rules.

25 To insert something into the record, please have your staff
26 email the previously mentioned address or contact full committee
27 staff.

28 As a reminder to members participating remotely, please keep
29 your video function on at all times, even when you're not
30 recognized by the chair, and members are responsible for muting
31 and unmuting themselves consistent with House rules.

32 Staff will only mute members as appropriate when they are
33 not under recognition to eliminate background noise.

34 And I see that we have a quorum and I now recognize myself
35 for opening remarks.

36 Let me start by thanking Administrator Power for appearing
37 before our committee today and for your leadership at USAID.
38 And, without question, your tenure has been at a time when the
39 world is in turmoil, and to say -- you know, to say just the least,
40 but it's when your leadership is needed the most and you've
41 delivered and continued with your with your efficacy and with
42 your energy and your focus to get us through these turbulent times.

43

44 The crisis in Ukraine has only added to the critical work
45 USAID does around the world, and with nearly 6 million refugees
46 fleeing the country and more than 8.7 million needing assistance
47 inside of Ukraine, I was proud of the House's action -- very quick
48 action, in fact, last week, providing an additional supplemental
49 to support the people of Ukraine and those impacted by the crisis,
50 including more than \$4 billion in humanitarian aid.

51 Putin's invasion of Ukraine has also exacerbated an already
52 worsening food security situation around the world. The blocking
53 of the port of Odessa has further restricted exports that could
54 feed 400 million people, staples that countries around the world
55 rely upon for basic food needs.

56 And already we're seeing how the Russians' invasion -- the
57 Russian invasion is affecting food prices, particularly in high
58 import countries such as Egypt and Indonesia and Bangladesh.

59 Furthermore, without the fertilizer that is usually produced
60 and exported from the region, crop production elsewhere is also
61 at risk with potentially destabilizing impacts.

62 These constraints on global food supply, combined with
63 drought in the Horn of Africa, humanitarian crises in Yemen,
64 Afghanistan, Ethiopia, and elsewhere are worsening the impacts
65 of climate change, all of these present and dire threats for
66 vulnerable communities around the world. These are issues that

67 will affect everyone across the globe.

68 The administration's budget includes an ambitious request
69 for climate-related assistance, which is incredibly important
70 to helping address the economics, security, environmental, and
71 agricultural impacts of the climate crisis.

72 Similarly, I'm heartened by the request for nearly \$4 billion
73 in U.S. aid, specific global health funding, including for global
74 health, security, and pandemic preparedness.

75 Over the past year, we have seen much progress in the fight
76 against COVID-19 with the United States providing more than 500
77 million vaccines around the world and supporting multilateral
78 efforts through the Global Fund, COVAX, and others to leverage
79 the collective strength of the global community as we saw last
80 week at the President's COVID summit.

81 However, without more funding, we risk squandering those
82 gains, particularly in countries that have not yet been able to
83 make vaccines fully available and acceptable to their populations
84 or have vulnerable health systems.

85 So I look forward to hearing more about the administration's
86 budget request for global health, including how we can work
87 together to improve pandemic preparedness and build the capacity
88 of countries to detect, prevent, and respond to outbreaks.

89 We must also make sure we fully empower our development
90 professionals to be ready to meet the tremendous challenges

91 they're working to face. They are on the front lines working
92 in countries with democratic backsliding, political instability,
93 and military coups or even just intense conflict.

94 And, thankfully, the United States has the premier
95 developmental workforce in the world, a workforce that will be
96 even better situated to achieve the goals of USAID as we work
97 to improve diversity within its ranks, taking advantage of the
98 tremendous talent that the United States has to offer.

99 So I appreciate the efforts USAID has made in partnering
100 with minority-serving institutions to create a more diverse
101 pipeline into USAID's workforce. But we must also ensure that
102 retention and advancement opportunities support diversity.

103 This also means making sure that there is equity across
104 hiring mechanisms so all USAID staff have opportunities to advance
105 and continue to serve the agency's great mission, just as we worked
106 in a bipartisan manner to advance these priorities with the
107 passage of the State Department authorization.

108 I look forward to working with my colleagues on both sides
109 of the aisle and the administration on a complementary effort
110 for assistance authorities. It is also critical that USAID
111 improves its diversity of partners that the agency works with
112 to implement its programs around the world.

113 Members of this committee are very interested in how this
114 budget request advances your initiative to increase the number

115 of local partners and deliberately build their capacity and
116 engagement and assistance decisions and implementation.

117 So I look forward to hearing your opening remarks,
118 Administrator Power, and I now recognize my friend and partner
119 on this committee, Ranking Member McCaul, for his opening remarks.

120

121 Mr. McCaul. Thank you, Mr. Chairman, and welcome,
122 Administrator Power, to the committee to discuss the agency's
123 foreign policy and international development priorities. From
124 the devastation in Ukraine to the continuing humanitarian crises
125 around the world, your mission is becoming more and more
126 critically important.

127 It's imperative that Congress and the administration work
128 together to understand these complex challenges and ensure the
129 use of taxpayer dollars to advance U.S. foreign policy objectives
130 is made. The needs around the world are really growing, as well
131 as here at home.

132 USAID must double its efforts to ensure rigorous monitoring,
133 vetting, and transparency that every dollar is achieving results.

134 You and I have had a lot of personal conversations and I
135 appreciate the time you spent talking to me about that very issue.

136

137 As you and I both know, and everyone, the situation in Ukraine
138 continues to deteriorate. In fact, the city of Mariupol fell

139 just yesterday. I thought it was interesting how the prime
140 minister of Greece at a joint session of Congress talked about
141 how Catherine the Great brought the Greek refugees from Crimea.

142

143 It was then taken by the Ottoman Empire to a city that they
144 named Mariupol, which is actually a Greek name -- the city. So
145 I think it was very timely today to hear from him. But it's also
146 created a huge extraordinary humanitarian crisis.

147 It's been inspiring, really, to see Ukraine and its neighbors
148 open, particularly Poland, offer open arms to refugees, accepting
149 over 3.3 million innocent Ukrainians. The chairman and I have
150 been there.

151 The leader -- Republican leader and I went to Romania to
152 see their efforts, as well as Poland again and the Ukraine border.

153 Every European nation needs to contribute to supporting Ukraine
154 and the strong response to the refugee crisis again, from Poland
155 to Romania to Hungary and Moldova, which we will be attending
156 shortly to Slovakia has really been critical.

157 Continued blockade of the Black Sea and the port of Odessa,
158 as you and I have talked about, could have devastating
159 consequences on the world's food supply. Ukraine is breadbasket
160 for the world.

161 They are the wheat supply globally, and the failure to be
162 able to export those commodities will lead to starvation of

163 millions of people around the globe. This impending food crisis
164 will exacerbate conflict and further destabilize the fragile
165 states that we see, particularly, I think, in Africa. We must
166 act now to address this threat.

167 As the chairman mentioned, we passed the \$40 billion
168 supplemental of both lethal weapons and humanitarian aid at a
169 time when, I think, it is most needed. But I do want to be clear
170 it's Vladimir Putin's actions that are pushing 40 million more
171 people into an urgent humanitarian disaster, whether it be
172 Ukrainian, to blocking off and choking Ukraine from the Black
173 Sea in an effort to starve them, the likes of which we haven't
174 seen since Stalin -- Ukraine -- starved his own people in Ukraine
175 so many years ago, and it's really interesting to see history
176 repeat itself and the parallels that we see to World War II.
177 Our adversaries are exploiting this crisis to advance their malign
178 agenda and undermine the rule of law.

179 USAID must recognize this threat and be more strategic in
180 utilizing foreign aid as a key tool to counter the malign actions
181 of both now Russia and China as they are now allies in this unholy
182 alliance that they formed and forged at the Beijing Olympics.

183

184 I continue to be concerned about China and their Belt and
185 Road Initiative. Their debt trap diplomacy efforts are selling
186 developing countries with unsustainable debt while security

187 strategic investments and gaining leverage, and on that point,
188 Administrator, the idea that 20 African nations abstained from
189 the U.N. Security Resolution. Abstaining from supporting
190 Ukraine against Mr. Putin just shows how much of a grip the CCP
191 has over these 20 African nations.

192 They also use their leverage to coerce countries to break
193 diplomatic relations with Taiwan and to refrain from criticizing
194 China's appalling human rights violations. I know you wrote a
195 piece on genocide in your prior lifetime, I should say.

196 China recently blindsided both me and the Biden
197 administration with a security pact of the Solomon Islands, which
198 is particularly concerning, basically buying their way in to take
199 over the very islands my father's generation liberated.

200 These are the very same islands again, that go back to World
201 War II. Now they're under the thumb of the CCP. The Biden
202 administration's fiscal '23 budget request to undercut, I think,
203 a deepening of engagement in the Indo-Pacific and we have to look
204 at the threats not only to Europe but to Asia as this crisis
205 unfolds.

206 When I meet with the partners and allies around the world,
207 I ask why are they entering into dangerous agreements with the
208 CCP and they tell me because we're not there. I think we need
209 to be on the field to win and we need to compete, and I think
210 your agency along with the Development Finance Corporation, which

211 was created by this committee, has a solemn obligation in this
212 competition, this great generational competition that we do have,
213 you know, with China.

214 It's also important we help understand that it's American
215 generosity that's changing lives and that's why with Mark Green,
216 your predecessor's, request I implemented the Branding
217 Modernization Act to see that the United States flag, when we
218 send food and medicine, that they know that it's coming from the
219 United States of America, for China, certainly, puts their flag
220 and raises it very high.

221 The legacy of U.S. efforts to save lives and support the
222 development of healthy, more prosperous, more stable communities
223 is something we all can be proud of. But we are witnessing the
224 largest invasion in Europe since the Nazis, since World War II,
225 since my dad's war.

226 When we went to Poland, they said it's eerily reminiscent
227 of 1939 and the parallels are real when Hitler invaded Poland,
228 and I really commend the Polish people for the burden they have
229 beared in accepting these refugees in what, I think, is one of
230 the greatest examples of being a good neighbor for humanitarian
231 purposes.

232 So with that, Mr. Chairman, I yield back.

233 Chairman Meeks. The gentleman yields back. I now turn to
234 the chair and ranking member of the International Development

235 Subcommittee for their remarks.

236 Chairman Castro, you're now recognized for one minute.

237 Mr. Castro. Thank you, Chairman Meeks, and thank you,
238 Administrator Power, for your important work at USAID. I look
239 forward to hearing from you on the efforts of USAID and the state
240 of international development today, and I hope today you will
241 speak to the need for the United States to continue to lead on
242 pandemic recovery, including on vaccines, treatment, and
243 development assistance and what resources are needed to
244 accomplish those goals.

245 Your efforts are absolutely essential, and I have
246 appreciated our partnership on the issue and hope this hearing
247 is an opportunity for you to demonstrate progress on making our
248 foreign assistance more effective, sustainable, and equitable
249 by working with local partners.

250 There's much more on innovation, climate finance, and your
251 work in the Western Hemisphere that also merit discussion, and
252 I look forward to working together and discussing USAID's
253 important mission today.

254 I yield back, Chairman.

255 Chairman Meeks. The gentleman yields back. I know we would
256 hear from Ranking Member Malliotakis but there's a special guest
257 in the building, the prime minister of Greece, and they just asked
258 her to have a private meeting with him so she's not here.

259 So we'll go straight to Administrator Samantha Power, who
260 has led the U.S. Agency for International Development for over
261 the past year. She's someone that's not a stranger to us on this
262 committee where she's testified before us on several occasions
263 in different capacities over the years also.

264 So I'm going to skip reading her extensive and dynamic
265 biography and the -- which is so impressive and just go straight
266 to the administrator. You'll have time to deliver your opening
267 remarks and, without objection, your prepared written statement
268 will be made part of the record.

269 STATEMENT OF THE HONORABLE SAMANTHA POWER, ADMINISTRATOR, U.S.
270 AGENCY FOR INTERNATIONAL DEVELOPMENT

271

272 Ms. Power. Thank you so much, Chairman Meeks, Ranking
273 Member McCaul, Representative Castro, and distinguished members
274 of the committee.

275 I am very grateful to be here for the opportunity to discuss
276 the fiscal year 2023 president's budget requests for the U.S.
277 Agency for International Development.

278 I do look forward to having the chance to respond to some
279 of what you, Mr. Chairman, and you, Ranking Member McCaul and
280 you, Representative Castro, have raised in your brief opening
281 statements.

282 But if I could use mine here to frame the broader discussion
283 that I hope we can have over the next few hours. It is no
284 overstatement to say that right now, right here, arguably, just
285 like back in 1939, we are gathering at a profound juncture in
286 human history.

287 For 16 straight years, we have seen the number of people
288 living under democratic rule decline. The world is now less free
289 and less peaceful than at any point since the end of the Cold
290 War, and for several years, as we have seen vividly, graphically,
291 horrifically, in recent days in Ukraine, autocracies have grown
292 increasingly brazen on the world stage, claiming that they can

293 get things done for their people with the speed and effectiveness
294 that they say democracies cannot match.

295 Today, we see just how empty that rhetoric is, just how dark
296 the road to autocracy can be, from Vladimir Putin's brutal war
297 on a peaceful neighbor in Ukraine to the People's Republic of
298 China's campaign of genocide and crimes against humanity in
299 Xinjiang.

300 Now, with autocracies on their back heel, is the moment for
301 the world's democracies to unite and take a big step forward after
302 so many years of losing ground. If the world's free nations,
303 with the United States in the lead, are able to unite the efforts
304 of our allies, the private sector, and our multilateral
305 institutions, if we can marshal the resources necessary to help
306 partner nations and freedom-loving populations, we have a chance
307 to extend the reach of peace, prosperity, and human dignity to
308 billions more people.

309 This has been USAID's mission since its inception more than
310 six decades ago, and I'm really and truly grateful to you for
311 your continued bipartisan support of our efforts to save lives,
312 strengthen economies, prevent fragility and conflict, promote
313 resilience to all of these shocks, and to bolster freedom around
314 the world.

315 USAID's work is a testament to the fact that America cares
316 about the plight of others, that we can competently accomplish

317 mammoth goals that no other country can, and that the work we
318 do abroad also matters to Americans here at home. It makes us
319 safer, it makes us more prosperous, and it engenders goodwill
320 that strengthens alliances and global cooperation and creates
321 a better future for generations to come.

322 Thanks to your past support, the U.S. has helped get more
323 than half a billion COVID-19 vaccines to people in 115 countries.

324 We have led life-saving humanitarian and disaster responses in
325 68 countries, including Haiti, Ethiopia, and Ukraine.

326 We have helped enhance pathways for legal migration to the
327 U.S. while working to strengthen worker protections, and we have
328 assisted the relocation and resettlement of Afghan colleagues
329 and refugees under the most dire of circumstances while pivoting
330 our programming in Afghanistan to address ongoing food insecurity
331 and public health needs and continuing to push to keep women and
332 girls in school.

333 We are also making strides to become a much more nimble agency
334 at a time of these intense demands that you all have alluded to,
335 shoring up a depleted workforce by welcoming new recruits and
336 operating with greater flexibility.

337 The Biden/Harris administration's fiscal year 2023
338 discretionary request of \$29.4 billion will build on these steps
339 forward, giving us the ability to invest in the people and systems
340 to meet the world's most significant challenges so the United

341 States can seize this moment in history.

342 Last week, with bipartisan support, you here in the House
343 of Representatives took a major step in that direction by passing
344 a nearly \$40 billion package for Ukraine, and we are hopeful for
345 its imminent passage in the Senate.

346 Yet, the challenges we face are significant. Putin's war
347 has displaced more than 14 million people, including two-thirds
348 of Ukraine's children. It has led to serious disruptions to
349 global food, fuel, and fertilizer supplies around the world,
350 further taxing the already overwhelmed international system.

351 Up to 40 million additional people could be pushed into
352 poverty and food insecurity in 2022 due to Putin's war. Two
353 difficult years of the COVID-19 pandemic have set back development
354 gains, and despite the United States' leadership in vaccinating
355 the world, the job remains unfinished.

356 Multi-billion-dollar climate shocks appear each -- more each
357 year with more frequency and these challenges only compound
358 suffering in places where there are already humanitarian crises
359 like Ethiopia, Syria, and Yemen.

360 Yet, as grave as these challenges are, I sincerely believe
361 this opportunity, this moment, this point of inflection, provides
362 us so much of an opportunity to meet the moment and meet the needs
363 and advance U.S. foreign policy objectives.

364 By providing the resources necessary, the United States can

365 galvanize commitments from our allies and our private sector
366 partners, and demonstrate to the world that democracies can
367 deliver in a way that autocracies cannot. These actions are key
368 to reversing years of democratic decline and creating a more
369 stable, peaceful, prosperous future.

370 With your support, USAID will move aggressively to grasp
371 this opportunity to build that brighter future for us all.

372 Thank you so much, Mr. Chairman.

373 [The statement of Ms. Power follows:]

374

375 *****COMMITTEE INSERT*****

376 Chairman Meeks. Well, I want to thank you, Madam
377 Administrator, and what we're trying to work out here is to make
378 sure that we keep the hearing rolling while votes are on, and
379 so we're just paying close attention to the vote and we're going
380 to try to have members go in and out.

381 Mr. Bera will come shortly and I'll run to vote and then
382 I'll get back here in time for you to go to vote and I guess you'll
383 work the same thing out so that we can get in, and the Administrator
384 has graciously said that she will be here to answer all of the
385 members' questions and we're going to try to move as quickly as
386 we possibly can so that we don't run into the long series of votes
387 that, I think, start somewhere in the area of 4:00 o'clock.

388 So I thank you for your testimony and I now recognize myself
389 for five minutes to ask questions.

390 And a couple of weeks ago, I had the opportunity to go to
391 Ukraine and I visited President Zelensky in Kyiv, and one of the
392 things that he was asking and talking about at that particular
393 time was a Ukraine -- the rebuilding -- the goal of rebuilding
394 Ukraine in a post-war scenario, both infrastructurally and
395 institutionally.

396 So I was wondering if you were considering ways for USAID
397 or of partner agencies around the world to do just that.

398 Ms. Power. Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I'll be brief on this
399 because I think the discussions are quite preliminary. Our

400 overriding premise with regard to discussions of reconstruction
401 and the best way forward is to follow the lead of the Ukrainian
402 authorities.

403 They, themselves -- I believe it was just last week -- have
404 released a kind of notional structure, internal kind of
405 interagency structure, for how those plans are being developed.

406

407 I, in the last two weeks, have spoken with the minister of
408 social services or social protection, the minister of
409 agriculture, and the minister of health to get an early glimpse
410 into how they are thinking about even right now building back
411 better, you know, not just doing temporary repairs but, for
412 example, in the health ministry building back health structures
413 that have been destroyed.

414 We know that more than 200 medical facilities have been
415 destroyed by Russian attacks, how to build them back in a manner
416 that then advances the health system from where it was before.

417

418 So I think the discussions are preliminary. I will say
419 Europe has come forward and already made very clear that they
420 intend to dedicate significant resources to this cause.

421 So we also, of course, want to leverage whatever we do to
422 make sure that our partners are contributing significantly. I
423 think that's already happening in the humanitarian and the

424 development space. But reconstruction, of course, given what's
425 estimated already to be about \$270 billion in damages, that's
426 going to be a very, very significant set of investments.

427 Chairman Meeks. The fact of the matter, you know, some was
428 talking, I don't know -- I'll just ask this question anyways --
429 you know, I guess this is the 75th anniversary of the Marshall
430 Plan, which helped Europe stay together, and so I'll just ask
431 the question. What do you think the -- do you have any thoughts
432 about, similarly, a Marshall Plan for Ukraine?

433 Ms. Power. Well, I think it's one tribute, and Ranking
434 Member McCaul spoke about his father and World War II. It's one
435 tribute to the success of the Marshall Plan that the European
436 Union is very likely, again, to be driving and investing -- driving
437 significant reconstruction efforts and making very, very
438 significant investments.

439 I think where we would look, Mr. Chairman, as the Ukrainians
440 develop their planning, is to stay in constant dialogue with you
441 about what we might mobilize.

442 I would note that the international financial institutions
443 and multilateral development banks are going to be a big part
444 of the equation, and right now, again, our emphasis is on getting
445 markets up and running because with territory liberated from
446 Russian hands, in addition to reconstruction, people are actually
447 willing to live in really difficult circumstances just to be near

448 their homes, their schools, in their communities, and so we need
449 to make sure right now that we're supporting them in that fashion.
450 But it's going to be a big job.

451 Chairman Meeks. But let me just switch real quick because
452 it's important. You know, there's a report that one in five women
453 report experiencing sexual and gender-based violence and
454 humanitarian emergencies, and, sadly, we have seen that crisis
455 around the entire world.

456 We must ensure they have the protection services including
457 counseling, safe spaces for women and children, protection
458 against gender-based violence and reducing the risk of human
459 trafficking are available in these places, in these spaces.

460 So can you speak to the importance of USAID's Safe from the
461 Start programming to support protection for populations in places
462 like Ukraine or Ethiopia or Afghanistan?

463 And let me also add, secondly, that this huge global food
464 crises are being exacerbated by Putin's war in Russia, again,
465 will increase the likelihood of GBV for women and girls and a
466 food insecure population.

467 And so is the administration's budget sufficient in ensuring
468 programming that is robust and comprehensive, and how does this
469 funding differ from previous enacted levels?

470 Ms. Power. Well, I hope we'll have time to talk at length
471 over the course of the hearing about the global food crisis and

472 the impacts of Putin's war on -- there are specific circumstances
473 in different countries. But in the brief time we have left here
474 in this exchange, let me speak, if I could, to the first part
475 of your question.

476 Chairman Meeks. Since I'm the chair you'll have a little
477 bit longer to answer that question.

478 Ms. Power. Oh, do I have longer? Okay. So then I'll take
479 each in turn. So on sexual and gender-based violence, just to
480 say it is horrific.

481 It is, as you've described it, you know, again, it'll take
482 time to get the documentary record on all of this or to have
483 processed all of the complaints and all of the testimonies of
484 women and girls who have suffered sexual violence.

485 But it is as systematic and prevalent as anything that I
486 have seen in what is now a nearly three-decade career of
487 documenting atrocities, including rape and sexual violence as
488 a weapon of war.

489 I think there are a couple different aspects to the response.

490 I think one -- we won't go into it here but the war crimes and
491 atrocity documentation, making sure that that evidentiary record
492 is built, first sent to the commission of investigation that was
493 set up at the U.N. Human Rights Council.

494 The ICC has said it's opening up an investigation. There's
495 domestic prosecutions where the Ukrainian domestic prosecutor

496 general is building cases and files already. All of that needs
497 to go there.

498 But what you've focused on is so important, which is the
499 psychosocial, the trauma, the healing, the recovery, and there,
500 you mentioned some of our programming. We're also supporting
501 a hotline -- an anti-trafficking hotline that was used before
502 the war but now, unfortunately, is seeing much more activity.

503

504 Just last week, I think, we trained Ukrainian psychiatrists
505 in how to deal with IDPs and these new internally displaced persons
506 and the new issues that they're reporting having suffered even,
507 you know, as they were being displaced from their homes or as
508 survivors of sexual violence.

509 So in a sense, Mr. Chairman, it involves a combination of
510 expanding programming that we were doing because of the prior
511 conflict and because of our steady state investment in women and
512 girls empowerment and the prevention of gender-based violence,
513 but then as these large international organizations and others
514 come in to make sure that they have protection services as part
515 of their mandates.

516 So not just food, water, medicine -- all of that is essential
517 -- but also that they are able to meet the needs of women and
518 girls who have gone through these horrors.

519 Chairman Meeks. Thank you. Let me now yield to the ranking

520 member, Mr. McCaul.

521 Mr. McCaul. Thank you, Mr. Chairman. You know, on the
522 issue of war crimes, the chairman and I passed almost unanimously
523 a war crimes bill.

524 As I understand, the Senate Foreign Relations will be taking
525 that up and, hopefully, will be on the President's desk very soon.

526 It's a good sign or message from the United States Congress on
527 behalf of the American people that we view these as war crimes
528 and we will prosecute you.

529 And I was pleased to see Ukraine taking the lead just last
530 week with individuals who killed, I believe, a 63-year-old woman.

531 And, you know, that the images of the maternity hospital, the
532 pregnant women who died, the building with children so big in
533 Russia you can see it from the satellites and they bombed it --
534 the schools. Then the anecdotal stories we got in Poland from
535 Ukrainian women about the raping, the torture, killing of --
536 whether it be little girls with, say, the Wagner Group to Russian
537 soldiers to mothers being raped in front of their families. And
538 it just goes on and on and on.

539 I believe as the dust in Mariupol is settling, we're just
540 going to hear more and see more images and it's just horrific,
541 and they need to be held accountable for that.

542 I have two quick questions. I know we're going to have to
543 go vote. But the first -- you and I talked about -- and when

544 I was over there they expressed frustration about getting this
545 aid that we have passed in Congress actually to the conflict areas
546 where they need it the most.

547 I know it's a very difficult thing to do. But they talked,
548 as you and I discussed as well, about using trusted partners in
549 Ukraine that have networks and logistics. And I understand you
550 need certifications. You've got to deal with, you know, metrics
551 because you don't want to be back here in front of us and us,
552 you know, grilling you on that. And so I get that drill.

553 But what have you done to try to expand that aid into Ukraine?

554 Ms. Power. Thank you so much. I think it's a really
555 important question and I think the entire international
556 humanitarian community needs to be operating in a manner that
557 takes account of all that Ukraine has to offer, that this is just
558 fundamentally a very different operating environment than the
559 kinds of places many of our traditional partners operate.

560 So on our side that also means for our humanitarians who
561 work for USAID and identify partners to support to be thinking
562 differently, as you and I have discussed, and I really appreciate,
563 actually, the language -- we haven't discussed this subsequent
564 to our phone call -- the language that you all had put into the
565 supplemental that stresses the importance of not only working
566 with international but also local organizations.

567 So I think that's an important signal. But for now, first,

568 it's important to note that the international humanitarian
569 organizations like World Food Programme offer a lot.

570 They offer scale, and they've already set up, I think, more
571 than seven hubs -- seven warehouses inside Ukraine proper. This
572 is a dramatic increase, of course, because they were not even
573 really operating in Ukraine before this phase of Russia's long
574 war that began in 2014 -- this horrific phase began.

575 So that -- those startup costs were real. I think they were
576 a little slow at the beginning because they weren't there and
577 now they've staffed up, and I think the numbers that they're
578 reaching, which is close to \$4 million, is reflective of that.

579

580 They're also working with 200 organizations themselves as
581 partners, and so a very significant share of them of those
582 organizations are local organizations.

583 Second, we have just last week finalized an agreement with
584 an international NGO, basically, to oversee a consortium of local
585 organizations and that'll be about \$120 million, not the kind
586 of scale of resource we invest in the World Food Programme's or
587 the UNICEF's, but I think these organizations will have lower
588 overhead. They will reach parts of the countries that the
589 international organizations are not yet present, and I think
590 you'll start to see a real return on that.

591 There are also organizations -- the last thing I'll say,

592 just quickly, because I know they have such a constituency up
593 here -- organizations like World Central Kitchen, we are -- even
594 though we are not funding them at the moment, they are such a
595 visible manifestation in the spirit of your branding initiative,
596 sir, of the American people's generosity.

597 We are looking forward and thinking through in addition to
598 all of the support they're getting from the private sector --
599 is there more that we can do to partner with them, for example,
600 as we work with the Ukrainian minister of agriculture in our
601 traditional development lane -- is there a way to work with an
602 organization like World Central Kitchen as they now move into
603 the business of actually trying to get seeds to farmers for the
604 next planting season.

605 Mr. McCaul. If I could just close, and my time has, you
606 know, expired -- and thank you for that. I also -- I met with
607 David Beasley and I've dealt with him a lot. He has a lot of
608 credibility on the Hill on both sides of the aisle in the World
609 Food Programme. So I'm glad to hear you invoke that organization.

610
611 Also, he emphasized to me with the closing of Odessa, and,
612 really, all -- the entire of Ukraine and ports to the Black Sea
613 in an effort to choke off Ukraine and starve them. They can't
614 export their wheat.

615 So when we were in Romania, for instance, we were trying

616 to find a way they could truck because the gauges don't work on
617 the railroad to truck it to Romania to the NATO port we visited
618 and then they -- the Russians bombed the railroad bridge to stop
619 that. And I just worry -- and I know my time has expired -- but,
620 you know, perhaps you and I can talk offline.

621 What is this going to mean in terms of global food shortage
622 and supply, particularly in African nations like in Egypt? What
623 is it going to mean for the world? And I think you're going to
624 see famine and you're going to see instability as a result of
625 that.

626 When people say why is Ukraine important that's why it's
627 important. It's also important as President Xi is looking at
628 Taiwan. That's important to me and our foreign nation
629 adversaries. It's also important because of energy.

630 It's also important because a third of the global wheat
631 supply comes out of there. And so I know my time is expired but
632 would love to get your take on that as well.

633 Mr. Bera. [Presiding.] Great. Thanks. The gentleman's
634 time has expired. Let me go out and recognize myself for five
635 minutes of questions.

636 We are, rightfully so, talking a lot about how Putin's
637 invasion of Ukraine has disrupted global food supplies. Prior
638 to the invasion we knew we have a massive food insecurity, water
639 insecurity, crisis in the world, and we will post-invasion, and,

640 you know, I know USAID has been focused on Feed the Future and
641 real investments here.

642 But I do worry with increased -- with climate change, a warmer
643 planet, the massive displacements of individuals are going to
644 continue to impact these fragile states. So a couple questions.

645

646 My home institution is the University of California Davis,
647 and they benefit from being one of the 21 innovation labs that
648 USAID partners with in terms of academies. I'd be curious, one,
649 how the administration's budget is looking at utilizing the
650 expertise that our academia has and universities like UC Davis.

651

652 And then a second area that I've been spending a little bit
653 of time delving into is alternative proteins and some of what's
654 happening in that space in terms of taking bio waste and so forth,
655 fermenting and so forth, and thinking about right now, the
656 technologies aren't at a price point where you can go into Africa
657 and work with communities.

658 But I think that is all coming because of investments going
659 into some of the alternative protein -- alternative food spaces,
660 potentially, you know, the reduction in water utilization, the
661 ability to take, you know, bio waste and turn that into food and
662 the reduction in the amount of water that you have to use. And
663 I'd be curious if this is a space that USAID is looking at

664 partnering with academia but also funding programs abroad.

665 Ms. Power. Thank you, Congressman. Let me say a few
666 things, and maybe on the very specific question of adjustments
667 that are being made in our programming as it relates, again, to
668 a greater emphasis on bio waste, maybe I could just get back to
669 on the specifics on that.

670 But, first, just to come back to the premise of your question,
671 which is so important, which is there was a food and even imminent
672 famine crisis before Putin's invasion of Ukraine, and I think
673 that developing countries say that to us a lot.

674 I, last week, met with the ministers of agriculture and
675 permanent secretaries of agriculture for Kenya, Zambia, and
676 Tanzania, and, you know, we are in the scrum with them just trying
677 to figure out, okay, what are the adjustments we can make if we
678 already have a Feed the Future program on the ground.

679 Now, with the supplemental, potentially, securing imminent
680 passage it gives us the opportunity to work side by side with
681 them and allow their own country planning and their articulation
682 of urgent needs to help us work with others in the interagency
683 to figure out if -- again, Senate willing -- you know, how that
684 additional \$760 million in food security resources could be spent
685 and that's, again, built on top of our Feed the Future programming.

686

687 I think Feed the Future's investments in those research

688 organizations are key. I will say there's usually a little bit
689 of a lag between what you hatch, you know, in a university lab
690 room and what you're able to get into the capillaries of the
691 international system, it goes without saying.

692 But already, you know, on issues like precision targeting
693 of the fertilizer that is out there, we know that Russia and
694 Belarus contribute 40 percent of the world's fertilizer -- export
695 40 percent of fertilizer. That's a problem. There was a problem
696 before the invasion insofar as supply chains were screwing up
697 the export of those fertilizers in any event.

698 But working -- for example, I heard today about a program
699 in Ethiopia where we have managed to work with farmers in select
700 areas to get 80 percent more grain out of the fertilizer that
701 they are using. It turns out there's just a lot of inefficient
702 use of fertilizer in countries that have had adequate supply in
703 the past.

704 Well, now when there isn't adequate supply that has to be
705 the learning there and the -- again, the targeting of that
706 fertilizer and the efficient use of that fertilizer has to be
707 accelerated.

708 I think the organics are great supplements. Nobody wants
709 to be dependent for fertilizer on single sources and I think export
710 vulnerability has been exposed in this crisis, just as it was
711 in different domains during the pandemic.

712 But, you know, thinking through what the right diversified
713 portfolio, you might say, of fertilizer is for any country, which
714 might include, you know, compost or manure or something in the
715 moment, but, ultimately, is going to need the scale of chemical
716 fertilizers as well.

717 Mr. Bera. Great. And I notice my time has expired. So
718 let me recognize my good friend, the gentleman from Ohio, the
719 ranking member on the Subcommittee on Asia and the Pacific, Mr.
720 Chabot, for five minutes.

721 Mr. Chabot. Thank you very much, Mr. Chairman, and let me
722 apologize, Madam Administrator, for members going in and out of
723 here.

724 As you know, we have got votes going on on the floor. Some
725 of us have meetings out in the hallway at the same time. So it's
726 been a bit chaotic. So I apologize for coming and going myself
727 as well.

728 The U.S. is, I think we all know, the most generous donor
729 nation on the globe, contributing hundreds of millions of dollars,
730 really, billions, probably, to many causes, hopefully, with the
731 goal to make the world a better, more stable place.

732 Unfortunately, the world is probably becoming even more
733 dangerous, as I think you mentioned in your testimony -- in your
734 opening statement -- and our share of global GDP is decreasing.

735

736 So in the future, we aren't likely going to be able to
737 continue to cover as much ground as we used to, at least
738 financially, relative to giving aid -- that sort of thing.

739 Can you give me some examples of discussions that the
740 administration, you, or others, in your capacity have had with
741 either our allies or our partners on sharing that burden and some
742 examples where other countries have picked up the slack?

743 Ms. Power. Congressman, it's such an important question.
744 It's something also that really hits home with me because in
745 my prior life, I was U.N. ambassador and spent much of my day
746 every day trying to leverage what we did to catalyze contributions
747 from others.

748 Let me give you a couple positive examples. Germany -- we
749 were -- I had an exchange a minute ago with Ranking Member McCaul
750 about the World Food Programme, which I think has a lot of support
751 up here on the Hill, rightly -- Germany, back in 2012, contributed
752 \$150 million annually to World Food Programme.

753 Today, that number is \$1.4 billion. They're also, of
754 course, making contributions through the European Union as well.

755 It's complicated for European countries because they have to
756 -- they give bilaterally but also give through their European
757 Union share.

758 That's one example. I would say that while much is made
759 of China's investments in the international system through the

760 Belt and Road Initiative -- you know, the challenges associated
761 with that in terms of debt traps, the lengthy and often -- the
762 inadequate oversight, the inadequate environmental protections,
763 all the rest, but a lot of money spent in developing countries,
764 not a lot of investments commensurate to growth in GDP in
765 international institutions apart from where there's an assessed
766 contribution where it's automatic in terms of GDP and GNI.

767 Mr. Chabot. Thank you. Let me, if I could just stop there,
768 because I've only got two more minutes and I wanted to get another
769 question.

770 Ms. Power. Of course. Sure.

771 Mr. Chabot. And I appreciate your response. And, you know,
772 relative to China and the Belt and Road Initiative, I think, you
773 know, we all know and, as you mentioned, the debt trap, many
774 countries, you know, end up signing on to something they probably
775 didn't, at the beginning, really understand what they were getting
776 into.

777 You know, Sri Lanka and a whole lot of others are examples
778 of just that and end up -- China ends up being advantaged to the
779 disadvantage of the other -- of a country. And we need country
780 -- you know, countries in the Gulf states, as we know, are quite
781 wealthy, do do, you know, some good. They help in different areas
782 but they need to step up.

783 Japan has been pretty good over the years in contributing

784 to various causes. But the United States has limited resources
785 and a lot of problems of our own. So we need other countries
786 to step in as well.

787 Finally, the U.S. spends a lot of money we don't have on
788 things that, unfortunately, don't necessarily have to do with
789 our national interest.

790 So I have a question. Can you identify for me some programs
791 that USAID looked at this year and maybe said that program is
792 nice, might even help some people, but it isn't clearly connected
793 to U.S. security interests, our national security interest, so
794 we just can't afford to fund it anymore?

795 Ms. Power. Thank you. Just parenthetically, on the
796 Ukraine development, humanitarian economic assistance, that
797 large pie of what people have contributed right now -- this is
798 to your prior question. I'll come to the question you just posed.

799 U.S. share so far, despite all the generosity and the resources
800 that we have expended, is 11 percent of the overall international
801 contribution to the crisis in Ukraine right now.

802 So that's -- that kind of ratio, of course, would be nice
803 to sustain, but agree very much on the Gulf countries. I think
804 with regard -- I mean, first thing that I would use your second
805 question to underscore is that we are massively earmarked.

806 When I entered the agency, in terms of our development
807 assistance 96 percent of our assistance was earmarked by region

808 or by geography and by sector, leaving us very little flexibility
809 to make that kind of -- to step back and make the kind of
810 allocations that you're describing.

811 You know, I think that in every country where we work --
812 I'll give you an example -- in Central America -- Northern and
813 Central America, as we have seen corruption revelations now from
814 Guatemala, El Salvador, et cetera, we have just cut off funding
815 to, for example, the supreme court, the attorney general's office,
816 to those bodies we were working with, thinking that we could make
817 progress on the rule of law.

818 But once we saw the rule of law itself being violated by
819 those institutions, we stopped those programs and actually began
820 to channel some of that funding to independent media and civil
821 society organizations, who are watchdogs of those institutions
822 themselves. So that's one example. I'm happy to follow up with
823 you with other examples.

824 Mr. Chabot. Thank you very much. My time has expired.
825 Yield back.

826 Mr. Bera. Great. Let me go and recognize the gentleman
827 from New Jersey, Mr. Smith, the ranking member on the Subcommittee
828 of Africa, Global Health and Global Human Rights.

829 Mr. Smith. Thank you very much, Mr. Chairman.

830 Administrator Power, again, welcome back to the committee
831 and thank you for your service.

832 Just on the issue of human trafficking, especially now as
833 it relates to the Ukraine and surrounding areas, at least three
834 or four times a week I'm in touch with people who are on the ground.

835

836 I've been part of hearings, as the Special Representative
837 for the OSCE PA for human trafficking. I'm talking to ODIHR and
838 all the others that are involved in this, and there's obviously
839 a serious exploding problem that, I believe, is only going to
840 get worse.

841 You know, the vulnerability of women and children, you know,
842 really, some of them come across the border. They have some
843 resources. They quickly spend down those resources and now we're
844 in a window where they're at even greater risk of deception and
845 exploitation.

846 So my question is with the existing funds, could you give
847 us a sense as to what you're doing now? And with the almost near
848 certainty that you'll get about \$4.3 billion when the \$40 billion
849 is approved by the Senate, maybe as early as -- it should have
850 been done already but by, say, Thursday, I know you're planning
851 and, you know, you'll get back to us, I'm sure, within 30 days
852 with what you're doing.

853 But there's got to be some very aggressive planning going
854 on on how to mitigate this harm, especially to women and children.

855

856 And secondly, if I could say, you might recall I was the
857 prime author of the Iraq and Syria Genocide Relief and
858 Accountability Act of 2018, and after chairing seven hearings
859 on the lack of response to those fleeing ISIS, particularly the
860 Chaldean Church and the Yazidis -- this is years ago, of course
861 -- the money was then provided and we also established in the
862 bill the new partnership initiative. I'm wondering how that is
863 being implemented.

864 And if you could, for the committee, explain why Iraq's
865 persecuted Christian community in the Nineveh Plain was dropped
866 from the USAID OTI Iraq Resilience Project in October of 2021.

867

868 The Nineveh Plain, also traditionally home to a number of
869 Yazidi individuals, was the only geographic area dropped, meaning
870 -- and I found it puzzling and mind boggling. I have been there,
871 particularly visiting with the Christians who fled ISIS, and if
872 you could give us insight into that and hopefully -- the concern
873 is that those communities be supported.

874 Ms. Power. Thank you, Congressman. I'm going to have to
875 get back to you, if I could, on your last question. In terms
876 of, you know, being -- this group being dropped from a specific
877 program, I've just got to get -- I'm happy to do it by phone.

878 Mr. Smith. Please do.

879 Ms. Power. I'm not at the staff level. I know how important

880 the issue of religious protection and religious freedom, you know,
881 have long been to you and, certainly, are to me. So let me look
882 into that, and the larger Iraqi funding questions that you're
883 referencing.

884 If I could speak to the protection crisis -- the exploding
885 protection crisis that you're describing, first, USAID, on human
886 trafficking over the last 20 years, as I understand it, has spent
887 about \$340 million in programming. A lot of that leadership and,
888 perhaps, some of those earmarks and directives have come from
889 you. But this is incredibly important programming.

890 However, this is a new crisis that creates new challenges
891 that requires new structures, and I think that we all know --
892 and many of us, again, have visited the border countries -- I've
893 visited Slovakia, Moldova, and Poland a couple of times since
894 February 24th -- you know, when 95 percent of the people coming
895 across the border are women and children, a lot of generosity
896 -- families showing up at the border crossing saying, let me take
897 you, but also some very, very unsavory characters.

898 I think it took time, frankly, for Europe, particularly those
899 countries that are members of the EU, to bring additional
900 resources to bear to support border guards who weren't accustomed
901 to this kind of flood of individuals -- vulnerable individuals.

902

903 I think we, USAID -- and PRM is at the State Department,

904 of course, funds the refugee assistance part of our portfolio
905 -- but USAID within Ukraine, we have spent, of the, you know,
906 roughly, \$400 million on food, medicine, water, repair, shelter,
907 and the like about -- around \$25 million on protection assistance.

908

909 But in some ways, just focusing on the humanitarian -- and
910 that would go to organizations like UNICEF and others who are
911 setting up, you know, programs and shelters and the like for
912 internally displaced because that is USAID's jurisdiction here
913 -- but through our development assistance, you know, we are
914 training Ukrainian psychiatrists and psychologists about how to
915 talk to women and girls who've experienced something like human
916 trafficking or just displacement and the ravages of displacement.

917

918 We have set up a hotline inside Ukraine and spent a good
919 degree of development resources -- I'll get you the specific
920 number. It doesn't do you any good to have a hotline if nobody
921 knows what the number is.

922 So actually creating PSAs and ensuring that things --
923 advertisements for that number arrive on people's cell phones
924 or that they can see billboards, pamphlets, and the like. So
925 the infrastructure was there before the war.

926 We have made investments in the fight against human
927 trafficking. But now we just need to scale them to an extent

928 that, again, was not contemplated before, combining our
929 traditional programs and using those structures and those
930 partners that we have long worked with, but with the generous
931 infusion of assistance, not just the \$4.3 billion that you,
932 rightly, pointed to but also in our development programming that's
933 about strengthening Ukraine's capacity also to deal with this,
934 which is an issue well beyond this conflict, even if, as you say,
935 it has exploded during this conflict.

936 Mr. Smith. Thank you. Look forward to following up.

937 Ms. Power. Absolutely.

938 Mr. Bera. Let me now recognize the gentleman from South
939 Carolina, Mr. Wilson, the ranking member on the Subcommittee on
940 Middle East, North Africa, and Global Counterterrorism.

941 Mr. Wilson. Thank you, Congressman Bera, and Madam
942 Administrator -- Madam Ambassador, thank you so much for your
943 service.

944 The United States Agency for International Development --
945 Congressman Steve Chabot is correct -- it actually reemphasizes
946 the generosity of the American people, which is unparalleled in
947 world history, and then your service is so important because I've
948 seen it firsthand.

949 I've had the opportunity to visit Tacloban, Philippines,
950 the recovery efforts from a super typhoon. I've been to most
951 of Muzaffarabad, Pakistan, to see the recovery efforts of an

952 earthquake to provide a U.S. Marine field hospital for females.

953

954 I've seen the refugee camps in Jordan, Sudan, and then I'm
955 really grateful in visiting villages in Guatemala the
956 extraordinary efforts that you perform along with the World Food
957 Programme with Governor David Beasley. So over and over again,
958 what you're doing is so important.

959 And then also it was so inspiring to me. Every time I went
960 to Afghanistan to see the schools being built for girls, the
961 bridges, the improvements of life, and it's just so sad to me
962 that has now been abandoned and the people are left behind.

963 But with that in mind, looking to the future, and, sadly,
964 with Putin's war, we have the illegal occupation of sovereign
965 Ukraine and we witnessed the proliferation of disinformation from
966 Putin, and I really appreciate very much Chairman Greg Meeks,
967 our ranking member, Greg McCaul, their most recent aid package,
968 the largest aid package in the history, as I'm aware of, almost
969 in the world, and what a message that sends to the people of Ukraine
970 and what that message sends to Putin and, hopefully, a message
971 to the people of Russia that this is a futile effort, which is
972 only to benefit Putin with oil, money, and power.

973 But with that in mind, what is USAID to doing to counteract
974 the disinformation and are there any specific programs to help
975 our allies of Moldova and Georgia?

976 Ms. Power. Thank you so much. So, in short, the first
977 Ukrainian supplemental -- and we'll have to work through the
978 details of what we will do if we were so fortunate for the Senate
979 to pass the second supplemental -- but on the first, we have
980 allocated about \$230 million, and that's not only to counter
981 disinformation but that's a big -- a big part of what we are going
982 to be doing.

983 And, again, bear in mind -- and I can get you the exact numbers
984 -- but prior to the Russian invasion, the fight against
985 disinformation but also, critically, the growth and support for
986 Ukraine's independent media was an absolutely critical component
987 of our so-called social resilience programming.

988 So now what we have sought to do is to scale that support.
989 Sometimes, Congressman, it entails providing flak jackets and
990 helmets to independent journalists via our program OTI so that
991 they continue to be out in the field able to themselves document
992 what's true.

993 There's a Center for Media and Disinformation that is
994 actually government affiliated, and actually a number of
995 independent journalists left civil society and went to work for
996 this center for combating disinformation. I'll get you the exact
997 title of it.

998 That is something that we have increased support for as the
999 government seeks to react in real time to memes as they develop,

1000 whether on Telegram or on Twitter or Russian-backed television.

1001

1002 So, again, some of it is helping those who are already doing
1003 this work manage the displacement and the crisis so that they
1004 can continue their work. But many others are getting into this
1005 line of work who were performing other jobs that are deemed less
1006 of a priority in wartime.

1007 The other thing I'd say --

1008 Mr. Wilson. Thank you for your efforts. I need to get one
1009 more question in.

1010 Ms. Power. Please. Of course. Of course, Congressman.

1011 Mr. Wilson. I know, but the people of Tunisia have been
1012 such an inspiration. They were the founders of the Arab Spring.

1013 But, sadly, the current regime is backsliding. What's being
1014 done and, particularly, with Millennium Challenge to assist the
1015 people of Tunisia?

1016 Ms. Power. Thank you, Congressman. Just briefly, just to
1017 say in Moldova we are increasing funding as well for our
1018 disinformation work. About half the people of Moldova right now
1019 have shown themselves to be very influenced by Russian TV, in
1020 particular, and that's reflected in the public opinion on the
1021 war in very disturbing ways.

1022 As it relates to Tunisia, I would just say that the '23 budget
1023 requests that I'm up here to talk about today, unfortunately,

1024 has in the request a lower sum for Tunisia because of the
1025 disappointing turns by the current government, the crackdown on
1026 civil society, the move away from the rule of law and from
1027 democratic institutions.

1028 We would look forward, of course, to restarting and finding
1029 a way to get that assistance going again if the government would
1030 get the country back on a democratic path. So, mainly, our
1031 support is for civil society, media, and looking at the
1032 Independent Electoral Board, which we have long sought to
1033 strengthen and we thought was doing very important work, but now
1034 have to look to see what the membership of that board will be.

1035 On the MCC, I would have to get back to you on that
1036 specifically. But given the governance circumstances in
1037 Tunisia, that's going to affect the indicators, which are so
1038 important to the question of whether MCC makes its investments.

1039

1040 Mr. Wilson. Thank you so much for your service. I yield
1041 back.

1042 Mr. Malinowski. [Presiding.] Thank you, Administrator
1043 Power. Seeing no one else I will now recognize -- oh, yes, I
1044 recognize myself. Yes. I'm just joining the flow here. Thank
1045 you.

1046 Let me just start with a brief comment. I noted your
1047 exchange with Ranking Member McCaul about Ukraine reconstruction,

1048 with Chairman Meeks as well. Just note that this extraordinarily
1049 expensive enterprise, as I think we agree now, could very well
1050 be aided if we found a way with our allies to be able to make
1051 use of some of the frozen and blocked Russian assets, whether
1052 we're talking about yachts or even central bank assets.

1053 I asked Secretary Blinken when he was sitting there a couple
1054 of weeks ago whether the central bank assets were something the
1055 administration would be looking at and he said yes.

1056 I do want to note that the administration gave us a
1057 legislative proposal to enable this very late in our process for
1058 considering the Ukraine supplemental. That's a problem because
1059 it's kind of hard to pass things in the other body as standalone
1060 bills. So if we're late in getting it into the supplemental,
1061 we do have a problem.

1062 We're going to need really high level administration
1063 engagement working with our leadership to find a way to get this
1064 done. Otherwise, we're probably going to be looking at no action
1065 until maybe the NDAA at the end of the year. So I just wanted
1066 to note that for you.

1067 A couple of other things I wanted to ask about -- COVID
1068 vaccination -- global vaccination efforts. Do you think it would
1069 be better for the United States to spend a few billion dollars
1070 beating this disease in the developing world or a few trillion
1071 dollars beating it, once again, in the United States? That's

1072 a loaded question but --

1073 Ms. Power. It's a trick question. I think the best way
1074 for me to answer that question other than to say yes, it would
1075 be better, is to just note that what we are doing is working.

1076 It is working so powerfully.

1077 It is working in terms of public opinion polling, where our
1078 global vaccination drive is having analogous effects to what
1079 PEPFAR did for America's standing in sub-Saharan Africa and
1080 beyond.

1081 It is working in the sense that when President Biden held
1082 his last COVID summit back in September, 13 percent of lower middle
1083 income countries where the populations -- where 13 percent of
1084 the populations were vaccinated that number is now 52 percent
1085 in lower middle income countries. In low income countries, of
1086 course, where the issues really have arisen, the numbers have
1087 gone from September 1 percent, roughly, to around 13 percent,
1088 and I could give you country by country breakdowns.

1089 Just Cote d'Ivoire, where we launched Global VAX to support
1090 the delivery -- not just the delivery of vaccines, but the delivery
1091 into the arms of people who were looking for vaccines, the number
1092 of people who were fully vaccinated in December when we launched
1093 this was 15 percent. This is of eligible members of the
1094 population. Now it is up to 38 percent of adults fully vaccinated
1095 in Cote d'Ivoire because of U.S. investments.

1096 What does that mean? That means in Cote d'Ivoire the risk
1097 of new variants getting started there is substantially lower than
1098 it would have been before we --

1099 Mr. Malinowski. But we're running out of money?

1100 Ms. Power. We have obligated almost all of our American
1101 Rescue Plan funds. We have purchased vaccines, and now risk not
1102 having the ability to actually fund getting those vaccines into
1103 arms. And for all of us who care about waste, the idea of having
1104 gold-standard Pfizer vaccines go to waste because we can't afford
1105 to support health workers who are working overtime or a pop-up
1106 clinic or fight against disinformation, it is -- it would be really
1107 devastating for U.S. interests, the interests of the health of
1108 our own people, if we let these programs grind to a halt.

1109 Mr. Malinowski. And, of course, there is another country
1110 with less effective vaccines waiting in the wings?

1111 Ms. Power. As it happens, there is, and we, though, with
1112 our -- the countries that we are working, which is all of the
1113 countries that are struggling to get their vaccination rates up,
1114 they are very clear about what vaccine and what vaccines they
1115 would wish to distribute to their populations.

1116 We just need the resources to be able to get those shots
1117 in arms and it is a bargain. It is a really modest sum of money
1118 when you think about all the money that is spent domestically,
1119 rightly, vaccinating our public, ensuring -- being able to take

1120 care of tests out of people's insurance, and so forth.

1121 The least we can do is everything we can globally to make
1122 sure that another new variant doesn't come and set back the
1123 progress that we are making, trying to return to a -- or to get
1124 to a post-pandemic America.

1125 Mr. Malinowski. Thank you. I would say it's -- I think
1126 it's the greatest opportunity for American leadership since the
1127 end of the Cold War. We have done a lot. We haven't done enough.

1128 It would be an absolute travesty if we allowed China to step
1129 in because the United States Congress is unwilling to spend a
1130 few billion dollars to do something that saves us trillions of
1131 dollars in terms of our own economy and the global economy.

1132 With that, I will call upon Representative Scott Perry of
1133 Pennsylvania for five minutes.

1134 Mr. Perry. Thank you very much, Mr. Chairman.

1135 Ambassador, thank you for being here. Forgive me for using
1136 the way back machine here but there's something that's kind of
1137 sticking with me that I never got answers on that I'm just curious
1138 about.

1139 So this goes back a ways. October 13, 2017, you were asked
1140 by the ranking member of HPSCI regarding the unmasking of General
1141 Flynn, and I think you replied that you don't -- you didn't recall
1142 unmasking him.

1143 Since that time, a lot of -- obviously, a lot of time has

1144 elapsed. Do you seek to correct that at all? Only from the
1145 context that from our records here you unmasked him seven times
1146 in a little over a month and a half period of time and the fact
1147 that you didn't recall that just strikes me as odd.

1148 Ms. Power. I was U.S. Ambassador to the United Nations.

1149 Mr. Perry. Right.

1150 Ms. Power. Worked around the clock to advance U.S.
1151 interests, read intelligence in order to prepare myself for
1152 negotiations with, for example, the PRC, the Russian Federation,
1153 other actors in the U.N. system that sought to accrue advantage
1154 for their national interests.

1155 Mr. Perry. Good. Right.

1156 Ms. Power. And I did absolutely nothing other than advance
1157 the interests of the American people.

1158 Mr. Perry. I'm not saying you did. I'm just asking.

1159 Ms. Power. I'm not going to discuss --

1160 Mr. Perry. Seven times you don't remember it at all.

1161 Ms. Power. I'm absolutely not going to discuss
1162 intelligence.

1163 Mr. Perry. I'm not asking you to discuss intelligence.
1164 I'm asking you to discuss your --

1165 Ms. Power. You're are absolutely --

1166 Mr. Perry. No, I'm asking you to discuss whether you
1167 remember, because you said you didn't recall. It says, I don't

1168 recall making such requests. But yet you unmasked General Flynn
1169 seven times in about a month and a half from November 30th to
1170 11 January.

1171 So it's about a -- a little less than a month and a half.
1172 And I'm just trying to clarify whether you remember now or you
1173 still don't remember ever doing that.

1174 Ms. Power. I think it'd be helpful -- I'm not sure if you've
1175 had the chance to be briefed by the intelligence community about
1176 the process by which individuals who are members of the executive
1177 branch and, I believe, the legislative branch review
1178 intelligence, reveal intelligence, the question of how, for
1179 example, the identity of U.S. citizens that appear in intelligence
1180 gets --

1181 Mr. Perry. Right. I am familiar --

1182 Ms. Power. It is not -- it is not a principle.

1183 Mr. Perry. So --

1184 Ms. Power. May I finish, sir?

1185 Mr. Perry. Yes, ma'am.

1186 Ms. Power. It is not an official in the executive branch
1187 whoever unmask anybody. All the official in the executive
1188 branch does is read intelligence, poses questions f there are
1189 questions that the intelligence demands. So any questions you
1190 have about unmasking should be referred to people who actually
1191 unmasked these individuals.

1192 Mr. Perry. No, I'm not asking about the intelligence. I'm
1193 just asking you what you did. I'm just asking you what you did.

1194 Ms. Power. And I am telling you I am not going to discuss
1195 intelligence that I read --

1196 Mr. Perry. And I'm not asking you to, for the record, but
1197 I am asking you about the unmasking. And I'm just wondering,
1198 so you saw some intelligence, however it came to you, with one
1199 side of it that then includes an American on the other side.
1200 That makes sense.

1201 What do you learn? Like, what's the purpose of learning
1202 who asked the question or who was involved in the conversation
1203 on the American side?

1204 Ms. Power. I'm not going to refer to any specific piece
1205 of intelligence.

1206 Mr. Perry. I'm not asking you to.

1207 Ms. Power. I will say -- no --

1208 Mr. Perry. Just tell me generally that.

1209 Ms. Power. I will -- yeah, exactly.

1210 Mr. Perry. Okay.

1211 Ms. Power. I will say, generally, that when one reads
1212 intelligence questions may arise where it is important to
1213 understand what it is that it is on the page, and in the event
1214 there is something that you are reading that you cannot understand
1215 where you, literally, cannot understand the content of what you

1216 are reading that you think might be important to do your job --
1217 only to do your job, not because of anything to do with anything
1218 other than representing U.S. interests.

1219 In my case at the United Nations, occasionally, you pose
1220 a question to the intelligence community in order to understand
1221 the intelligence you are reading.

1222 Mr. Perry. Okay. So --

1223 Ms. Power. There is no straight motive. There's no
1224 ulterior anything. It's a desire to understand what you're
1225 reading.

1226 Chairman Meeks. [Presiding.] And I'm confused, Mr. Perry.
1227 I want to let you know this is a HFAC hearing --

1228 Mr. Perry. I understand, Mr. Chairman.

1229 Chairman Meeks. -- not a HPSCI hearing --

1230 Mr. Perry. I understand --

1231 Chairman Meeks. -- and this hearing -- the purpose of this
1232 hearing is for the budget questions in dealing with USAID. So
1233 I want to make sure that your questions are relevant to the issues
1234 of which this hearing has been called for.

1235 It sounds to me from just walking in and listening that we
1236 are at a HPSCI hearing and we're not.

1237 Mr. Perry. We're not. I'm trying to understand why she
1238 needed to know the name and that she didn't remember seven times
1239 in a month and a half period of time unmasking the person.

1240 These questions, in my opinion, Mr. Chairman, have never
1241 been adequately answered and this is the first opportunity I've
1242 had to ask these questions. I'm happy to ask questions about
1243 budget as well. But I've got five minutes, and these are
1244 questions that are pressing and have been for some time.

1245 Chairman Meeks. And it should be pressed in the appropriate
1246 committee at the appropriate time on the subject matter that
1247 committee is hearing.

1248 Mr. Perry. So if you're not a member of said committee,
1249 you never have an opportunity to represent the folks back home
1250 that you -- that are your bosses to ask the question that they
1251 wish to ask? That's the position of the committee?

1252 Chairman Meeks. The committee is that we want to make sure
1253 that we are dealing with relevant subject matters of which this
1254 hearing was called and which the witnesses were asked to testify.

1255 Mr. Perry. Mr. Chairman, the ambassador was the ambassador
1256 to the United Nations. She's here talking about USAID. This
1257 is the Foreign Affairs Committee. All these things are relevant,
1258 whether or not you're interested.

1259 Look, you know, I respect you, Mr. Chairman, and I get that
1260 this is uncomfortable line of questioning. But the fact that
1261 it's uncomfortable, nonetheless, doesn't mean that we shouldn't
1262 endeavor to ask the questions. That's my job here. And, quite
1263 honestly, I've sat through many, many hearings where folks on

1264 your side of the aisle asked all kinds of things that were
1265 completely irrelevant and we allowed them to do it every single
1266 time. That's how this goes.

1267 And, you know, this is your committee, Mr. Chairman. If
1268 you want to shut me up, okay, it's on the record. But these are
1269 germane questions to foreign affairs and that's this committee.

1270

1271 Chairman Meeks. I respect you, too, Mr. Perry, and I
1272 generally -- I let you go as --

1273 Mr. Perry. We only had 30 seconds left, Mr. Chair.

1274 Chairman Meeks. I know, but I just wanted to make sure that
1275 we understood the subject matter of which we were here and to
1276 make sure that we're --

1277 Mr. Perry. I do understand, Mr. Chairman, and I will tell
1278 you this, too. And I'm not accusing the ambassador of this, but
1279 there are many times that I send correspondence to the
1280 administration and I never get an answer.

1281 So this is my opportunity, and I'm not saying that she's
1282 responsible for any of the other folks in the administration.

1283 But this is my opportunity to speak on behalf of my bosses, my
1284 constituents, and I feel like it shouldn't be hampered or
1285 encumbered by different opinions here, with all due respect.

1286 Chairman Meeks. You always treat me with respect, as I will
1287 always treat you with respect, and I appreciate it.

1288 Mr. Perry. So do I have 30 seconds or are we done?

1289 Chairman Meeks. Well, I'm going to give you 30 seconds if
1290 you have a budget question.

1291 Mr. Perry. I have a question on the same line that I had
1292 before.

1293 Chairman Meeks. I'm going to give you 30 seconds.

1294 Mr. Issa. A point of order, Mr. Chair. I think he was
1295 actually at a minute, Mr. Chairman.

1296 Chairman Meeks. No, he had 30 seconds at the time that I
1297 intervened.

1298 Mr. Perry. I won't argue --

1299 Mr. Issa. It was at a minute.

1300 Mr. Perry. All right. Mr. Chairman, I yield.

1301 Chairman Meeks. Thank you, Mr. Perry.

1302 I now recognize Representative Bill Keating of
1303 Massachusetts, who is the chair of the Subcommittee on Europe,
1304 Energy and Environment and Cyber, for five minutes.

1305 Mr. Keating. Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Thank you,
1306 Administrator, for being here. I thank your husband as well for
1307 his service in our district here. Very helpful.

1308 You know, I know this has been touched on before but it can't
1309 be touched on enough. In my view, there's going to be more --
1310 many more by multiple amounts of people that die from starvation
1311 and hunger this fall because of Putin's action in Russia and what's

1312 occurred to the breadbasket, what's occurred were Belarus and
1313 Russia have 40 percent of the world's fertilizer.

1314 You've addressed that, but there's one aspect I was wondering
1315 if we could do things to address, looking forward, to this awful
1316 crisis that is going to occur and that's the issue of hoarding,
1317 too, by some countries.

1318 I notice that India has just stopped all its exports at this
1319 stage and that's a problem. Are there things we could do to try
1320 and ease what could well be the hoarding of food supplies instead
1321 of equitably spreading them around, given the crisis we're going
1322 to face?

1323 Ms. Power. Thank you. Well, I know that Secretary Blinken
1324 and his legion of diplomats are out in the world and have been
1325 since the very beginning of the crisis because this is an obvious
1326 risk as soon as Russia began to blockade the southern ports of
1327 Ukraine, in particular, blocking the export of a third of the
1328 world's grains -- a third of the world's wheat, I should say.

1329
1330 And we are -- you know, there have been a number of countries
1331 that have made decisions along the lines of India's. I would
1332 note that India's deal that they had -- the government's deal
1333 that they had done with the World Food Programme to give the World
1334 Food Programme significant access to their grains, I believe,
1335 is still going forward.

1336 I also think there's a humanitarian assistance exception
1337 to what India has announced. But Indonesia, as well, has followed
1338 suit just in the last week. So, again, we are urging countries
1339 to think in terms of the collective good.

1340 Often, it's an emotional or domestic political reaction,
1341 not one actually even borne of sound economic practice from the
1342 standpoint of feeding one's own people. But in addition to doing
1343 this diplomacy and urging our colleagues in international
1344 institutions like the WTO and the multilateral development banks
1345 to do the same, you know, we're also just working with countries
1346 who may be in a position, not tomorrow but in the coming months,
1347 to be able to plant more, bring more wheat to export.

1348 I was just talking to the Zambian minister of agriculture,
1349 who believes that they could be in a position with some more
1350 inputs, potentially, to do that. And so this assistance that
1351 is pending now before the Senate and we hope will be passed --
1352 maybe even while we're sitting here -- you know, the resources
1353 there that would allow us to work with countries to see what share
1354 of the supplies that are being held back by Putin's war could
1355 somehow be compensated for or what share of those supplies that
1356 aren't going to market --

1357 Mr. Keating. Thank you. I think it also underscores the
1358 need for planning. If you look at a country like Ethiopia, they
1359 won't be hurt as badly because they put a process in place.

1360 Just quickly on another subject, too, I just got back from
1361 Poland where I spoke to President Duda. Just a week before I
1362 spoke to the mayor of Warsaw, and I think the same can be said
1363 for other countries in the region, but they're taking an enormous
1364 burden.

1365 Three million Ukrainians have come over including out of
1366 country people to Poland. They 180,000 people, remarkably, in
1367 their school systems already. The population of Warsaw is up
1368 17 percent. It's just an enormous undertaking that they're
1369 doing, to their credit. Can we do more?

1370 What could we do and what's budgeted for helping Poland,
1371 helping these countries, helping cities that are taking the bulk
1372 of the people that are coming over as well as, perhaps, helping
1373 Romania and Moldova, some of those countries as well?

1374 Ms. Power. Well, I would put Moldova very high up the list,
1375 as Moldova has received the highest per capita number of refugees.
1376 Many have moved on, of course.

1377 But for such a small country that's not part of the European
1378 Union, that doesn't have the same resources injected by that
1379 broader super system or supra system, it's very, very challenging.

1380 For Poland, I met with the mayor of Warsaw and he, of course,
1381 ran through a number of the very significant challenges they are
1382 facing. I think USAID's jurisdiction is more -- it's not within
1383 the European Union, per se. PRM at the State Department is

1384 providing UNHCR and others resources, including -- there'll be
1385 additional resources if the second supp passes the Senate.

1386 But, for example, one of the things that we can do is work
1387 on the Ukrainian side of the border with the education system
1388 with which we have had, you know, programs over many, many years
1389 to ensure that Ukrainian teachers are able to teach those students
1390 who happen now to live in third countries because so many of the
1391 -- including of my own staff -- Ukrainian staff -- who might now
1392 be refugees in Poland, Romania, or elsewhere, most of their there
1393 -- at least my staff anecdotally, most -- in some cases, many
1394 and others depending on the community are still actually doing
1395 their Ukrainian classwork online.

1396 And so we work with the Ministry of Digital Transformation,
1397 we work with the Ministry of Education to be able to ensure that
1398 Ukrainian teachers are getting paid inside Ukraine or getting
1399 paid by the government of Ukraine, perhaps, through some of the
1400 direct budget support --

1401 Mr. Keating. The gentleman's time has expired. I have to
1402 --

1403 Ms. Power. -- so we can keep that education afloat.

1404 Mr. Keating. Thank you very much.

1405 Chairman Meeks. I now recognize Representative Darrell
1406 Issa of California for five minutes.

1407 Mr. Issa. Thank you, Mr. Chairman. And, Chairman, I'm

1408 going to ask your indulgence for a very short line of questioning
1409 for the ambassador on a previous subject.

1410 Ambassador -- over here.

1411 Ms. Power. Yes.

1412 Mr. Issa. Is it fair to say, from my understanding and your
1413 views, that the unmasking that was talked about for quite a while
1414 is the result of administrative people using your credentials,
1415 your right to unmask, to deliver information that you ask for
1416 and that, per se, there's not a written order that says, please
1417 unmask General so and so? Is that a correct statement?

1418 Ms. Power. I am so hesitant to answer this question because
1419 it really is not the appropriate forum. But --

1420 Mr. Issa. No, I just -- but we --

1421 Ms. Power. -- yes. But the short answer is yes.

1422 Mr. Issa. Okay. That's all I wanted.

1423 Ms. Power. Yes. Thank you.

1424 Mr. Issa. I just wanted to make sure that we sort of
1425 understand that that term is sort of like you signed something
1426 versus your indicia on something. It's not always quite what
1427 it seems to be.

1428 Ms. Power. Correct.

1429 Mr. Issa. Today, going from the U.S. Ambassador to the
1430 United Nations previously, to this job, you managed to find the
1431 hardest possible alternative to your earlier job at the most

1432 important time. So I have a couple of questions.

1433 We have dealt a lot into the wheat situation and it appears
1434 as though you have a great deal on that. The two areas that it
1435 appears that you don't have the ability to help surge wheat is
1436 the U.S., which is a different cabinet position's job, or
1437 independent agency, and one that I wanted to bring up, which is
1438 currently you are prohibited from operating in Zimbabwe.
1439 Zimbabwe, when it was Rhodesia, was the breadbasket of Africa.

1440

1441 If this committee were to relook at and the administration
1442 were to relook at considering that question, do you see potential
1443 for USAID to operate in that country, at least to the benefit
1444 of their ability to produce and feed themselves? I've been to
1445 that country and I've seen the effects of three decades-plus of
1446 dictatorship.

1447 Ms. Power. Thank you, Congressman. I've also been to
1448 Zimbabwe at a time, actually, when people were having to carry
1449 cash in pillowcases because the inflation was so --

1450 Mr. Issa. Now they use \$20 bills, so they've taking care
1451 of that problem.

1452 Ms. Power. You know, I am, and our agency, is driven by
1453 the humanitarian imperative, and the needs in Zimbabwe are going
1454 to be acute. I would actually want to look into what those
1455 restrictions currently are because, again, in terms of our funding

1456 to World Food Programme and others, certainly, U.N. agencies are
1457 already operating in Zimbabwe. So what you're saying is
1458 surprising me a little bit. But the need to meet --

1459 Mr. Issa. Okay. And maybe respond for the record. I mean,
1460 if you were operating in that country, your ability to help people
1461 begin farming effectively would be very different than the aid
1462 that is currently in Zimbabwe.

1463 I want to switch to a country that, when you first came into
1464 office, was not on your list and that's Lebanon. In this short
1465 period of time of the last two years, it's gone from being a country
1466 that had a huge problem.

1467 A far greater percentage of its population were refugees
1468 than any other country on Earth. Far more refugees are there
1469 today than are in Poland or almost as many as are in Poland, except
1470 as a percentage it's 50 percent of the population.

1471 What's happened differently is that their -- the value of
1472 their currency and their economy has diminished by 95 percent.

1473 So for an agency that normally takes months or years to target
1474 a country, how are you reacting to a country that overnight went
1475 from middle income to near the bottom?

1476 Ms. Power. Thank you. Well, let me just say that, you know,
1477 of course, Lebanon just had its elections and --

1478 Mr. Issa. And congratulations for throwing Hezbollah out
1479 in an election.

1480 Ms. Power. I thought you might appreciate the results.
1481 But I think -- I mentioned that because the paralysis of governing
1482 institutions cannot be really separated from the economic
1483 downturn and spiral that the people of Lebanon have had to endure.

1484

1485 I think, you know, largely, what we have done is worked,
1486 as USAID does, you know, trying to provide technical assistance
1487 and technical advice as to how to shore up different aspects of
1488 the economy. Right now, though, with 81 percent of Lebanon's
1489 wheat coming from Ukraine, we are focused on humanitarian
1490 assistance --

1491 Mr. Issa. And no storage capability.

1492 Ms. Power. And no storage capability because of the
1493 explosion, and so forth. So I think that this supplemental --
1494 I don't have the country breakdown for you yet. But, again, with
1495 new resources, \$4.3 billion coming online for humanitarian
1496 assistance, that's a part of the equation, but it's stopgap.

1497 It doesn't get at the underlying causes of this unraveling
1498 of quality of life and standard of living for the people of
1499 Lebanon. And so I think when we look at our food security, which
1500 is a separate allocation in the supplemental, thinking through
1501 other things that we can do in the agricultural sector with the
1502 new government when it comes in that, hopefully, will be more
1503 dedicated to making hard choices in the economic reform area,

1504 you know, it's those structural changes that are really needed
1505 to stop the free fall.

1506 Mr. Issa. Thank you.

1507 Mr. Chairman, I want to thank you for this hearing,
1508 specifically, and for bringing us the kind of a witness that we
1509 desperately need on a regular basis and, again, thanks for your
1510 indulgence on that first question. I yield back. Thank you.

1511

1512 Chairman Meeks. I now recognize Representative Ted Deutch
1513 of Florida, who is the chair of the Subcommittee of the Middle
1514 East, North Africa, and Global Counterterrorism, for five
1515 minutes.

1516 Mr. Deutch. Thank you, Chairman Meeks. I join Mr. Issa
1517 in praising you and our witness today. So glad to have this
1518 opportunity, Administrator.

1519 Following years of hard work, Nita Lowey -- the Nita Lowey
1520 Middle East Partnership for Peace Act was finally enacted into
1521 law in December of 2020. As authorized, MEPPA directs \$50 million
1522 for each of the five fiscal years following enactment and, as
1523 you well know, the fiscal year 2023 budget request urges Congress
1524 to maintain \$50 billion under the Economic Support Fund, which
1525 is consistent with previous year's authorization.

1526 Over the last year, the Department of State, USAID, and DFC
1527 have been hard at work implementing both the people-to-people

1528 Partnership for Peace Fund and the Joint Investment for Peace
1529 Initiative, which resulted in the first three MEPPA awards being
1530 announced in the past two months.

1531 They'll support Palestinian and Israeli private sector
1532 initiatives to build partnerships to increase economic growth
1533 and to lay the foundation for peace through people-to-people
1534 programs. Our support for grassroots programs as well as
1535 building a viable Palestinian economy remain fundamentally
1536 central to the goal of preserving the possibility of a negotiated
1537 settlement leading to a sustainable two-state solution, and
1538 former chairwoman Nita Lowey said, for whom the act was named,
1539 I quote, "I firmly believe these programs are important to build
1540 the foundation for such a peace to take root and endure. It has
1541 been really exciting to watch this become a reality." And we're
1542 all excited to see where it goes.

1543 And as you approach the halfway point and the first year
1544 of MEPPA implementation, can you give us an update on the process
1545 for awarding grants under the people-to-people Partnership for
1546 Peace Fund that USAID oversees and when we might see additional
1547 grants awarded?

1548 Ms. Power. Thank you so much, Congressman, and thanks for
1549 pushing us throughout the teething phase, I guess you'd call it,
1550 of MEPPA. I think I had to appear here last year and answer as
1551 to why we hadn't, you know, been able to kind of compress the

1552 process there.

1553 You know, there were some startup investments that had to
1554 be made, at least having the chairman and ranking member of this
1555 committee nominate their board members. So we do have a fully
1556 constituted board.

1557 We do have George Salem, who was named as the chair of the
1558 board. We have had our first board meeting in April. It's great
1559 to see Nita Lowey back in action in that fashion. And as you
1560 mentioned, we have three organizations that have received a grant
1561 so far.

1562 You know, it is \$50 million a year, you know, each year for
1563 five years. We have two solicitations -- I think this gets to
1564 the heart of your question -- one on peace building and one on
1565 building economic bridges that are out.

1566 I think the more that, you know, we can talk about this being
1567 up and running, I think, you know, so a lot of attention to it
1568 when the legislation passed. I'm not sure, again, yet how broadly
1569 understood it is.

1570 I think our Deputy Administrator, Isobel Coleman, traveled
1571 to the region, in part, for this reason to be traveling into the
1572 Palestinian territories, talking to Israeli officials, the COGAT
1573 and others, about, you know, how do we really maximize the pool
1574 of community members on both sides of the line that would wish
1575 to be a part of this.

1576 So on the solicitation timing, I don't have that specific
1577 in my in my head. But, again, I would expect in the coming months
1578 to have more announcements.

1579 Mr. Deutch. Great. Thank you. And can I just ask,
1580 obviously, MEPPA is overseen by Meghan Doherty, the deputy
1581 assistant administrator, quite ably, but it requires an
1582 interagency approach and I wonder if you could speak to how MEPPA
1583 is working to ensure that these grants are driving broader
1584 administration policy in this space.

1585 Ms. Power. Well, as you know, Congressman, USAID is part
1586 of in every respect but, certainly, on anything to do with Middle
1587 East policy we are part of the interagency process. So the
1588 NSC-led process brings to the table everything from the
1589 intelligence community, the Department of Commerce, USTR, DFC,
1590 of course, the State Department, Treasury, and others.

1591 So I think as part of that process we are able, working with
1592 our colleagues, to, you know, have a ever refreshed sense of what
1593 our objectives are. There is lead, time, again, between the
1594 solicitation and then the rollout or the granting of an award
1595 to a particular organization.

1596 But I think that there's been extensive communication,
1597 again, through the regular interagency policy committee process.

1598

1599 Mr. Deutch. Thanks -- thank you, Administrator, and, Mr.

1600 Chairman, I wonder if there might be an opportunity in the
1601 reporting from our committee about today's hearing to post a link
1602 to that solicitation so that everyone is well aware of the
1603 opportunities available under this.

1604 Chairman Meeks. Thank you. The gentleman's time has now
1605 expired. I now recognize Representative Ann Wagner of Missouri,
1606 who is the vice ranking member of the full committee, for five
1607 minutes. I thank you, Mr. Chairman, for organizing this hearing.

1608

1609 Mrs. Wagner. I thank you, Mr. Chairman, for organizing this
1610 hearing, and I thank Administrator Power for her time and service.

1611 Administrator Power, since you last appeared before this
1612 committee in July of 2021, the world has become a significantly
1613 more dangerous, unstable, and unpredictable place. The
1614 Taliban's tragic and appalling surge back to power, thanks to
1615 the administration's botched withdrawal from Afghanistan,
1616 plunged innocent Afghans into dire humanitarian circumstances.

1617 Putin's brutal invasion has forced millions more, more than
1618 a quarter of Ukraine's total population, to flee their homes and
1619 seek the assistance of neighboring countries. U.S. development
1620 and humanitarian activities abroad recognize the inherent worth
1621 of all people and leverage the boundless human capacity for
1622 generosity, cooperation, and ingenuity to overcome the global
1623 challenges.

1624 I have said this before, but I think it is particularly true
1625 today as the U.S. and our allies unite to protect and serve the
1626 vulnerable, the oppressed, and the persecuted our values make
1627 us the partner of choice for countries seeking self-sufficiency,
1628 security, and the ability to determine their own futures, and
1629 as we work to consider the aggressive imperialist agendas of
1630 China, Russia, and other dictatorial states, strong and confident
1631 American leadership is more important, ma'am, than ever.

1632 Administrator Power, I co-chair the Congressional Caucus
1633 on the Association of Southeast Asian Nations, or ASEAN. ASEAN
1634 countries are deeply worried about China's clear intent to
1635 dominate the region and are urgently calling for increased U.S.
1636 engagement, especially in the infrastructure sector.

1637 Can you tell me how USAID is supporting infrastructure
1638 development in Southeast Asia and what sorts of project USAID
1639 plans to prioritize?

1640 Ms. Power. Thank you, Congresswoman.

1641 First, let me say that I agree with everything you've said
1642 about the importance of U.S. leadership at this moment.

1643 Second, I had the privilege of attending the ASEAN summit
1644 last year week chaired by President Biden. I was in a session
1645 chaired by Vice President Harris.

1646 The entire interagency turned out in force to engage with
1647 the heads of state who had traveled here for a very unusual

1648 gathering that, I think, will be the first of many, and your
1649 question really was the question, at least in the session I was
1650 in, that we were delving into, particularly as it relates to
1651 transitioning to renewable energy.

1652 The Development Finance Corporation, of course, has a big
1653 role to play there as many countries are very eager to meet their
1654 newly ambitious emissions targets to bring down emissions
1655 quickly, to draw on solar, hydro. There's so many opportunities
1656 in the Mekong and beyond to draw on hydropower.

1657 USAID's work is concentrated there and you'll see in the
1658 '23 funding request a request for additional resources,
1659 particularly, again, in the energy and climate domains, but also
1660 helping countries that have withstood the COVID pandemic where
1661 we have provided hundreds of millions or tens of millions of
1662 vaccines, really helping that region cross the 70 percent
1663 threshold that WHO recommended on COVID vaccination more quickly
1664 than many other regions in the world.

1665 Mrs. Wagner. Administrator -- Administrator --

1666 Ms. Power. Yes?

1667 Mrs. Wagner. -- if I could, and I hate to interrupt but
1668 I've got just a short period of time left. I want to get one
1669 more question. How does USAID programming in Southeast Asia and
1670 in the Indo-Pacific region as a whole help our partners resist
1671 China's coercive economic and diplomatic and financial policies?

1672 Does USAID have a roadmap to help countries that are highly
1673 dependent on China reduce their vulnerability to China's malign
1674 influence operations?

1675 Ms. Power. Well, first, let me, again, embrace the premise,
1676 I think, where you started and where you're now finishing, which
1677 is that is what either openly or privately so many of these
1678 countries are really, really eager to do. They're eager to be
1679 in a position to secure resources that don't entail decades of
1680 debt mortgaging the futures of their young people in order to
1681 have to carry that debt into the future.

1682 They're eager for environmental impact statements so that
1683 infrastructure projects don't harm the environment but, in fact,
1684 are rooted in withstanding climate events, let's say, but also
1685 built in such a fashion that actually hastens that transition,
1686 again, to clean energy.

1687 So I think everything from the Countering Chinese Influence
1688 Fund, which you all have generously supported, to the investments
1689 we make in an open and secure internet in the digital sphere to
1690 these kinds of investments that, again, don't come with the
1691 transaction -- with the strings attached that PRC investments
1692 come with. I think these are the domains in which USAID and our
1693 partners across the U.S. government have been --

1694 Mrs. Wagner. Thank you.

1695 Chairman Meeks. The gentlelady's time has expired.

1696 Mrs. Wagner. My time has expired so I yield back. Thank
1697 you, Mr. Chairman.

1698 Chairman Meeks. I now recognize Representative Gerry
1699 Connolly of Virginia, who is the president of the NATO
1700 Parliamentary Assembly, for five minutes.

1701 Mr. Connolly. Thank you, Mr. Chairman, and thank you so
1702 much for having this hearing today.

1703 Welcome, Administrator Power. It's so great to have you
1704 here and I just want to thank you for your leadership. I've been
1705 involved with AID going back to the late 1970s and I think you
1706 stand out in putting an imprint on AID that, I think, puts us
1707 in a really positive direction. So thank you for your leadership.

1708

1709 Let me ask about the Global Health Security Act you and I
1710 worked on and the chairman co-sponsored. It passed out of this
1711 committee multiple times. It passed on the floor of the House
1712 multiple times.

1713 We got it into the National Defense Authorization Act as
1714 a provision of that draft bill. We negotiated with the Senate
1715 and, of course, at the last minute, whimsically and arbitrarily,
1716 one member of the Senate just decided he didn't want to do it,
1717 and an important piece of legislation, an important -- more
1718 importantly, piece of public policy died and so now we have to
1719 do it all over again.

1720 Could you just comment on why you got involved in that effort
1721 and why you thought -- not the bill as such but the need to have
1722 a global health security policy and to restore a coordinator
1723 position, either at NSC or at the White House, was so important
1724 and what role AID might have played in that and, hopefully, will
1725 in the future?

1726 Ms. Power. Thank you so much for championing this and thanks
1727 to the chairman as well. You know, I do think it is extremely
1728 important that we see reflected in our budget and in our
1729 institutions -- in our governing institutions -- the priority
1730 that we must place on this key component of our national security.

1731

1732 You know, I think that our '23 budget requests reflects the
1733 budgetary piece of that. That's something I'll have to take up
1734 with the appropriators and appeal to them to make investments
1735 not only in the vaccines of today or the therapeutics and tests
1736 of today but in the ability to strengthen countries' health
1737 infrastructure in everything from surveillance to labs to the
1738 training of health workers, where President Biden just issued
1739 a new health worker -- a training initiative that, I think, is
1740 so important.

1741 But we have to look ahead. We can't keep having to reinvent
1742 the wheel every time there is a new global health emergency of
1743 this magnitude. And, you know, I lived some of the investments

1744 that were made since 2014 after the Ebola crisis, such as the
1745 creation of the African CDC, certainly, changes at USAID that
1746 put us in a position to be much quicker on the draw this time
1747 around when COVID struck.

1748 But, you know, when you think about the loss of life in this
1749 country by virtue of a pandemic reaching our shores, and when
1750 you think about the number of families whose lives have been,
1751 you know, permanently deprived of people, we just -- the human
1752 stakes are so high of preventing anything like this from happening
1753 again, and, again, that's resources but it's also just ensuring
1754 that every agency in the U.S. government is singing from the same
1755 hymn book and making the kinds of investment, whether Treasury
1756 through the World Bank, or the intelligence community, you know,
1757 in terms of what it is collecting on in the global health space,
1758 or what we do in terms of program, all of that being brought to
1759 bear together in the way that your bill would have done, I think,
1760 just so important for the future.

1761 Mr. Connolly. I think it's important to note, too, that
1762 Mr. Chabot and I introduced that bill on a bipartisan basis several
1763 years before COVID-19 struck. So it wasn't in response to
1764 COVID-19.

1765 It was actually in response to the Ebola crisis where we
1766 were caught flat footed globally, and WHO did not have its finest
1767 moment and lots of quick work had to be done by AID and others

1768 to compensate for the tears in the fabric, shall we say, in terms
1769 of the immediate health response.

1770 At some point, Administrator Power, I'd love to sit down
1771 and talk to you about upgrading the underlying legislation that
1772 authorizes AID, which we haven't passed an aid authorization bill
1773 since 1986 and we haven't really updated the underlying
1774 authorization act since the early '60s.

1775 Lots has happened in between and we might want to think about
1776 trying to streamline the objectives and goals and purposes, which
1777 number over 250 now in the existing law.

1778 In any event, I'd welcome that opportunity. Mr. Chairman,
1779 my time is up and I thank you so much for this opportunity.

1780 Chairman Meeks. I thank the gentleman. The gentleman's
1781 time has expired. I now acknowledge Representative Brian Mast
1782 of Florida for five minutes.

1783 Mr. Mast. Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Thank you, ma'am, for
1784 attending today.

1785 I'll just go from a quote off your website to begin with
1786 to set the stage for my question. USAID improves the lives of
1787 the Palestinian people, and this is an important word, to -- to
1788 set conditions for a viable two-state solution.

1789 How does improving the lives of Palestinians work to set
1790 conditions? How does us paying to improve their lives work to
1791 set conditions?

1792 Ms. Power. Well, I think that part of the logic, for
1793 example, of the Middle East Partnership Act that was passed by
1794 this body and by the Senate and that we have now begun to implement
1795 is that as you create economic development in the Palestinian
1796 territories but, particularly, when you can create, you know,
1797 kind of cross line trade, cross line partnerships, in water
1798 sanitation, those kinds of connections -- those human connections
1799 -- give rise to more trust, create a different kind of climate
1800 than that which exists right now, which is inhospitable.

1801 Mr. Mast. Are they ready today for -- to be a second state?

1802 Ms. Power. Pardon me?

1803 Mr. Mast. Are they ready today to be a second state?

1804 Ms. Power. Well, as you know, there is no assistance
1805 provided by USAID to the Palestinian Authority under law, and
1806 I think the --

1807 Mr. Mast. Are they ready to be a second state?

1808 Ms. Power. I think --

1809 Mr. Mast. You were setting conditions for the last 20 years.
1810 Are they ready to be a second state after billions of dollars?

1811 Ms. Power. Well, I don't think, in fact -- I mean, given
1812 that all assistance was cut off, in fact, to the territories,
1813 I don't think it's accurate to characterize the last 20 years
1814 in that fashion.

1815 Mr. Mast. Are they ready today to be a second state?

1816 Ms. Power. I think that there is no negotiation right now
1817 underway that is even, you know, engaging on that question,
1818 bringing the parties together to ascertain, you know, even what
1819 is a requirement. I think there's an awful lot of corruption
1820 that needs to be addressed within the Palestinian Authority and
1821 we --

1822 Mr. Mast. If there's no negotiation to do this, then that
1823 begs the question of why support \$185 million dollar request for
1824 West Bank and Gaza.

1825 Ms. Power. I think there are plenty of reasons --

1826 Mr. Mast. But to go to the question --

1827 Ms. Power. Yeah --

1828 Mr. Mast. -- are they ready today to be a second state,
1829 in your opinion?

1830 Ms. Power. Again, there's no process underway that is about
1831 to culminate in Palestinian statehood. But I think our job is
1832 to --

1833 Mr. Mast. So you're working to set the conditions. Have
1834 you met the conditions? Are they ready?

1835 Ms. Power. I don't think the website said that we had set
1836 conditions.

1837 Mr. Mast. I just read it to you.

1838 Ms. Power. No. No. I --

1839 Mr. Mast. To improve the lives of Palestinian people to

1840 --

1841 Ms. Power. I don't think it -- I don't think it was --

1842 Mr. Mast. -- set conditions.

1843 Ms. Power. Right, which is not saying that we had or anybody
1844 had set conditions. It's saying working to actually improve the
1845 economic welfare of people living in often very difficult
1846 circumstances.

1847 Mr. Mast. To set conditions. There's no comma or period.

1848 To set conditions --

1849 Ms. Power. I know. Right. But --

1850 Mr. Mast. -- for a two-state solution. That's what the
1851 website says, and down at the bottom --

1852 Ms. Power. Right. The very thing that you're reading is
1853 --

1854 Mr. Mast. -- again, are they ready today to be a second
1855 state? Real hard job, set the conditions. Are they ready?

1856 Ms. Power. Our job -- our job as USAID is to invest in
1857 programs that are going to improve conditions on the ground, which
1858 will benefit not only the Palestinian people but the broader
1859 region and will have --

1860 Mr. Mast. To set conditions for a two-state solution,
1861 period. That's the website statement. So are they ready today
1862 to be a second state? I'm going off your website.

1863 Ms. Power. But the website doesn't say that which you are

1864 using as the predicate for your question so --

1865 Mr. Mast. I'm reading it right from your website.

1866 Ms. Power. No, no, no, no. I understand what you're
1867 reading from the website is on the website. But then your
1868 question is saying something entirely -- the website doesn't say
1869 --

1870 Mr. Mast. I'm just -- are they ready today to be a second
1871 state?

1872 Ms. Power. The website doesn't say they're ready or not
1873 ready. The website --

1874 Mr. Mast. No, I'm asking you. I'm asking you to say are
1875 they ready or not.

1876 Ms. Power. We could keep going back and forth like this
1877 but --

1878 Mr. Mast. Clearly, we can. We have done it before now.

1879 Ms. Power. But what I will say again is that the Palestinian
1880 Authority still practices, for example, the pay to slay program,
1881 which is outrageous, and I would say --

1882 Mr. Mast. That would lead me to say they're not ready, as
1883 one example.

1884 Ms. Power. It is something, absolutely, that is -- that
1885 no sovereign member state should -- of the United Nations should
1886 embrace. Our emphasis as USAID -- we are not involved in
1887 negotiations around a two-state --

1888 Mr. Mast. So are they not ready? Are they not ready --

1889 Ms. Power. We are not involved in negotiations around the
1890 two-state solution. We are involved -- we are involved in
1891 supporting --

1892 Mr. Mast. We are involved if we're spending \$185 million
1893 a year of our taxpayer money.

1894 Ms. Power. -- in supporting initiatives --

1895 Mr. Mast. We are involved. Every taxpayer -- ma'am, every
1896 taxpayer would agree we're directly involved if we're spending
1897 \$185 million. So are they ready or not ready?

1898 Ms. Power. We're involved in the region. We're involved
1899 in advancing the welfare of the Palestinian people through
1900 education, through sanitation programs --

1901 Mr. Mast. So not ready yet?

1902 Ms. Power. -- through food security programs. Again --

1903 Mr. Mast. I would say not ready. Thank you for your time.

1904 Ms. Power. -- I'm going to leave it to people who are
1905 involved in negotiations to discuss --

1906 Chairman Meeks. The gentleman's time has expired. I now
1907 recognize Representative Dean Phillips of Minnesota for five
1908 minutes.

1909 Mr. Phillips. Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Greetings to you,
1910 Madam Ambassador.

1911 I just read moments ago that a GOP gubernatorial candidate

1912 in Pennsylvania said that she would not support the eventual
1913 nominee today if it is not her because, and I quote, "I have no
1914 intention of supporting globalists," a concept shared by, in my
1915 estimation, too many in our country right now.

1916 So, perhaps, if you would just take a moment and express
1917 to the American people why foreign assistance, why international
1918 development, is in our country's best interest and democracies'
1919 best interests and in our national security best interests.

1920 Ms. Power. Thank you. I mean, for starters, every American
1921 has an interest in seeing, for example, health systems around
1922 the world be capable of picking up viruses before they turn into
1923 epidemics and pandemics.

1924 USAID and other foreign assistance is invested in
1925 strengthening those health systems and building labs, in
1926 shortening turnaround times so that that detection can occur.

1927 Second, we have an interest in curbing radicalization, for
1928 example, of young people.

1929 When USAID supports humanitarian assistance or schools for
1930 displaced persons we give people or support their ability to have
1931 economic opportunities that they might not otherwise have so that
1932 when a gang comes calling or a radical group or terrorist group
1933 comes calling, young people might have another path that they
1934 would be inclined to pursue.

1935 When countries emit too much carbon and the planet continues

1936 to warm, even as we begin to make transitions here, we will feel
1937 the climate effects of other countries' growing emissions, in
1938 some cases.

1939 And so it is in our interest to engage, for example, those
1940 countries in sub-Saharan Africa that are not -- or those parts
1941 of the countries that are not electrified to ensure that they
1942 go immediately to renewables, to hydro, to solar, to others, as
1943 their populations grow and as young people come online.

1944 So those are just a few examples of the ways we use
1945 humanitarian assistance, foreign assistance, in a manner that
1946 advances the interests of the American people.

1947 Mr. Phillips. And as you pursue that mission and consider
1948 the challenges, are they more relative to financial resources
1949 or human resources?

1950 Ms. Power. Could you -- could you --

1951 Mr. Phillips. Yeah. As you pursue your mission --

1952 Ms. Power. Yes.

1953 Mr. Phillips. -- are your challenges as you see them more
1954 predicated on a lack of financial resources or human resources
1955 or both?

1956 Ms. Power. Well, I think, as I said in my opening statement,
1957 I think USAID's workforce has been depleted over the years. There
1958 was a lot of staff turnover. There is a need to build a younger
1959 more diverse and inclusive workforce.

1960 So we have come to you with requests in that domain. But
1961 it goes without saying as well that the global needs are spiraling
1962 as we have more displaced people been than at any point since
1963 Hitler, more conflict than at any point since the end of the Cold
1964 War, and an intensification of humanitarian emergencies brought
1965 about by climate change, the pandemic, and now Russia's invasion
1966 of Ukraine.

1967 So there are a lot of needs to go around and, you know, one
1968 of the things that's exciting that USAID does globally is invest
1969 in other countries' human resources with the idea of over time
1970 working ourselves out of jobs because no country actually really
1971 wants to be, you know, in any way dependent on USAID's assistance.

1972 They'd like to be in a position to be talking to USTR and the
1973 Department of Commerce and others rather than me most of the time.

1974 Mr. Phillips. I hear you. I had the pleasure recently of
1975 being on a call when you introduced the youth policy initiatives
1976 at USAID as a co-leader with Reps. Manning, Curtis, and
1977 Fitzpatrick of the Youth Peace and Security Act. I celebrate
1978 that.

1979 Maybe just take the last minute of my time on how your fiscal
1980 year '23 budget appropriately resources some of these youth
1981 initiatives that you've introduced.

1982 Ms. Power. Well, it does so in two ways. I mean, first,
1983 increasing a plus-up in our funding for youth programming. But

1984 if that were the -- if you see the numbers there, you know, I
1985 think it's a little above single digits in terms of youth
1986 programming, maybe even a little below. That's not where the
1987 action is.

1988 The action is in actually integrating -- I mean, that's not
1989 merely -- there's some action there but it's about integrating
1990 young people across the board in everything we do. And so as
1991 we move to co-design more of our programming in agriculture or
1992 on clean energy or in the digital space, especially with local
1993 organizations, local partners, to make sure that that's not just
1994 the same old, you know, set of individuals or organizations that
1995 we have always worked with, that we're really going out of our
1996 way to take account of the fact that 60 percent of the population
1997 in many, if not most, of the countries we work especially in
1998 sub-Saharan Africa are under 30.

1999 Mr. Phillips. Most importantly, thank -- heartfelt
2000 gratitude to you and everyone at USAID for building the American
2001 brand that I know members on both sides of the aisle support.

2002 Thanks.

2003 Ms. Power. Thank you.

2004 Chairman Meeks. The gentleman's time has expired. I now
2005 recognize Representative Tim Burchett from the great state of
2006 Tennessee for five minutes.

2007 Mr. Burchett. Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Thanks for that

2008 plug from our great state. It is. I concur with you on that
2009 issue.

2010 Ma'am, thanks for being here and the all the usual flowery
2011 things we say and then we go for the jugular, but I'm not going
2012 to do that.

2013 What steps has the administration taken to press the
2014 Palestinian Authority to improve its educational materials?
2015 Specifically, I'm talking about the -- you've seen the videos
2016 and all the hatred that seems to be pushed out, and I'm wondering
2017 how you're ensuring that USAID partners do not promote this
2018 incitement with our hard-earned tax dollars.

2019 Ms. Power. Thank you. Well, one of the domains where this
2020 has arisen -- I know there's been congressional concern over the
2021 years is UNRWA and questions about textbooks, and I know that
2022 something that doesn't -- isn't something USAID funds
2023 specifically, but from my last job in the executive branch, you
2024 know, I know U.S. U.N. Ambassador Thomas-Greenfield and Secretary
2025 Blinken are, you know, always engaging with UNRWA and UNRWA U.N.
2026 leadership is reviewing textbooks and the like to try to make
2027 sure that course work doesn't cross the kinds of lines that you're
2028 describing.

2029 You know, USAID, in the -- until about a year ago wasn't
2030 funding work in the Palestinian territories. That funding had
2031 been cut off. So some of the investments that we had made, for

2032 example, in independent media or in civil society organizations
2033 that themselves, you know, are fact based and not inclined in
2034 that way, particularly, the investments in local education
2035 systems, you know, those investments had been suspended, you might
2036 say, or picked up by other donors.

2037 Mr. Burchett. Right.

2038 Ms. Power. I think now our programming is, largely, in the
2039 kind of wash and sanitation area. We're looking for projects
2040 that we can work on also collaboratively with the government of
2041 Israel through the MEPPA program. But I think the main answer
2042 to your question is that, certainly, anytime I or my deputy I
2043 mentioned in a previous exchange was just in the region just where
2044 it is at the top of the list of issues to raise with any Palestinian
2045 officials that we encounter, and I know this is, again, something
2046 that Secretary Blinken --

2047 Mr. Burchett. All right. Let me get on some more
2048 questions, ma'am. I appreciate your talkability here. But how
2049 are you --

2050 Ms. Power. It's a strong suit, talkability. The Irish --
2051 yeah.

2052 Mr. Burchett. Yes, ma'am.

2053 Ms. Power. Yeah.

2054 Mr. Burchett. It's like lawyers. They get paid by the word
2055 and I'm not a big fan of them, either. I'm not necessarily a

2056 big fan of yours yet unless you answer these questions well and
2057 then I'll be a fan.

2058 How are you ensuring adherence to the Taylor Force Act?
2059 I'm sure you're familiar with that. It's the thing where they
2060 pay the family members if somebody's caught in a terrorist act
2061 or they die and they pay them kind of a pension thing on that.

2062

2063 To me, it's sort of a bounty type situation. How are you
2064 ensuring that adherence to the Taylor Force Act and other
2065 restrictions of our assistance to the Palestinians? I'm
2066 wondering what safeguards do we ensure that no assistance is going
2067 to those associated with or supporting terrorism? And, you know,
2068 I guess it's kind of hard to get inside their books, you know,
2069 is what I'm saying.

2070 We're always up here and say, oh, no, that pays for this,
2071 not that, where we send them a blank check and sure as the world
2072 they run out over here they're going to bring it in over there
2073 and it's a very fluid amount, I would assume, their bank accounts.

2074 So I'm kind of wondering how do we ensure that.

2075 Ms. Power. Well, the law is fairly black letter in the sense
2076 that it is the assistance will not directly benefit the
2077 Palestinian Authority and we take the law incredibly seriously.

2078

2079 We have vetting requirements for all of our partners, again,

2080 very -- our partners, by definition, would be nongovernmental
2081 so not the Palestinian Authority, and this involves, you know,
2082 everything from, you know, running the names of organizations
2083 and individuals associated with organizations through all the
2084 databases that the national security agencies that are part of
2085 the U.S. government have.

2086 We have strengthened -- this is before my time --
2087 strengthened oversight of the prime awardees. There's post award
2088 compliance reviews where you go back over, and that's within 18
2089 months of implementation. We have a team on the ground. As you
2090 know, our USAID mission --

2091 Mr. Burchett. Ma'am, I'm going to run out, but let me ask
2092 you, have you all ever stopped any funding because of that? Just
2093 a simple yes or no would be fine. I'm not trying to be a jerk
2094 but I'm out of time.

2095 Ms. Power. Yeah. No. No. I don't -- in my time, because
2096 I only -- I would have to get back to you on the lifetime of USAID
2097 assistance in the region. But if I may just -- in my time we
2098 are just getting our assistance --

2099 Mr. Burchett. A simple yes or no, ma'am. I appreciate it.

2100 Ms. Power. I don't have the ability to answer what's
2101 happened over the 61-year life of USAID but I'll get back --

2102 Chairman Meeks. The gentleman's time has expired.

2103 Mr. Burchett. Thank you.

2104 Chairman Meeks. I now recognize Representative Joaquin
2105 Castro of Texas, who is the chair of the Subcommittee on
2106 International Development, International Organizations, and
2107 Global Corporate Social Impact, for five minutes.

2108 Mr. Castro. Thank you, Chairman. This budget reflects
2109 important priorities, including resources for climate, women and
2110 girls, and food security. But beyond funding, making serious
2111 progress on any of these issues is going to take far more
2112 innovation, new partners, and new ways of solving problems.

2113 During the budget hearing last year, I asked you about the
2114 issue of innovation and asked you to prioritize it during your
2115 tenure, which you said that you would, and USAID's Development
2116 and Innovation Ventures Office has one of the highest returns
2117 on investment in all of USAID and the entire federal government
2118 -- a \$17 social return for every \$1 invested.

2119 But it receives about just 0.1 percent of USAID's budget
2120 each year. So its potential for impact is, therefore, limited.

2121 In addition to increasing resources for this office, the DIV,
2122 can you talk about how USAID can better integrate this highly
2123 effective innovative unit into the rest of the agency and ensure
2124 that its efforts are not limited to just one part of the agency?

2125 Ms. Power. Thank you. This is something that we are
2126 looking at, Congressman, and, of course, welcome ideas from you
2127 and your team as we seek to bring on a new chief economist.

2128 As you know, the economist Michael Kramer was very involved
2129 in the DIV over its life and including doing some of the studies
2130 about the return on investment that you've mentioned.

2131 But I do think this question of how to integrate,
2132 particularly at a moment like today where we're facing a food
2133 crisis -- a food security crisis -- of this magnitude, to be able
2134 to take small ideas, be able to move money quickly, nimbly, as
2135 the Innovation Ventures effort has done in the past and then
2136 potentially scale them over time, whether through Feed the Future
2137 or through, you know, a clean energy program.

2138 So I don't have a complete answer for you. I will say, again,
2139 that we're very earmarked at USAID more than I had imagined and
2140 more than was true at the tail end of the Obama administration.
2141

2142 So that does limit our ability to move money around including
2143 to beef up that percentage that you referenced, which is a very,
2144 very small percentage of the overall budget, especially given
2145 the good that it has done in the past.

2146 Mr. Castro. Well, thank you. And I want to ask you with
2147 regard to the chief economist, where are you in the hiring and
2148 selection of that person?

2149 Ms. Power. I would expect -- I shouldn't get ahead of the
2150 process. But I would expect, certainly, us to have a chief
2151 economist in place over the summer at some point, hopefully. in

2152 the early part of the summer. But anyway, yes, I think that's
2153 probably the best time line I can offer.

2154 Mr. Castro. Well, thank you. And on a separate subject,
2155 under your leadership you've talked about initiating a, quote,
2156 "anti-sludge effort" to eliminate a lot of the unnecessary red
2157 tape to make it easier for new organizations to work with USAID
2158 and for USAID to be able to move more quickly.

2159 This is particularly important for the success of your
2160 efforts on localization, and I believe these efforts are important
2161 to make USAID an effective organization.

2162 Can you speak to the status of these anti-sludge efforts?

2163 How pervasive are unnecessary requirements in grants or
2164 procurement and what are you doing to remove that red tape?

2165 Ms. Power. Well, first, Congressman, I would also -- I would
2166 attach this both to the localization initiative that you've
2167 championed for a long time and also to President Biden's broader
2168 initiative, which is captured in an executive order, on what he
2169 calls customer service, which is an interesting way, I think,
2170 to think about desludging or about reducing administrative and
2171 reporting requirements.

2172 So whether that's, you know, working, in our case, with
2173 governments overseas to make it easier for small businesses to
2174 start up by reducing paperwork burdens, whether that is, as you
2175 noted, in our contracting process to shorten the length of

2176 contracts, which can sometimes run 150 pages, I gather, to, you
2177 know, everything from onboarding of officials here as we try to
2178 staff up at USAID to meet these really difficult threats of the
2179 moment.

2180 So we have -- in the front office, our deputy administrator
2181 is the lead on this, working across bureaus. Bureaus are needing
2182 to come forward with ideas for how they can cut sludge in the
2183 here and now, and then some of these longer-term reforms around
2184 procurement, around paperwork requirements on missions that keep
2185 them away from the fields.

2186 They're in the fields in the sense that they're in other
2187 countries but they're away from the actual projects and
2188 beneficiaries because they're so busy filling out forms. That's
2189 going to be a longer-term process. Thank you for asking.

2190 Mr. Castro. Thank you.

2191 Chairman Meeks. The gentleman's time has expired. I now
2192 recognize Representative Mark Green, again, of the great state
2193 of Tennessee, ranking member of the Subcommittee on the Western
2194 Hemisphere, Civilian Security, Migration, and International
2195 Economic Policy.

2196 Mr. Green. I know it's a mouthful, Mr. Chairman, but I think
2197 you came up with the title of that committee.

2198 Chairman Meeks. I did.

2199 Mr. Green. So it's all --

2200 [Laughter.]

2201 Mr. Green. Thank you for holding the committee hearing and,
2202 of course, ranking member for your leadership, and, Administrator
2203 Power, thanks for being here.

2204 Soft power is a crucial component to not only the projection
2205 of America's strength but also the protection of our strength,
2206 and as a complement hard power soft power helps strengthen our
2207 partnerships and grow those alliances stronger and I think that's
2208 a big part of where USAID comes in.

2209 Your budget, as I recall, was, I think, for assistance last
2210 year \$31.7 billion. So that's a big commitment. But with
2211 inflation raging, you know, at 40-year highs, we got to take a
2212 hard look at all the line items in the budget and make sure that
2213 those taxpayer dollars are wisely spent, and from my standpoint
2214 -- the folks in my district, the 760,000 people that I represent,
2215 they want to see that money directed toward national security
2216 objectives countering the Chinese Communist Party, particularly
2217 the Belt and Road Initiative, how we use our assistance to
2218 checkmate what China is doing and for reducing the push factors
2219 that lead to illegal immigration -- economic opportunities.

2220 And one of the ways that we can strengthen, particularly,
2221 that is this bill that we just recently dropped, myself and
2222 Chairman Sires, a bipartisan bill. It's H.R. 7579, the Western
2223 Hemisphere Nearshoring Act, and it will reduce our supply chains'

2224 dependence on Chinese manufacturing while fostering economic
2225 prosperity among our southern neighbors.

2226 And since it leverages private sector dollars and China
2227 tariff money, it costs the taxpayers nothing, and I urge the
2228 administration to take a look at that and, of course, to spend
2229 our foreign aid and assistance with care and avoiding, you know,
2230 sort of divisive cultural issues, prioritizing on national
2231 security objectives.

2232 My first question is, you know, the Chinese Communist Party
2233 has vastly expanded in Latin America. Nineteen regional
2234 countries are a part of the Belt and Road Initiative.

2235 How is USAID working to counter the CCP's sort of debt trap
2236 diplomacy and promote sort of our developmental side and pulling
2237 those folks sort of back into our strong alliances?

2238 Ms. Power. Well, let me try to be brief, since I was accused
2239 of talkability a minute ago by your colleague. But, first, let
2240 me say that I think there's much more emphasis being placed on
2241 the Caribbean countries where, for example, USAID has a much
2242 smaller presence but where you've seen the PRC really make
2243 inroads, including -- I met recently with both the prime minister
2244 of Jamaica and that of Barbados, and Barbados is a Belt and Road
2245 country right there.

2246 And so we are looking at -- and I think you'll see this
2247 reflected, I hope, at the Summit of the Americas -- but whether

2248 some of the financing arrangements that currently exist that make
2249 it hard to do substantial investments -- you know this better
2250 than I do -- in our hemisphere because a lot of the countries
2251 are technically middle income countries, you know, how those
2252 arrangements can either be altered or supplemented in a manner
2253 that would allow more of the investment along the kinds -- along
2254 the lines of what you're describing. I think the -- sorry.

2255 Mr. Green. Well, if I could jump in real quick.

2256 Ms. Power. Yeah, please -- oh, please do.

2257 Mr. Green. You know, I just had a meeting with the
2258 ambassador from Jamaica and her -- and we were talking about my
2259 nearshoring bill because in it I asked that they open a -- allow
2260 Taiwan to open a business office, and she began to describe to
2261 me the challenge in competing with the Belt and Road Initiative,
2262 which was great conversation.

2263 They come in and build hard infrastructure. The local
2264 politician can go see that bridge and get reelected, and so this
2265 loyalty, to use their word, to China becomes real. How do we
2266 compete with that?

2267 Ms. Power. Well, first, I think there is a fair amount of
2268 buyer's remorse, notwithstanding that initial gloss. So --

2269 Mr. Green. Understood. Yes. I think that's --

2270 Ms. Power. -- but I don't think we can rest on that alone.

2271 But it is noteworthy to see, you know, countries like Zambia

2272 where, you know, the PRC got in with, you know, so much investment
2273 and now you're seeing, again, the future of young people in Zambia
2274 kind of mortgaged to the -- just the interest on the debt that
2275 is carried and how -- and this is where USAID is trying to make
2276 additional investments because we have a government that wants
2277 to escape that kind of dependence.

2278 So I do think our competitive advantage is wanting to work
2279 ourselves out of jobs rather than to increase dependence. It's
2280 the absence of corruption and, indeed, pushing a governance and
2281 rule of law message, which some governments don't like, which
2282 is another source of PRC's appeal is to be -- if you're a government
2283 and want to stay in power for life, you know, the PRC pathway
2284 is one that asks no questions about that, whereas we are more
2285 critical.

2286 But if I may, just one example --

2287 Chairman Meeks. Go ahead.

2288 Ms. Power. -- and I know, Mr. Chairman, just -- I think
2289 what Vice President Harris has led with the Partnership for
2290 Central America, which isn't nearshoring, per se, and that's where
2291 the DFC, I think, which USAID supports on the ground, can come
2292 in.

2293 But the Partnership for Central America also shows that with
2294 a dedicated effort we can draw hundreds of millions, if not
2295 billions, of dollars from private sector companies that want to

2296 be involved in that broader societal effort and not just
2297 governmental effort to offer that alternative.

2298 Mr. Green. One of the things -- and I'll be very brief,
2299 Mr. Chairman, if you'll humor me --

2300 Chairman Meeks. Mr. Green, you're out of time.

2301 Mr. Green. Oh --

2302 Chairman Meeks. A minute. I have to move.

2303 Mr. Green. I'm so sorry.

2304 Chairman Meeks. I'll now recognize Representative Dina
2305 Titus of Nevada for five minutes.

2306 Ms. Titus. Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Thank you,
2307 Administrator Power.

2308 You just mentioned corruption. I'd like to ask you about
2309 that. Your budget includes 100 percent funding increase for
2310 anti-corruption efforts. Some things that we describe as
2311 corruption other people just think of, oh, that's the price of
2312 doing business in some countries.

2313 So I wonder if you could explain to us how your
2314 anti-corruption initiative is utilizing a top to bottom approach
2315 to getting at corruption, how you're defining corruption, what
2316 you're doing on the ground in countries to try to address the
2317 problem.

2318 Ms. Power. Thank you. Briefly, I would love to -- it's
2319 such a good question. I would love to encourage, if we could,

2320 follow up where we -- USAID, now, for the first time has an
2321 anti-corruption coordinator at USAID, Shannon Green, who's part
2322 of this interagency task force that President Biden is -- who's
2323 the first president to declare combating corruption a national
2324 security priority -- the task force that he's assembled. That's
2325 one.

2326 Two, maybe just to offer a few examples from Ukraine of what
2327 we have in mind. We have done everything there from strengthening
2328 the National Corruption Commission to strengthening the
2329 prosecutor's office to ensure that the people who are involved
2330 in prosecution, and then the judges in the judiciary separately
2331 themselves have been screened and are not corrupt actors but are
2332 there in order to enforce the laws that the RADA has increasingly
2333 -- has, over the years, at least, been increasingly been putting
2334 on the books, but so too are we supporting those outside actors
2335 -- the civil society groups and the journalists -- who uncover
2336 the corruption, who expose it, and I think that is sort of the
2337 template that we have in places like northern Central America,
2338 where in El Salvador and Guatemala the attorney general's office,
2339 in the case of Guatemala, and the -- in El Salvador, the supreme
2340 court and other institutions themselves were overtaken by corrupt
2341 actors.

2342 We had to pull the plug on the assistance that we provided
2343 and channel it to journalists and to civil society rather than,

2344 again, continuing to invest in institutions that were pursuing
2345 aims that were antithetical to ours.

2346 I will say, Congresswoman, I think corruption is the
2347 Achilles' heel, not only of the oligarch, which we know, but also
2348 of the autocrat, and what we're finding is that these investments
2349 are allowing journalists to tap at that vulnerability, that those
2350 leaders who are trying to rollback accountability, rollback
2351 checks and balances -- it is the one vulnerability, they feel,
2352 to their people.

2353 There's no leader, no matter how little they claim to care
2354 about public opinion, that wants to have their financial holdings
2355 and their squirreling away of public resources exposed.

2356 So with the President's Democracy Summit, you're right, we
2357 have asked for an increase in our funding, which was very marginal
2358 before we came into office relative to other investments we have
2359 made, and if we are serious about this battle between democracy
2360 and authoritarianism and winning that battle, funding those
2361 actors that are, again, getting at this Achilles' heel of those
2362 who have backslid is a really sound investment.

2363 Ms. Titus. Well, thank you, and I also serve on the House
2364 Democracy Partnership and in some of our visits with
2365 parliamentarians as well as NGOs revealed that working with NDI
2366 and some agencies like that they've actually even been engaged
2367 in helping to draft anti-corruption statutes.

2368 Usually, this effort is taken on by new members and often
2369 those members are women who can kind of make it their charge to
2370 go after this corruption, and I wonder how you all interact with
2371 those kind of groups.

2372 Ms. Power. Well, I'm not 100 percent sure, but I'm going
2373 to take a bet that the work that you're describing was funded
2374 by USAID because --

2375 Ms. Titus. Sure. It is, I'm sure.

2376 Ms. Power. -- particularly, and so, you know, the National
2377 Endowment for Democracy and NDI and IRI are key partners of ours
2378 as is IFIS, which is doing, you know, more, again, on these key
2379 components of the autocrats' playbook. So I think that the
2380 progress that was made in Ukraine prior to the war, which, as
2381 you'll note from President Putin's speech on the eve of the war,
2382 is precisely the anti-corruption progress that he wants it to
2383 halt with this invasion.

2384 It's progress that the Ukrainians were making with an eye
2385 to integrating with Europe that was making him crazy and the
2386 exposure that they were doing in Ukraine also of Russian oligarchs
2387 and their assets, and their co-option of various politicians was
2388 extremely unnerving to him and those around him.

2389 And so, again, the ways in which autocrats and authoritarians
2390 are vulnerable to these investments and the importance on the
2391 other side of the investments in the rule of law and finding

2392 political will among governmental partners like we had among many
2393 in Ukraine, but not all, that's going to be key also as we think
2394 through the reconstruction, the humanitarian assistance. That
2395 anti-corruption prism needs to be in everything we do in Ukraine,
2396 not just the post-war period.

2397 Ms. Titus. I appreciate that and I look forward to working
2398 with you.

2399 Chairman Meeks. The gentlelady's time has --

2400 Ms. Titus. Oh. Yeah. Okay.

2401 Chairman Meeks. Time has expired. I now recognize
2402 Representative Claudia Tenney for five minutes.

2403 Ms. Tenney. Thank you, Mr. Chairman, and fellow New Yorker.

2404 Chairman Meeks. From the great state of New York.

2405 Ms. Tenney. The great state, the greatest state of New York.

2406 Chairman Meeks. Of all time.

2407 Ms. Tenney. Of all time in history. It's much better than
2408 Tennessee.

2409 Thank you, Administrator Power. I really appreciate you
2410 being here and I just want to -- a couple quick things I want
2411 to just -- first of all, I was happy to support the additional
2412 assistance for our military that included aid to Ukraine, and
2413 like all Americans and taxpayers, you know, I want to know how
2414 that money is going to be monitored and make sure that every dollar
2415 is tracked -- obviously, the American people are concerned about

2416 that -- to ensure that it goes to the best benefit of the Ukrainian
2417 people and I can report back to my district knowing -- seeing
2418 these horrific images and making sure that that transparent
2419 accountability is going to be something that you're going to be
2420 providing on a regular basis so that we can track this new
2421 investment that we have put in that was part of our new military
2422 supplement.

2423 Ms. Power. I think the question is will those --

2424 Ms. Tenney. Yeah. How can -- what are the metrics you're
2425 going to be using and how could -- where will we see these on
2426 an ongoing basis? Will you be coming here? Is it going to be
2427 something on a website? Are we going to be reporting that to
2428 Congress?

2429 We just want to make sure every dollar is really going to
2430 the Ukrainian people, and people are concerned about the
2431 mismanagement, potentially, of that, not because of USAID program
2432 but because of some of the past history we're seeing with --

2433 Ms. Power. Absolutely. No, I think it's -- well, let me
2434 just say that I really appreciated that the House supplemental
2435 bill wrote in provisions, at least as it related to the direct
2436 budget support.

2437 I believe it's every 90 days Secretary Blinken and myself,
2438 perhaps other interagency colleagues, have to report back as to
2439 how that very substantial infusion of assistance would be spent.

2440 Direct budget support is not something that USAID generally does.

2441

2442 We have just made -- \$500 billion has already been obligated
2443 -- an additional \$500 million going because of the Ukrainian
2444 government's burn rate. So I think it's -- we're building --

2445 Ms. Tenney. I think the question is how do we track that
2446 so --

2447 Ms. Power. No, no, I understand. I mean, we are channeling
2448 it through the World Bank that has policies and procedures in
2449 place from doing this kind of thing around the world. So that
2450 is our partner of choice in this instance.

2451 I think then there's a question about the humanitarian
2452 assistance, which is, you know, being largely channeled through
2453 the large international humanitarian partners that are used to
2454 our tracking requirements where we're constantly -- you know,
2455 you've seen it operating in other theaters in the world -- and
2456 then the investments that we are making in Ukraine's own
2457 institutions to do that tracking.

2458 Now, that may sound counterintuitive but it's --

2459 Ms. Tenney. Is that a USAID function?

2460 Ms. Power. Yes, that is a huge part of our governance of
2461 programming.

2462 Ms. Tenney. Okay. Great. Thank you. I appreciate that.

2463 Now, another -- I just want to quickly -- since you were just

2464 at the ASEAN conference, how are you -- how is USAID navigating
2465 development assistance in the portfolio with relation to the coup
2466 and the junta government in Burma -- Myanmar -- since this is
2467 a huge issue for me and the almost 5,000 -- a little over 5,000,
2468 actually -- Burmese refugees in my community?

2469 We are tracking this and want to be -- obviously, we'd like
2470 great outcomes. But is there something that was -- I hope it
2471 was prime on the calendar and on the agenda in the ASEAN
2472 conference.

2473 Ms. Power. Well, first, to say USAID, of course, provides
2474 humanitarian assistance through international nongovernmental
2475 partners and stays clear of the junta.

2476 With the coup, we -- and you know this, I think, because
2477 we have maybe spoken about this before, but we reprogrammed
2478 assistance that we had -- where we have been working with various
2479 ministries to civil society actors and others, holding those
2480 ministries to account.

2481 With regard to ASEAN, it's no secret that that is a divided
2482 grouping on the question of how hard to push. You know, I think
2483 some countries have gone further than they had in the past to
2484 stand up to the coup, to criticize the coup, but some -- and some,
2485 again, similarly want to assert independence from the PRC.

2486 Others, and I probably don't have to name them, are in a
2487 very -- feel themselves in some respects in a dependent

2488 relationship to the PRC and are more reluctant to raise their
2489 voices in ways that we would like.

2490 Ms. Tenney. Thank you. I just have a quick question. I
2491 don't have much time. Since you and I, I didn't realize, have
2492 this -- Yugoslavia in common since I used to live in the former
2493 Yugoslavia and work for the former Yugoslav consulate, and I know
2494 you did some pretty incredible work there during the war.

2495 I'm concerned now about what's happening in the Balkans and
2496 the influence, and one of my colleagues had mentioned, you know,
2497 the -- what is USAID doing about the People's Republic of China's
2498 engagement and what's happening with the Belt and Road Initiative
2499 there where that influence is coming into the Balkans in a heavy
2500 way?

2501 Are we focusing on making sure that aid is getting to that
2502 region to ensure that the Chinese and the PRC is not influencing
2503 them to make them comfortable, as my colleague referred to
2504 earlier? I think I'm out of time.

2505 Thank you. I yield.

2506 Chairman Meeks. The gentlelady is out of time.

2507 Ms. Power. I'll submit a response.

2508 Ms. Tenney. Thank you. I appreciate that.

2509 Chairman Meeks. And let me say this to the administrator,
2510 because I'm going to have to leave and Mr. Malinowski is going
2511 to come to chair the remainder of the hearing. Some of us and

2512 other members of the committee have a meeting with the prime
2513 minister of Greece -- those that are on that committee. So I'm
2514 going to have to leave now and probably will not get back in time
2515 before you conclude your testimony.

2516 But I just wanted to take this time to -- again, to say thank
2517 you for taking your time and answering all of the committee's
2518 questions and be willing to stay here.

2519 We have had to juggle back and forth. People don't know
2520 behind the scenes what was taking place. But you and your staff
2521 made every effort that you could be here, be here in a timely
2522 fashion, and stay to answer every member's question, and I really
2523 appreciate that and your effort and your diligence and how you
2524 -- you know, your values that you lead the world with from USAID's
2525 positioning.

2526 You are the one, you know, who can show who America is.
2527 They see America on the ground, and that's why I'm proud to wear
2528 your cap, USAID, from America to the rest of the world. So I
2529 want to thank you and thank you for your being here and all that
2530 you do. I'm so proud when I travel and see the work of USAID
2531 around the world. Thank you.

2532 Ms. Power. Thank you, Mr. Chairman. And you're a great
2533 ambassador but we need to update your swag.

2534 [Laughter.]

2535 Ms. Power. We need more USAID swag, and anybody else on

2536 the committee.

2537 Mr. Malinowski. [Presiding.] All right. We will go now
2538 to Representative Susan Wild of Pennsylvania for five minutes.

2539 Ms. Wild. Thank you, Mr. Chairman, and thank you,
2540 Administrator Power. Susan Wild here. I represent one of the
2541 largest Ukrainian-American communities in the United States.

2542 Over the course of this devastating invasion, I've been
2543 struck by the strength and the resilience of my constituents,
2544 even as they face the anguish of knowing that their family members'
2545 lives are under threat at every moment and, in many cases, not
2546 knowing where they are from time to time.

2547 We know that -- from the U.N. that more than 6 million
2548 Ukrainians have sought refuge in neighboring countries and an
2549 additional more than 8 million Ukrainians have been displaced
2550 within Ukraine and those numbers are, I'm sure, constantly subject
2551 to change.

2552 And as you know, we have worked very hard with the
2553 administration and, thankfully, on a bipartisan basis for the
2554 most part to provide historic levels of assistance to the
2555 Ukrainian people.

2556 In terms of the humanitarian assistance overseen by USAID
2557 what have you found to be the greatest challenge in implementing
2558 and delivering the aid?

2559 Ms. Power. Thank you for your generosity and your

2560 leadership on behalf of your constituents and on behalf of all
2561 the people of Ukraine.

2562 The biggest challenge is Putin using starvation as a weapon
2563 of war and denying the ability of wounded civilians -- you know,
2564 wounded anybody to get out of besieged areas, and while, you know,
2565 humanitarians want nothing more than to be in the most dangerous
2566 places and to be accessing the people most in need, when, you
2567 know, Russian forces say, no, you can't travel -- we won't
2568 guarantee your security -- you know, makes it really difficult
2569 to overcome that. So I would put that atop the list by far.

2570 Ms. Wild. So the failure to be able to have and rely upon
2571 humanitarian corridors, I assume, is what would really help
2572 tremendously?

2573 Ms. Power. I would just put it in its more active -- in
2574 its more active form, which is just the Russian Federation's
2575 denial of food, medicine, and water and the denial of evacuation
2576 to civilians in besieged areas.

2577 Ms. Wild. So, you know, the Russians have also shown that
2578 the age of the Ukrainian doesn't matter when it comes to their
2579 viciousness.

2580 Have you been able to develop any kind of strategy to help
2581 ensure that children, in particular, receive continuity of health
2582 and education services, including those who have been displaced
2583 to neighboring countries? Can you address that at all, the

2584 specific needs of children?

2585 Ms. Power. Well, first, just to offer a fact that I shared
2586 in my opening statement, which is just that two-thirds of
2587 Ukraine's children have been displaced -- two-thirds, which is,
2588 obviously, a higher displacement rate than of any other grouping
2589 and, presumably, because, you know, parents looking to move their
2590 kids before the conflict comes to them or as the conflict comes
2591 to them.

2592 So I would say, of course, children are -- along with the
2593 elderly and those with medical needs are atop the list of
2594 vulnerable groups and groups that our broader humanitarian
2595 assistance inside Ukraine and that provided by our partners in
2596 neighboring countries target.

2597 Then there's the whole set of protection questions around
2598 unaccompanied children where they're -- you know, in some cases
2599 you'll have kids, you know, under the age of 15 who are sent across
2600 the border to safety, you know, while the parents may still have
2601 to -- feel they have to stay behind to take care of aging parents
2602 of their own.

2603 And so, you know, that programming has been gradually ramped
2604 up over time, again, particularly, in neighboring countries.
2605 But there, we look to UNICEF as our key implementing partner inside
2606 Ukraine as well as the Ukrainian ministries of health, of social
2607 service protection -- social protection, rather, and of education

2608 to ensure that continuity of service that you mentioned.

2609 Ms. Wild. Thanks. I want to switch gears, just in the
2610 interest of time. I want to talk about USAID's global labor
2611 program, which I think is a program that's very much under
2612 discussed, and, specifically, I wanted to advance an idea that
2613 I had posed with Deputy Secretary Wendy Sherman when she recently
2614 testified before our committee, asking her to take back to the
2615 administration the idea of hosting a global summit supporting
2616 the rights and safety of union organizers in the labor movement
2617 with representatives from the countries where the labor movement
2618 was identified by the ITUC as coming the most under attack in
2619 2021, which would include Bangladesh, Belarus, Brazil, Colombia,
2620 Egypt, Honduras, Myanmar, the Philippines, Turkey, and Zimbabwe.

2621

2622 And I hope that you will take this idea back to the
2623 administration. I don't know whether Assistant Deputy Secretary
2624 Sherman has done so. But I really would urge the administration
2625 to consider this proposal and the powerful message that hosting
2626 this type of event would send.

2627 And thank you. With that, unfortunately, my time is up and
2628 I yield back, Mr. Chairman.

2629 Mr. Malinowski. Thank you. Next, I'll call on
2630 Representative Dan Meuser of Pennsylvania.

2631 Mr. Meuser. Thank you, Chairman, and thank you very much,

2632 Ambassador. Nice to see you again. So I'd like to discuss a
2633 little bit the root causes strategy that we have spoken about
2634 once before. But, first, just to bring up, outline, summarize
2635 the crisis that exists at the southern border.

2636 I know it must weigh on you as it weighs on a lot of us the
2637 fact that we really have a -- quite a crisis taking place. I
2638 mean, just last year alone 1.66 million unlawful crossings, you
2639 know, and in the previous administration there was 488,000 average
2640 over a year. I mean, it's almost four times more in the first
2641 year of the Biden administration.

2642 You know, sadly, so many of these folks are coming across
2643 -- false pretense. Cartels -- you know, we all hear the stories.
2644 Ambassadors from Nicaragua and elsewhere speak about that
2645 they're very unhappy about it, to say the least, having a brain
2646 drain, losing a lot of young people, the type of debts, the abuses
2647 that take place along the trek, again, the -- you know, the level
2648 of drugs coming into our country.

2649 So your whole root cause initiative, I think, is very
2650 important. But may I just ask you this? Is that something that
2651 -- and I've asked Secretary Mayorkas this -- is this something
2652 that is discussed with the President and is weighed in on and
2653 saying, you know, we really need some new plans, a new policy
2654 here to correct this situation?

2655 Ms. Power. Well, needless to say, there are a lot of factors

2656 that would cause any individual to migrate but I -- and I know
2657 implicit in your question is that you think there is one factor
2658 bigger than the others.

2659 But I would also note that Latin America and the Caribbean
2660 have 29 percent of the COVID infections globally. The pandemic
2661 has been really, really hard on that part of the world. I'm really
2662 struck, Congressman, that just my colleague, Marcela Escobari,
2663 our assistant administrator, was just at the Darien Gap and just
2664 -- I wrote down these numbers. One hundred and forty thousand
2665 individuals transited the Darien Gap in 2021, 102,000 in the
2666 entire seven-year period before, and this gets to just the
2667 changing complexion of who is coming to the border.

2668 So my root causes strategy is in these three countries where
2669 there's also an uptick, of course, again, I think, related to
2670 some of the very difficult economic circumstances and some of
2671 the downturns in governance and the rule of law in a couple of
2672 countries. But this is a broader phenomenon. I mean, this is
2673 where you are seeing people voting their desperation with their
2674 feet.

2675 Mr. Meuser. I appreciate that. Thank you for your
2676 response. I'm not sure if Representative Green brought up
2677 earlier the initiative -- a foreign aid idea to accomplish the
2678 goals through the -- through a program providing financial support
2679 and tax breaks and some other financial subsidies for companies

2680 to move from China, for instance, or from Asia to Central America.

2681 Are you familiar with that bill -- an insourcing bill?

2682 Ms. Power. He brought up his nearshoring bill but didn't
2683 get into the details.

2684 Mr. Meuser. Okay. I'd like to send you the details and
2685 get your thoughts on it to see if that's something that you would
2686 work into your root cause initiative. And as I stated last time
2687 that you testified, if there's anything that I could try to help
2688 with -- trade missions, trips to Central America, working on bills
2689 that the administration or you feel are essential even from a
2690 regulatory standpoint, I think that's very, very crucial to have
2691 such a plan in place over the long term. So I do applaud you
2692 for that.

2693 Let me -- I have limited time, but just quickly on China
2694 and the Belt and Road -- the Belt and Road, my understanding,
2695 issues about \$4.8 billion a year for different types of aid and
2696 financial investment.

2697 U.S. foreign aid is \$51 billion a year. So a big difference.
2698 We have been at it longer and, you know, we're just the U.S.
2699 and, you know, they aren't. Are we using our funding in a manner
2700 that is reflective or at least competing where the Belt and Road
2701 competes?

2702 Mr. Malinowski. All right. Time has expired so if you
2703 could --

2704 Mr. Meuser. Thanks. I yield. Thank you, Chairman.

2705 Ms. Power. If you'd respond in writing.

2706 The chair now recognizes Representative Brad Sherman of
2707 California.

2708 Mr. Sherman. Thank you. The whole world is transfixed by
2709 the humanitarian disaster in Ukraine. But 500,000 people have
2710 died in northern Ethiopia.

2711 As you note in your testimony, the majority of those facing
2712 famine like conditions in northern Ethiopia and 90 percent of
2713 Tigray's population needs humanitarian assistance. Right now,
2714 maybe 3 to 5 percent of the amount of food that's needed is being
2715 allowed in and this is not because humanitarian organizations
2716 don't have the food and the capacity. It's because the Ethiopian
2717 government lets only a few percent in and the Eritrean government
2718 lets nothing in.

2719 Back in December, the Assistant Secretary for African
2720 Affairs, Molly Phee, testified before our committee that the State
2721 Department had decided to refrain at the current moment from
2722 making a public determination on atrocities, human rights, but
2723 most significantly, whether this is a genocide or an attempt at
2724 genocide.

2725 Just last month, Secretary Blinken was sitting where you
2726 are now and he testified that a legal determination will, in fact,
2727 be made on those issues by the State Department. It may not be

2728 your exact portfolio but there's very few people in America who
2729 have your background.

2730 In your testimony you say that addressing these atrocities
2731 in Ethiopia is a major top priority. If you have a government
2732 or, in this case, two governments deliberately starving hundreds
2733 of thousands of civilians to death, does that constitute a
2734 genocide or attempted genocide?

2735 Ms. Power. Thank you, Congressman. Obviously, my past
2736 life -- this is a question -- questions of what constitutes a
2737 genocide or how courts have adjudicated that over time is
2738 something I've studied a lot.

2739 But, as you noted, it is not something as USAID administrator
2740 that I'm involved in in terms of making that determination, and
2741 you have raised it with Secretary Blinken. I believe he's given
2742 you the assurance that that determination will come.

2743 I don't think the question of, again, whether one is using
2744 that -- whether that legal determination is made is influencing
2745 in any way the U.S. government's posture toward the Ethiopian
2746 government. In other words, we are acting in just the same way
2747 we would be irrespective of --

2748 Mr. Sherman. I would point out that in this room I've
2749 suggested ways to pressure the Ethiopian and, especially,
2750 particularly, the Eritrean government, which has, of course, the
2751 ports that could be used, particularly by interrupting sea traffic

2752 going, you know, even hundreds of miles away from Eritrea.

2753 And so there -- I think a determination of genocide would
2754 spur our administration to do more than simply send harsh letters
2755 to Addis Ababa and Asmara.

2756 You visited the refugee camp in Sudan where Tigrayan refugees
2757 are also hungry. Are we going to increase our aid to those
2758 refugees?

2759 Ms. Power. Well, we are -- as part of the broader package
2760 of assistance that we hope is going to be voted on by the Senate,
2761 we are able now to have additional humanitarian assistance to
2762 meet global needs that are profound.

2763 And just to come back to where you started, you do have a
2764 million people facing famine in Ethiopia by the end of June.
2765 I mean, we're past mid-May. This is upon us and that includes
2766 700,000 people in Tigray.

2767 So, you know, I think the pressure by the United States has
2768 been a belated but important factor in why the number of trucks
2769 that have gotten into Tigray in recent days has increased. We
2770 got 320 trucks in this past week.

2771 But, Congressman, as you know better than anybody, we need
2772 500 trucks a week if we are going to meet those food needs.

2773 Mr. Sherman. And I would say that Congress should provide
2774 the money but only the administration can provide the pressure
2775 and only the administration can use the U.S. Navy to put additional

2776 pressure on the two countries involved, and without that pressure
2777 -- you got a certain number of trucks in with oil pressure. We
2778 can do more.

2779 I yield back.

2780 Ms. Power. Thank you.

2781 Mr. Malinowski. The chair will now recognize
2782 Representative August Pfluger of Texas.

2783 Mr. Pfluger. Thank you, Chair.

2784 Administrator, I've got a series of questions so I'm going
2785 to try to get through all of them. Let me focus in on the restoring
2786 U.S. climate leadership part of the testimony.

2787 Who are we trying to catch on the Climate Leadership Board
2788 to restore?

2789 Ms. Power. Well, what I'm trying to do as USAID
2790 administrator is meet the colossal needs, as support those on
2791 the ground who are meeting the colossal needs caused by increased
2792 flooding, drought, humanitarian event emergency.

2793 Mr. Pfluger. Who's the worst actor on climate issues in
2794 the world right now? Your opinion?

2795 Ms. Power. Well, if you are talking about the world's
2796 largest emitter, that would be the PRC.

2797 Mr. Pfluger. Okay. So how important is energy to USAID's
2798 mission? Food, energy, shelter -- how important is energy
2799 delivery to the areas that need it?

2800 Ms. Power. Well, energy poverty is something particularly
2801 in sub-Saharan Africa that is setting back everything from health
2802 care provision to education. So it's really --

2803 Mr. Pfluger. The estimates -- and I agree with that. The
2804 estimates I've seen are that over the past 10 years 1 billion
2805 people have been lifted out of poverty with energy that they
2806 previously didn't have. One billion people. So do you think
2807 that renewables will provide baseload -- are capable of providing
2808 baseload power generation right now?

2809 Ms. Power. Well, I think if you look at Power Africa and
2810 the work that it is doing, it is finding a way to generate the
2811 kind of electrification that developing countries are craving.

2812

2813 Mr. Pfluger. But what -- do you think that renewable power
2814 --

2815 Ms. Power. With a combination of --

2816 Mr. Pfluger. Is renewable power by itself capable of
2817 baseload capacity?

2818 Ms. Power. Yeah. I think the markets are speaking on this.
2819 I think the technologies are evolving. You know, where things
2820 will be in a couple of years or in five years, I don't know.
2821 But right now, it's a combination of energy sources that are being
2822 deployed.

2823 Mr. Pfluger. Mr. Kerry sat here and he said, no, he does

2824 not think baseload power or that renewables can provide baseload
2825 power. So what percentage decrease in temperatures do you think
2826 will be generated with your -- just worldwide global temperatures
2827 will be generated with the USAID's several billion dollars into
2828 -- I think it's, you know, the words I'm looking for here are
2829 the climate financing gap and mitigation and adaptation. What's
2830 the temperature decrease that we're going to see?

2831 Ms. Power. Well, with respect, Congressman, every
2832 increment that any one of us can contribute to the broader effort
2833 to keep emissions to 1.5 percent or 1.5 degrees or, you know,
2834 any increment as close to that as we can get, even if it's a tiny
2835 contribution, is a relevant contribution. Otherwise, we'd have
2836 a collective action plan.

2837 Mr. Pfluger. On the flip side of that, what will a kilowatt
2838 hour cost when these initiatives are input in sub-Saharan Africa,
2839 because you brought that up?

2840 Ms. Power. Yeah.

2841 Mr. Pfluger. What will the kilowatt hour cost with --

2842 Ms. Power. You know what, Congressman? I feel, to some
2843 extent, that this exchange -- you know, I could see maybe five
2844 years ago having an exchange of this nature. But the thing is
2845 the countries in which we work want to make these shifts.

2846 Mr. Pfluger. Okay.

2847 Ms. Power. This is not our ideology or our doctrine.

2848 Mr. Pfluger. But what are --

2849 Ms. Power. No, I mean, what I'm saying is what makes sense
2850 is to listen to the communities in which we are working, the
2851 partner governments, in some cases, or the energy ministers.

2852 They are interested in saving money. To save money over
2853 time they're interested in using solar and wind. They think that
2854 is a really sound financial investment. Turns out the entire
2855 private sector is actually voting with its feet in that manner
2856 as well.

2857 Mr. Pfluger. Well, I think that's -- I think that's
2858 debatable.

2859 Ms. Power. So we can have a debate about, you know, the
2860 cost benefit here or there. I think it's an important debate
2861 to have but what I'm saying is that --

2862 Mr. Pfluger. I'm going to reclaim -- I'm going to reclaim
2863 my time, Administrator. Thank you.

2864 Ms. Power. Sorry.

2865 Mr. Pfluger. I felt like that was slightly condescending
2866 on the -- on your part for the exchange that we could have had
2867 five years ago. The point is that you said something that's very
2868 interesting, that the markets are speaking and I think that that's
2869 where it should be, that the market should speak, and when we're
2870 talking about energy it's not just the price.

2871 It's not just the availability in certain areas like

2872 sub-Saharan Africa or the Indian subcontinent. But it's also
2873 the reliability. It's also the ability to get it there, and I'm
2874 very concerned about some of the rhetoric here and I ask you
2875 detailed questions because there's some big goals in here and
2876 I'm just not sure that USAID is the right venue for some of these
2877 goals if we're not able to actually deliver affordable and
2878 reliable energy.

2879 Mr. Malinowski. Time has expired.

2880 Mr. Pfluger. I yield back.

2881 Mr. Malinowski. The chair recognizes Representative Omar
2882 of Minnesota for five minutes.

2883 Ms. Omar. Thank you, Chairman.

2884 Ambassador Power, if we can just -- if I can just piggyback
2885 on some of the exchange that was just taking place. I do agree
2886 with you that this is really what many African leaders are asking
2887 for.

2888 Africa has 17 of the 20 most climate vulnerable countries
2889 and, in general, most countries lack the infrastructure and
2890 resources needed to adopt and adapt to green energy technology
2891 initiatives. Some African governments urge that transitional
2892 framework will be required to help capitalize and eventually wind
2893 down their reliance on gas and other fossil fuels.

2894 What exactly is USAID doing to help prepare African
2895 governments that have identified deficit in infrastructure,

2896 capital, and other resources to make a much needed green energy
2897 transition and what challenges have you identified and how we,
2898 in Congress, can help you overcome that?

2899 Ms. Power. Thank you so much.

2900 I think, Congresswoman, your question was focused, as was
2901 the prior exchange, mainly on mitigation and I guess what I would
2902 say is, in that regard, a lot of the work that we do is not, you
2903 know, again, grand infrastructure projects, per se, but on
2904 mitigation, working with countries where their regulatory
2905 frameworks are adjusted to reduce emissions, where their own --
2906 you know, everything from, you know, sort of greenhouse gas rules,
2907 their power plant rules, their transportation infrastructure
2908 rules, guidelines, design features, where the emissions question
2909 or their nationally determined contributions is the filter
2910 through which they are making judgments about how the regulatory
2911 cost benefit analysis is done. So that's a kind of technical
2912 role.

2913 Then, of course, as you know well, in Power Africa -- and
2914 this allows me to respond to the last point that was made by the
2915 prior speaker -- I mean, often it is, you know, USAID with grant
2916 financing that might be, you know, at the foundation of a pyramid
2917 then allowing a private sector actor to come in and feel more
2918 comfortable bearing less risk where USAID bears the first layer
2919 of risk.

2920 You asked about the challenge, though, and there I might
2921 just pivot because, strangely, it hasn't come up that much today,
2922 which is adaptation is the challenge. You know, I mean, climate
2923 change is touching every single area of human development on
2924 planet Earth, and in countries that are -- where the poverty rates
2925 are high to begin with and people are living on less than \$2 a
2926 day, you know, that extra week of drought or that flooding, you
2927 know, that washes away the gains of this year's harvest, that's
2928 an existential set of questions -- that bridge that disappears
2929 in a hurricane that is the sixth hurricane, you know, over a
2930 two-year period.

2931 I mean, so, again, that's where the technical advice in part
2932 about, again, how to how to build, just as FEMA is doing here,
2933 with building codes and other features but how to build in a
2934 resilience to the infrastructure that is being built, let's say,
2935 with support from the multilateral development banks and others.

2936 Ms. Omar. And I'm curious, Ambassador, if I can also just
2937 interject and maybe have you expand on some of that sustainability
2938 and adaptation that is needed.

2939 We know that food insecurity is also a huge threat and we
2940 know that a third of the world's wheat supply used to come from
2941 Russia and Ukraine, and the Russian illegal invasion of Ukraine
2942 has now exasperated an already dire food insecurity and food
2943 crises that are taking place.

2944 So part of the supplemental budget that the House passed
2945 includes resources in helping address the food insecurity. How
2946 can that be used to create some infrastructure in countries in
2947 Africa and other parts of the world like Yemen and others that
2948 are experiencing food insecurity?

2949 Ms. Power. Well, first, it's extremely important that the
2950 supplemental written by you all here and pending passage, we hope,
2951 in the Senate was written to allow that humanitarian assistance
2952 to meet the needs of people in Ukraine who are suffering but also
2953 to meet the needs of people who are suffering from the fallout
2954 from the war in Ukraine.

2955 And that's really, really important because humanitarian
2956 assistance, unfortunately, is going to be a big part of the
2957 response that we are going to need to mobilize globally.

2958 And why do I say unfortunately? Because that's not the same
2959 as development. You have a dollar, you'd much prefer to be
2960 investing that dollar in a manner that was going to produce a
2961 more sustainable gain and we're looking at how to do humanitarian
2962 assistance in a way that advances that objective.

2963 But, additionally, there is the food security resources
2964 along with the humanitarian assistance, and I think that's where
2965 we want to look at more strategic policies and programs because
2966 this is the first infusion of resources to meet a crisis that
2967 predated the war in Ukraine and so how to do so in a manner where

2968 agriculture ministries and others are making the sort of systemic
2969 investments that we need them to make. Thank you.

2970 Ms. Omar. Thank you. I yield back.

2971 Mr. Malinowski. We want to try to get everybody a chance.
2972 So we'll turn now to Representative Young Kim of California.

2973

2974 Mrs. Kim of California. Thank you, Chairman, and I want
2975 to thank you, Administrator Power, for joining us today. We're
2976 almost coming to an end of this hearing, but I do want to go back
2977 to an issue that you had conversed with Brad Sherman earlier.

2978 After more than a year of fighting between the Tigray
2979 People's Liberation Front and the Ethiopian government, the
2980 humanitarian situation in northern Ethiopia remains
2981 exceptionally dire with 7 million people still suffering acute
2982 food insecurity.

2983 In late March, we saw some hopeful signs when the government
2984 and the TPLF announced a humanitarian truce to allow aid to flow
2985 into those affected regions. Since July 2021 the U.N. has said
2986 that a hundred trucks must enter Tigray per day to meet the
2987 humanitarian needs.

2988 But I heard you saying that we need about 500 trucks a day.

2989 Well, in the month and half since the Ethiopian government
2990 announced a humanitarian truce on March 24, less than 300 total
2991 trucks have entered Tigray. That is way below what is needed

2992 to meet the humanitarian needs there.

2993 So with that backdrop, my question is how is the
2994 administration working with the U.N. and other international
2995 partners to address the humanitarian crisis in Ethiopia in the
2996 Tigray region and what points or pressure or leverage can we use
2997 to ensure that international aid is able to reach the vulnerable
2998 civilians who need it the most?

2999 Ms. Power. Thank you, Representative and I think we have
3000 had an exchange on this in the past so I really appreciate you
3001 staying on top of it because I think there was a temptation in
3002 certain circles to say, oh, humanitarian truce -- you know, maybe
3003 somehow the problem has been addressed.

3004 Just to be clear, I might have misspoken earlier, but it
3005 is 500 trucks a week that are needed, not a day, but we're still
3006 -- your point is still valid and the point I made earlier is still
3007 valid, which is that we are nowhere near those numbers and we
3008 have, again, 700,000 people in Tigray facing grave, grave peril.

3009
3010 We did just this past week see 320 trucks go. That is more
3011 than had gone in the entire prior period since the March 24th
3012 truce. So my team on the ground, Congresswoman, is seeing some
3013 signs of an opening, and I met with the minister of finance --
3014 the Ethiopian minister of finance when he was here a few weeks
3015 ago. He indicated much more personal engagement. You know, I

3016 think, again, there's small signs of a shift.

3017 But the easy way to show whether or not you're using food
3018 as a weapon of war is to let food in and not only food, because
3019 I think we focus a lot on the trucks. There is a need for cash,
3020 for telecommunications equipment, for fuel. I mean, Tigray
3021 cannot be on -- it needs to be on international life support at
3022 the moment, given the acute needs, but it cannot be on
3023 international life support forever. Actually opening up the area
3024 so that real life can resume and goods can flow and markets can
3025 open, that is the only way to deal with the food crisis of this
3026 nature.

3027 You asked what we can do. I think more diplomatic pressure,
3028 including by our Special Envoy and by Secretary Blinken and
3029 others. I think the phone call that President Biden and Prime
3030 Minister Abiy had, at least it correlates with a period in which
3031 more progress was made.

3032 So our high level engagement is, clearly, important.
3033 They're looking at the international financial institutions and
3034 looking for relief there in light of the food crisis that Ethiopia
3035 as a whole is facing and there, again, to make clear that everybody
3036 deserves food. Everybody deserves access to seeds.

3037 Mrs. Kim of California. Well, let me -- let me just continue
3038 on that conversation. But let me further ask you about what is
3039 the biggest impediments, if any, to scaling up that humanitarian

3040 assistance in Tigray and what role is the government of Ethiopia,
3041 the regional authorities, and TPLF playing in response -- in
3042 response efforts and, similarly, blocking access into the region?

3043

3044 What are the greatest areas of need on the ground? You
3045 mentioned -- you know, when we were talking about bringing some
3046 -- this humanitarian needs, from December 2021 to late March of
3047 this year, there has been zero humanitarian convoys entered into
3048 Tigray. So what are the biggest impediments?

3049 Ms. Power. I think the -- it has been the throughout this
3050 whole period the government of Ethiopia's either obstruction or
3051 unwillingness to do the work to ensure that local and regional
3052 actors allow those trucks to pass.

3053 I think the local and regional actors in Afar and Amhara
3054 also have of late been difficult to work with and, you know, there
3055 are reports about the TPLF, you know, commandeering some of the
3056 supplies that are meant for civilians. So every single actor,
3057 you know, must act responsibly and with far more urgency than
3058 we have seen on the ground up to this point.

3059 Mrs. Kim of California. Let me put in one more question
3060 regarding --

3061 Mr. Malinowski. Your time has expired.

3062 Mrs. Kim of California. Has it? Okay. Well, I yield back.

3063

3064 Ms. Power. Thank you, Congresswoman.

3065 Mr. Malinowski. All right. Now, the chair recognizes
3066 Representative Andy Levin of Michigan for five minutes.

3067 Mr. Levin. Thank you so much, Mr. Chairman, and thanks so
3068 much for being here, Ambassador Power. It's great to see you.

3069 So under the Biden administration, more than 20,000 people have
3070 been removed or deported to Haiti in the last several months.

3071

3072 I've called on the administration to halt these flights as
3073 I believe these deportations exacerbate an already dire security
3074 situation and places these migrants at severe risk.

3075 Now, those deportations are not your policy matter. But
3076 my question to you is whether USAID has developed any procedures
3077 for tracking or supporting those removed to Haiti and is the agency
3078 providing assistance and support to ensure their well-being.

3079 Ms. Power. Thank you. I will have to get back to you on
3080 the specifics and the latest on the numbers of the amount of
3081 support. But at the outset, we worked with the International
3082 Organization of Migration to support their efforts to integrate
3083 some of those who had been returned. But I'd have to get back
3084 to you with the specifics.

3085 Mr. Levin. Okay. No problem.

3086 Ms. Power. Our emphasis is on conditions in Haiti for the
3087 general population, as you know.

3088 Mr. Levin. Yes. No problem. I would really appreciate
3089 that. So Haiti was, rightly, chosen as one of four priority
3090 countries that will receive dedicated resources through the
3091 Global Fragility Act, a bipartisan bill that aims to elevate peace
3092 building and conflict prevention.

3093 Both through the regular budget and under the Global
3094 Fragility Act framework, you're tasked with helping to provide
3095 U.S. assistance to a government that lacks credibility and has
3096 rampant corruption and ties with gangs that are perpetuating
3097 violence in Haiti.

3098 Do you expect you'll be able to spend newly appropriated
3099 dollars effectively and GFA-specific funds effectively while the
3100 political situation remains extra constitutional? And which
3101 groups and parties are being consulted within Haiti to ensure
3102 that GFA implementation is starting off on the right foot, given
3103 the difficult political situation in the country?

3104 Ms. Power. Well, the announcement of the Global Fragility
3105 Act countries, the process that gave rise to all of that, took
3106 some time. The announcement is in the scheme of the U.S.
3107 government relatively recent, so I don't think yet that we have
3108 a breakdown or anything close to it on the organizations that
3109 we would be partnering with.

3110 But very much taking on board the premise of your question
3111 about the major legitimacy challenges around the current

3112 political structures. You know, there are ways to support the
3113 cause of the Global Fragility Act that don't entail working with
3114 the government, indeed, working with some of the very partners
3115 that you have in mind.

3116 And, certainly, you know, as we see rampant gang violence
3117 and a level of physical insecurity for the Haitian people, I mean,
3118 where whole parts of the capital city now are deemed off limits.
3119 You know, there's plenty of work to go around.

3120 But on the specifics, I think we're still developing that.
3121 I hope the consultation has been as broad as you would wish to
3122 see, but that's something I can be more specific on when I check
3123 in with our mission.

3124 Mr. Levin. Okay. Great. So let me switch to migration.
3125 I was glad to see last year's announcement that USAID would be
3126 supporting the implementation of the Biden administration's root
3127 causes strategy and the collaborative migration management
3128 strategy to tackle migration in the Northern Triangle.

3129 I'd like to hear more about how this work is developing a
3130 year on and specifically about how these strategies are focused
3131 on the unique needs of marginalized and particularly vulnerable
3132 groups. For example, we know that women and children on the move
3133 are uniquely vulnerable to gender-based violence and we have heard
3134 stories about how racism impacts migrants like the differential
3135 treatment Haitians received at the border, but throughout the

3136 region and at the southern border.

3137 So how does USAID's implementation of the root causes
3138 strategy address these unique and specific needs and you have
3139 adequate resources to do so effectively? Do you need any more
3140 help from us or, you know, what's the situation there?

3141 Ms. Power. Thank you. Well, I think there is a request
3142 in the '23 budget very specific to this region asking for a ramp
3143 up of resources in keeping with President Biden's four-year plan,
3144 which he announced at the outset of his administration.

3145 I mean, I think, not by way of caveat because I don't like
3146 these kinds of caveats, but it is important context that the
3147 decision to suspend assistance by the previous administration
3148 did impact more than 80 percent of USAID's projects and many of
3149 them shut down entirely.

3150 People were laid off. So we are still scaling up.
3151 Nonetheless, I think the vaccine distribution program has been
3152 heroic, which reflects the kind of partnership with the ministries
3153 of health, distributing more than 10 million vaccines, reaching
3154 people with humanitarian assistance and creating tens of
3155 thousands of jobs.

3156 I can give you the breakdown per country. But I also draw
3157 your attention, finally, briefly -- sorry, Mr. Chair -- to the
3158 legal pathways. The H-2B announcement was made yesterday, I
3159 believe, by the Department of Homeland Security.

3160 We are really beefing up our efforts to ensure that
3161 individuals from Honduras, El Salvador, and Guatemala are part
3162 of that pipeline to pursue lawful migration to this country
3163 because -- and they can also bring those resources back home.

3164

3165 Mr. Levin. Thank you. Thanks, Mr. Chair. I yield back.

3166 Mr. Malinowski. Thank you. I will now turn to
3167 Representative Ronny Jackson of Texas for five minutes.

3168 Mr. Jackson. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

3169 Administrator Power, thank you for being here today. I
3170 continue to be disappointed and unimpressed with the --

3171 Mr. Malinowski. Is your mic on, Ronnie?

3172 Mr. Jackson. Over here.

3173 Mr. Malinowski. Yeah, maybe try another chair.

3174 Mr. Jackson. How about that? Perfect. All right. Thank
3175 you for being here today. I'll just start over here. I continue
3176 to be a little bit disappointed and unimpressed with the Biden
3177 administration's foreign policy agenda.

3178 China's utilizing soft power diplomacy through COVID vaccine
3179 distribution and through the Belt and Road Initiative. Russia
3180 continues to attack Ukraine civilians and destroys a country.

3181 Iran is reportedly increasing its demands of the U.S. and our
3182 partners in the JCPOA negotiations, which are actually still being
3183 proctored by Russia.

3184 Closer to home, the southern border is facing a constant
3185 stream of record-breaking numbers of illegal immigrants and
3186 deadly drugs like fentanyl. Across all corners, global
3187 leadership is sorely needed and the United States under the Biden
3188 administration is missing the mark, in my opinion.

3189 I hope that we see strong leadership and better policy coming
3190 from USAID and the State Department, going forward. But that
3191 said, I'd just -- I'd like to ask you a question. You said one
3192 of your biggest priorities is to break down the barriers to make
3193 it easier for different kinds of organizations to work with USAID.

3194

3195 Last year, just 10 groups received over half of all the
3196 contract funding. So there seems to be a limited opportunity
3197 for nontraditional partners to work with the agency.

3198 It can take more than a year for USAID to vet a new partner.
3199 Long time lines and red tape does and will discourage
3200 organizations, especially smaller organizations, from working
3201 with USAID.

3202 What specific steps are you taking to shorten this time to
3203 get new organizations vetted and improved and also what specific
3204 regulation changes could Congress make to speed this process up?

3205 Ms. Power. Thank you so much for that question. So I think
3206 already Congress, through the New Partners Initiative and the
3207 Local Works program, have created dedicated pools of funding in

3208 a sense where that funding can't be accessed unless and until
3209 it goes to local partners. I want to come back, actually, to
3210 your opening statement, if I could, if I have a second.

3211 But the -- I think that the -- we are launching within USAID
3212 as a whole kind of desludging anti -- paperwork burdens -- anti
3213 -- administrative burdens -- effort that is going to touch very
3214 much on the contracting process so that these 150-page contracts,
3215 which disproportionately are going to exclude the ability to work
3216 with local organizations, that those are not, again, the run of
3217 the mill.

3218 You know, some of the big contracts that you mentioned go
3219 to large humanitarian organizations that are operating in all
3220 the countries of the world. So there's some amount of that that,
3221 I think, is an important feature of American foreign policy,
3222 especially when it's branded as it is with the World Food Programme
3223 and others.

3224 And then if I just may say on vaccinating the world, which
3225 was just a part of your opening statement, I do think that has
3226 been a major foreign policy success for this administration.
3227 You are seeing it in the soft power return that is evidenced in
3228 polls, but above all, you're seeing it in people who've been
3229 inoculated, thus reducing the risk of variants, not entirely.

3230

3231 So I'm hopeful that the House and Senate will give us

3232 additional resources to continue vaccinating the world rather
3233 than saying on the one hand that the PRC, you know, is out there
3234 doing vaccine diplomacy and then depriving us of the resources
3235 to do a job that is actually working for us and for the American
3236 people. Thank you, Congressman.

3237 Mr. Jackson. Thank you. I have one more quick question.

3238 I'm extremely concerned over the Biden administration's stance
3239 towards American energy as well. Our executive branch should
3240 be supporting and encouraging domestic energy production.

3241 Instead, the administration is shunning American oil and
3242 gas while simultaneously soliciting Venezuelan oil, for example.

3243 I was alarmed by reports of a directive sent to all embassies
3244 that no new money could support any project with fossil fuels
3245 overseas.

3246 I'm especially concerned with the potential effects on Power
3247 Africa that this policy change will have. As the world is looking
3248 for alternatives other than Russian oil and gas, the United States
3249 needs to be the country that others rely on for energy.

3250 Administrator Power, in parts of the developing world where
3251 energy access is not widespread do you believe our priority should
3252 be combating energy poverty, you know, in any way we can instead
3253 of imposing more restrictions on useful energy sources?

3254 Ms. Power. I think Power Africa, you know, is proceeding
3255 to address energy poverty, recognizing, of course, that there

3256 are a lot of legacy programs and recognizing the need for base
3257 energy and so forth.

3258 I mean, you know, I don't -- I think that right now we are
3259 not seeing our efforts to address energy poverty offset by the
3260 countries that we're working with's interest in transitioning
3261 to renewables, which they believe are ultimately going to be
3262 cheaper for their people and particularly off-grid installations
3263 of solar, hydro, et cetera, that don't require as much financial
3264 investment in infrastructure.

3265 Mr. Jackson. Thank you. I appreciate your answers. My
3266 time is up. Thank you, sir.

3267 Ms. Power. Thank you. Nice to see you again.

3268 Mr. Malinowski. The chair recognizes Representative Sara
3269 Jacobs of California and praises her for her patience.

3270 Ms. Jacobs. Thank you, Mr. Chairman, and thank you,
3271 Administrator Power, for staying for all of us to be able to ask
3272 questions.

3273 You know, many of my colleagues have discussed what we have
3274 seen, Russia using hunger as a weapon of war and its invasion's
3275 impact on global food security. It's why I introduced a
3276 bipartisan resolution recognizing the impact of conflict on
3277 global hunger and why I'm grateful for everything you and the
3278 administration are doing to address global food insecurity around
3279 the world.

3280 I wanted to talk with you about the Global Fragility Act.
3281 Last week, I chaired a Foreign Affairs subcommittee hearing on
3282 the implementation of the act, where in addition to State and
3283 DOD, Assistant to the Administrator Rob Jenkins testified on
3284 USAID's behalf. We discussed lessons learned on Mozambique and
3285 coastal West Africa, the resources most needed for successful
3286 implementation and the importance of localization.

3287 So I, first, wanted to ask you about resources. I understand
3288 there is a deadline to use that fiscal year '21 funds. How does
3289 the administration plan to utilize these funds and when can we
3290 be expected to be notified of this plan?

3291 Ms. Power. You would think, given how long you'd waited,
3292 that I would be absolutely sure I could answer your question.

3293 But, unfortunately, I'd have to get back to you on that. I don't
3294 actually -- I know that, again, the country selection process
3295 -- there were lively debates that took a long time on that. What
3296 I don't know is where we are on country planning.

3297 Ms. Jacobs. Okay. No problem. Then you may or may not
3298 know the answer to this, but the multi-donor Global Fragility
3299 Fund is right now included within the Prevention and Stabilization
3300 Fund, despite the intent of GFA for the Global Fragility Fund
3301 to be a separate and distinct fund.

3302 I know State's not here, who has some of the management of
3303 these funds, but I was wondering if you could speak to the

3304 justification for not seeking the creation of a distinct fund
3305 and how will you ensure implementation is not hindered and were
3306 able to properly solicit contributions to the Global Fragility
3307 Fund?

3308 Ms. Power. I don't have the answer. I believe the answer,
3309 though -- as you know, USAID's budget process kind of runs --
3310 its collaborative with the State Department runs through the
3311 State's F Bureau. I think the logic of that, from recall, is
3312 some idea of integration and concentrating resources and being
3313 able to double down so we actually show a return.

3314 But, again, the specific logic and whether that's a -- yeah,
3315 I don't have that --

3316 Ms. Jacobs. No problem. I'll give you one that you for
3317 sure can answer.

3318 Ms. Power. I'm not sure. I'm running -- I'm losing
3319 confidence.

3320 Ms. Jacobs. No, all good. You know, I know that
3321 localization has been a big priority of yours and I really thank
3322 you for your leadership on that and for everything you're doing
3323 on locally-led development.

3324 We have heard, in a bipartisan way, I think, today, somewhat
3325 surprisingly, how important that is to improve our development
3326 assistance. So I wanted to ask you, you know, how does USAID's
3327 reliance on a small number of large government contractors carry

3328 out -- to carry out its program impact our ability to be able
3329 to address the challenges we're facing, and how can we reduce
3330 this reliance on large international government contractors as
3331 we look to increase the use of local experts and encourage local
3332 partners to really be in the lead of these programs?

3333 Ms. Power. Well, this builds on Congressman Jackson's
3334 questions you said nicely. I mean, I think that, you know, one
3335 would have to do a side by -- you know, it's the counterfactual
3336 we never have, right, of what is the actual impact in a community
3337 of going through a local organization in the moment rather than
3338 something that might be multi-year and, you know, bigger sums
3339 at work as international organizations.

3340 You know, that might be their -- their proposals might entail
3341 something that scales more easily. So, again, that
3342 counterfactual isn't available to us program by program, but what
3343 -- my biggest concern about the overweighting that both of you
3344 have referred to and the reason that we are making a hard push
3345 on this including by trying to increase the number of individuals
3346 we have at USAID at our missions who can sit down side by side
3347 with local organizations and help them jump through the hoops
3348 that they have to jump through in order to contract or get a grant
3349 with USAID, because no matter -- even if we desludge and reduce
3350 burdens that's still -- those requirements are still stringent
3351 for all the reasons that we also care about -- reducing fraud,

3352 waste, and abuse.

3353 But my biggest concern is not that side by side. It's the
3354 lasting question of whether we are doing sustainable development
3355 -- you know, whether these organizations -- you know, we can say,
3356 well, it's costly in the here and now to make an investment in
3357 their accounting capability or in their ability, you know, to
3358 meet these stringent requirements.

3359 But then these organizations don't get the resources or maybe
3360 they're a subgrantee, which is -- which would be progress, but
3361 it's still not the same as being a grantee themselves, and all
3362 that overhead exists in other organizations and all that
3363 accountability but they then don't obtain that internal
3364 infrastructure to do work over time.

3365 So when we close our missions, as we always hope to do, what
3366 have we left in our place? And when those international
3367 organizations go away, yes, there'll be human capital that will
3368 have been trained, presumably, as staff and as beneficiaries.

3369 But it's not the same as really growing a country's ability to
3370 do that work by itself. Thank you.

3371 Ms. Jacobs. Thank you. I yield back.

3372 Mr. Malinowski. The chair recognizes Representative
3373 Chrissy Houlahan of Pennsylvania.

3374 Ms. Houlahan. Thank you so much for the opportunity to ask
3375 you questions. Can you hear me okay, before I get started?

3376 Ms. Power. Yes.

3377 Ms. Houlahan. Excellent. I'm going to follow up on some
3378 of the conversation that you were having with Mr. Pfluger while
3379 ago. He was asking questions about demand for sustainable
3380 energy, as an example.

3381 But my question will be more broad than that on the role
3382 of capitalism and in growing our sustainable efforts worldwide.
3383 I've co-chaired the Stakeholder Capitalism Caucus with a
3384 colleague, Dean Phillips, and we're aiming to promote equitable,
3385 inclusive, and sustainable private sector practices and
3386 investments.

3387 I'm also grateful to sit out here on this Foreign Affairs
3388 subcommittee, Subcommittee on International Development,
3389 International Organizations and Global Corporate Social Impact.

3390 I was attracted to that particular committee because of the
3391 global corporate social impact aspect of it. So I'm very, very
3392 interested in and invested in exploring the intersection between
3393 smart private sector investments a

3394 For fiscal year '23 USAID requested \$250 million for
3395 President Biden's Build Back Better World Initiative that would
3396 support development of high-standard infrastructure in low and
3397 middle income countries while collaborating with the private
3398 sector to support inclusive economic growth, to raise labor and
3399 environmental standards, and to promote transparency,

3400 governance, and anti-corruption measures.

3401 The administration has stated that the infrastructure
3402 development carried out in a transparent and sustainable manner
3403 financially, environmentally, and socially will lead to a better
3404 outcome for recipient countries and communities.

3405 You were mentioning in your conversation with Mr. Pfluger
3406 about how many of our international communities are walking or
3407 talking with their feet, you know, and asking for things that
3408 they need independent of us pushing them.

3409 But I was wondering if you agree that the United States'
3410 views on ESG criteria as a priority consistent with our national
3411 interest in the foreign affairs and international development
3412 space -- I'm wondering if you agree that these views are important,
3413 that ESG is a priority for us not only domestically but also
3414 globally as well.

3415 Ms. Power. I believe that those are part of the standard
3416 process and that USAID is, you know, attentive to those standards
3417 in the work that it does, running through potential projects
3418 through that prism but also engaging governments so that they're
3419 sensitive to those criterion standards as well.

3420 So one of the things that I was wondering beyond that is
3421 -- beyond the Build Back Better World Initiative -- is your agency
3422 engaged in other collaborative partnerships that might help
3423 promote environmental, social, and governance standards that

3424 would be in line with the U.S. interests internationally as well?

3425 Ms. Power. I think the short answer is yes. But getting
3426 you a lay down of that would require me to get back to you.

3427 Ms. Houlahan. I'd like that and I'd like to have, if it's
3428 possible, kind of a longer conversation about what we can be doing
3429 to harness the power of the for profit economy and the for profit
3430 sector, NGOs aside and governments aside and, you know, foreign
3431 assistance and aid aside.

3432 The for profit sector is just so powerful and I think that
3433 it's catching on globally that this is something that we need
3434 to be thinking of in terms of our resources and dollars and
3435 partnering, and would love to have a longer conversation about
3436 how we can work on that.

3437 With what's remaining of my time, I want to switch topics
3438 to talking about UNFPA. I'm really grateful that the
3439 Biden/Harris administration has requested \$56 million for UNFPA,
3440 which is, I think, an historical high.

3441 But I was wondering if you could comment a little bit on
3442 whether you believe meeting the protection and health needs of
3443 girls and women still remains a critical component to USAID'S
3444 mission.

3445 Ms. Power. Well, I think you'll see from the President's
3446 budget request, which has in it a historic request to double gender
3447 finance and that includes, you know, everything from reproductive

3448 health, maternal health, gender, and -- excuse me, women and girls
3449 empowerment, microfinance for women.

3450 You know, it runs the gamut but, absolutely, women's health
3451 is at the core of that programming. It's also what our Public
3452 Health Bureau recognizes. We have seen just in countries all
3453 over the world that the investments we make in women's health,
3454 in women's reproductive health, just have cascading benefits in
3455 all the other development sectors. So these investments are not
3456 only the right thing to do but, of course, a very, very wise smart
3457 thing to do.

3458 Ms. Houlahan. I appreciate that, and would look forward
3459 with the remaining seconds that I have to welcoming any
3460 conversation you'd like to have with me or my office on how I
3461 can be helpful to engage USAID and UNFPA's continued relationship.

3462 And with that, I yield back and appreciate the time.

3463 Ms. Power. Thank you, Congresswoman.

3464 Mr. Malinowski. The chair now recognizes Representative
3465 Ken Buck of Colorado.

3466 Mr. Buck. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

3467 Administrator Power, I'm concerned and interested in your
3468 views on aid to the Palestinian Authority and particularly in
3469 light of the documented incitement of hatred and violence in the
3470 schools in the Palestinian territory. Just wondering what your
3471 thoughts are on that.

3472 Ms. Power. Thank you, Congressman. Well, to state what
3473 I hope is obvious, any such incitement is abhorrent and USAID's
3474 deputy administrator was actually just in the region and had the
3475 chance to raise directly with Palestinian Authority officials
3476 our concerns as an agency but, of course, as an administration,
3477 as a country, with everything from the pay to slay program to,
3478 you know, broader concerns about incitement.

3479 Our programming is in different domains. It's programming
3480 that is just restarting now after a hiatus brought about by the
3481 prior suspension. We're in very close touch with the government
3482 of Israel on everything from water and sanitation projects that
3483 we might be able to do together to kind of community-level peace
3484 building across the lines to core humanitarian assistance, given
3485 the global food crisis.

3486 So most of the engagement on incitement by our administration
3487 comes through diplomatic pressure of that nature. The State
3488 Department, not my agency, but is the funder of UNRWA as well
3489 where this question of incitement also has arisen because of
3490 concerns about textbooks and I know that's something that they
3491 press on constantly.

3492 Mr. Buck. What gains have we seen? What changes have we
3493 seen as a result of resuming the aid?

3494 Ms. Power. Well, I think that, first, we see a lot of
3495 enthusiasm on the part of the government of Israel to resume this

3496 assistance out of concern about the destabilizing effects of
3497 cutting off assistance, just the fundamental recognition that
3498 economic stability plays a critical role. It's not the only
3499 factor, but behind the kind of security that everyone in the region
3500 is craving for themselves.

3501 With regard to the specific number of beneficiaries of people
3502 who've received, for example, our World Food Programme
3503 humanitarian assistance, I'd have to get back to with the numbers.

3504

3505 Mr. Buck. And I guess I'm more interested in the alignment
3506 of values than in specific numbers of individuals that have
3507 benefitted from the aid. Do we see -- and it may be too early
3508 to make that kind of judgment, but do we see any sort of movement
3509 in values?

3510 Ms. Power. You know, it is very soon. I mean, we just --
3511 there were some congressional holds on last year's funding that
3512 got lifted quite late and so some of that money is just getting
3513 obligated. MEPPA, which is something that -- named, of course,
3514 for Nita Lowey, was just created and we have projects that are
3515 going to involve peace building, you know, as I mentioned already
3516 at the community level.

3517 You know, it's going to be very difficult to, you know, judge
3518 sort of a population as a whole on values. But what I can say
3519 is that there was, you know, great sadness among some of the,

3520 for example, independent media that USAID had trained to see
3521 funding cut off when those journalists were actually exposing
3522 the very corruption that we, as an administration, were critical
3523 of.

3524 So over time, we hope to be in a position to diversify the
3525 kinds of programs that we fund -- you know, young women's
3526 organizations, the kinds of education that has lasting effects
3527 and, you know, our programs all around the world -- it would be
3528 true in community programs here in this country, too -- they
3529 operate kind of individual by individual and I think that's where
3530 one would look to see, you know, a change in the view of the United
3531 States but also, above all, a change in the welfare of the people
3532 who we're engaging.

3533 Mr. Buck. So what policies are in place or procedures that
3534 will guarantee adherence to the Taylor Force Act and the making
3535 sure that money doesn't get into the wrong hands, that it is
3536 strictly for humanitarian aid?

3537 Ms. Power. Well, every obligation of funding we are, you
3538 know, in consultation, of course, with our mission on the ground
3539 and all of the vetting requirements that I alluded to earlier
3540 -- we have little time so I won't go back through them -- but
3541 also with, you know, our programs are now run out of our embassy.

3542

3543 So, you know, Israeli officials have been consulted on a

3544 great number of them, including the COGAT, who my deputy
3545 administrator -- our deputy administrator met with on her recent
3546 travels.

3547 But what I was starting to say is that in doing the
3548 congressional notification process as well you all retain an
3549 ability to look at these programs and, you know, when we have
3550 encountered concerns about programs, about whether they are
3551 somehow close to the line, we have worked those concerns through
3552 with staff or we have adjusted programming.

3553 So I have great confidence that we are adhering to the Taylor
3554 Force Act and will continue to do so.

3555 Mr. Buck. Thank you. And I yield back, Mr. Chairman.

3556 Mr. Malinowski. Thank you. The chair now recognizes
3557 Representative Kathy Manning of North Carolina.

3558 Ms. Manning. Thank you, Mr. Chair. Thank you,
3559 Administrator Power, for being with us for so long and for your
3560 service.

3561 One of the uplifting things that I have seen in my district
3562 during Putin's terrible assault on Ukraine is the determination
3563 of Americans to find ways to help the Ukrainian people, those
3564 who stay in their country and those who have sought refuge in
3565 Poland and in Moldova, and there are a variety of individuals
3566 and nonprofit organizations in the Triad area of North Carolina,
3567 my district, who are working to help deliver supplies to Ukrainian

3568 refugees, working with groups on the ground in Europe such as
3569 the Jewish Community Center of Krakow.

3570 Are there ways that American nonprofit groups can partner
3571 with USAID to help deliver those supplies to those who need them
3572 in an organized fashion? I'd appreciate working together on this
3573 because I'm getting lots of calls from people and groups in my
3574 district.

3575 Ms. Power. Thank you. Well, I think, you know, in the
3576 initial crush of the invasion as, you know, Kyiv was under siege,
3577 including all the centralized, you know, government institutions,
3578 you know, I think this was very, very challenging because, you
3579 know, you had people out of such generosity, you know, sending
3580 supplies to the border. They were backing up. Sometimes that
3581 was making it challenging for some of those very large
3582 humanitarian actors to get their commodities in.

3583 I think now, as the Ukrainian government reconstitutes, you
3584 know, in Kyiv en masse -- I mean, again, the core of the Ukrainian
3585 government, of course, remained -- I think this is something that
3586 our mission on the ground when we get back -- because right now
3587 we're still in Poland, unfortunately, very, very eager to be part
3588 of this vanguard of U.S. officials who go back -- I think this
3589 question of how to facilitate is going to become easier to address.

3590

3591 Our message up to this point, though, has been cash is best,

3592 which is a very -- it's not a nice message because people want
3593 to mobilize strollers and, you know, teddy bears or, you know,
3594 hygiene products. You know, they want to do things that feel
3595 a little more personalized.

3596 But the cash really does help because it is the kind of thing
3597 that when it goes to a World Food Programme or a UNICEF it can
3598 actually go directly into the bank account of a vulnerable family
3599 that's been displaced. That's the kind of cash assistance
3600 programs that they run.

3601 It's not people's impression of what these international
3602 organizations do. But it's, definitely, the preference of the
3603 families to be able to decide for themselves, you know, what to
3604 do with a small increment of cash that comes in.

3605 Ms. Manning. So my state of North Carolina has a
3606 long-standing relationship -- partnership, rather -- with the
3607 country of Moldova, and my community in Greensboro has a
3608 long-standing partnership with the city of Beltsy. So we have
3609 a particular interest in making sure that we are helping Moldova,
3610 and, as you know, that country has welcomed the highest
3611 concentration of refugees per capita, which is a serious challenge
3612 for Moldova not only because it's a small country but it is a
3613 poor country.

3614 Has USAID taken stock of Moldova's needs, including ways
3615 that we can help upgrade hospitals and other infrastructure as

3616 they deal with the influx of so many people? And they've really
3617 welcomed the refugees, but it is a burden on their country.

3618 Ms. Power. Well, I've traveled, actually, to Moldova twice,
3619 and I'm so glad to know about your community's interest in Moldova.

3620 We should talk more about that because I do think it's kind of
3621 an unsung story in all of this is that they have taken the highest
3622 number of per capita refugees.

3623 You know, many of those may have moved on eventually but
3624 there's still, you know, just shy of 100,000 refugees living in
3625 the country. I visited just last month and just saw, you know,
3626 these bed and breakfasts that used to be charging and just letting
3627 people in to stay. Wineries, you know, near the Ukrainian border
3628 that used to be catering to tourists and others now just allowing
3629 displaced people. I mean, the generosity is off the charts.

3630 I think the other part of the unsung or the untold story
3631 here is the leadership of that country. President Sandu, who,
3632 you know, is trying to implement an anti-corruption agenda that's
3633 as ambitious as anything happening anywhere in the world and doing
3634 so with Russian energy blackmail taking hold at the very same
3635 time.

3636 So what's really important, I think, about the supplemental
3637 that you previously passed, which created flexibility, and the
3638 supplemental that's now pending before the Senate, is it actually
3639 puts us in a position, potentially, if it goes through to provide

3640 some direct budget support to Moldova when fuel prices are
3641 skyrocketing, when there's, you know, a lot of political
3642 polarization where Russian media have really infiltrated the
3643 country through television primarily.

3644 So there's a real chance to support Moldova at this critical
3645 inflection point, I think, in its trajectory, which wants to be
3646 an integrated trajectory west.

3647 Ms. Manning. Well, I appreciate your talkability, and I
3648 yield back.

3649 Mr. Malinowski. The chair now recognizes Representative
3650 Andy Barr of Kentucky for five minutes, and maybe five seconds.

3651 Mr. Barr. Thanks. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

3652 Administrator Power, thanks so much for your service, and
3653 I've had the pleasure of meeting many of the staff that work USAID
3654 abroad and they do great work, and please pass along our gratitude
3655 for their service.

3656 Square One Technologies is a company in my district that
3657 develops and manufactures a 14-stage advanced water treatment
3658 and purification system that can disinfect and sanitize dirty
3659 water much cheaper and better than widely adopted methods like
3660 chemical treatment or reverse osmosis.

3661 I know you're very familiar with water challenges across
3662 the undeveloped world. This company is interested in partnering
3663 with USAID to distribute their systems across Africa, in

3664 particular, to offer a solution to access clean water.

3665 For American companies such as Square One that employ
3666 hardworking Americans, how does USAID partner with those
3667 companies here in the United States that may want to offer their
3668 technology or services abroad?

3669 Ms. Power. Thank you. We actually just set up a website
3670 called WorkWithUSAID.org because so many have that question and
3671 weren't finding it, I gather, all that easy to answer. So as
3672 a first port of call, I think that's where I would steer anybody
3673 interested in working with USAID.

3674 But, obviously, if your office wants to reach out, you know,
3675 just to have a better sense of what our water programs look like
3676 or -- and to pass that along on your side, you know, we're sensitive
3677 about procurement and wanting, you know, there to be rigorous
3678 procurement processes and transparent ones and all the like.

3679 But I think what we need to do is just simplify the procedure
3680 of informing people about what it takes to work with USAID, making
3681 sure that they know the deadlines, the requirements, et cetera.

3682

3683 Mr. Barr. So my constituent at Square One has been waiting
3684 on for a reply from USAID's water office to set up a call. Can
3685 you commit that we can hear by USAID in short order?

3686 Ms. Power. If your office will give us that information
3687 --

3688 Mr. Barr. We'll work with you on that.

3689 Ms. Power. -- yes, of course. Absolutely.

3690 Mr. Barr. Thank you very much.

3691 In 2021, USAID provided over \$110 million to support
3692 development and humanitarian programs in the West Bank and Gaza
3693 -- kind of as a follow-up to Mr. Buck's line of questioning.

3694 In prior years we have received reports from the Israeli
3695 government that U.S. tax dollars going to organizations
3696 purporting to be humanitarian in nature are actually being
3697 funneled to support the boycott, divestment, and sanctions
3698 movement against the state of Israel.

3699 What partner vetting system does USAID use to make sure that
3700 U.S. tax dollars do not go to malign actors, particularly those
3701 who are participating in the BDS movement?

3702 Ms. Power. Thank you. I have not heard allegations that
3703 any of the funding you're referencing has gotten to anything other
3704 than its intended beneficiaries. Again, if your staff can follow
3705 up and if there's anything specific there.

3706 You know, our vetting procedures are as stringent there as
3707 in any part of the world. There layers of vetting ahead of time
3708 not only with the grantee but any subgrantee. We also do
3709 compliance reviews after the fact in terms of what our
3710 implementing partners have actually done to sort of go back over
3711 and make sure we're checking any issues or any diversion on the

3712 back end.

3713 So, again, if there's a specific, but it's a very, very
3714 elaborate -- in light of the sensitivities, in light of the risks
3715 there and in several other theaters, it's, again, the most
3716 stringent vetting --

3717 Mr. Barr. And shifting away from BDS but back to Taylor
3718 Force and Taylor Force compliance, while there may not be direct
3719 assistance to the PA, there is concern that the spirit of Taylor
3720 Force is being circumvented by partnering with organizations and
3721 NGOs that may be making those martyr payments to in lieu of the
3722 PA directly.

3723 And we don't -- we, obviously, don't want any U.S. tax dollars
3724 funneled through NGOs that operate to circumvent Taylor Force.
3725 Can you speak to that?

3726 Ms. Power. Again, if you have any specifics where there's
3727 a concern that that is happening, I would definitely like to hear
3728 those. Just the nature of the projects that we are doing, the
3729 extent of the conversations we are having with members up here
3730 in the MEPPA context, the composition of the board that we have
3731 where the ranking and majority of all our oversight committees
3732 and others were able to put four board members, I really think
3733 we have the infrastructure in place to guard against diversion.

3734 Mr. Barr. And a final question on China in the Pacific.
3735 What work is USAID doing with other development arms like DFC

3736 to accomplish American foreign policy goals, specifically
3737 countering Belt and Road? I'm especially interested in Oceania,
3738 Indo-Pacific.

3739 Mr. Malinowski. And I have to -- yeah, it's an important
3740 question, but maybe if you can follow up directly.

3741 The chair now recognizes Representative Juan Vargas of
3742 California for five minutes, and then we have just one more and
3743 we'll be done.

3744 Ms. Power. Until somebody else arrives.

3745 [Laughter.]

3746 Mr. Vargas. Thank you very much. Thank you very much, Mr.
3747 Chair.

3748 Ambassador, thank you so much for being here. We appreciate
3749 it. I apologize that I wasn't able to hear the entirety of your
3750 comments. There was another hearing that I also was involved
3751 in.

3752 But there's so many questions: the invasion of Ukraine, you
3753 know, Afghanistan, Yemen, northern Ethiopia. But I'd like to
3754 focus in on something you said and that is everyone deserves food.

3755 Everyone deserves food.

3756 The insecurity that we see right now, especially because
3757 of Ukraine, really concerns me. I think I've asked you before
3758 about David Beasley. I know you know who he is. And he has talked
3759 to us before -- and was going to talk but we had to cancel his

3760 hearing -- but of the severe problem that we have and how it's
3761 getting worse because of what's happening in Ukraine and Russia.

3762

3763 Could you comment a little bit of how you interact with the
3764 World Food Programme that he runs and what we can do? Because
3765 I think it's horrible that so many people are marching towards
3766 starvation when, again, everyone deserves food.

3767 Ms. Power. Well, exactly, and with world food prices up
3768 as high as 34 percent from last year, you know, for all of the
3769 incredible generosity of the American people, who have really
3770 stepped up not only through the Congress but on their own, you
3771 know, contributing to organizations who are trying to help meet
3772 food needs, the needs are just outpacing the resources that are
3773 being dedicated to this.

3774 So we are grateful for the humanitarian assistance that is
3775 provided for in the second Ukraine supplemental, which is not
3776 confined to funding humanitarian needs inside Ukraine or for
3777 Ukrainians. It also speaks to the need to meet the needs stemming
3778 from the fallout from the war.

3779 But this food crisis, as David Beasley has been the first
3780 to say up here for almost a year, well predated the decision by
3781 Putin to recklessly invade Ukraine, and I think what we are trying
3782 to do is to combine this kind of stop gap humanitarian assistance
3783 through WFP and other humanitarian actors -- WFP is our main --

3784 as USAID is our main provider of humanitarian assistance globally
3785 -- but to combine that with engagement, you know, at the field
3786 level on the kinds of inputs and drought-resistant heat-resistant
3787 seeds, building on the Feed the Future program, but taking the
3788 additional food security money, which is apart from the
3789 humanitarian assistance, to try to make sure that farmers are
3790 using this precious fertilizer that they have in the most
3791 efficient way possible, that they're supplementing it with
3792 organic if they can just to try to be able to get more yield,
3793 that countries like Zambia that make wheat -- when there is a
3794 wheat need in the neighborhood are able to export more of their
3795 supplies, and we're also engaging on the export bans that have
3796 been put in place because those are really going to hurt the global
3797 food supply -- the global grain supply -- along with what Putin
3798 is preventing from being exported out of Ukraine.

3799 Mr. Vargas. Thank you for working on that and, again, I
3800 hope that relationship is a good one because I think it's very
3801 important to work with the World Food Programme.

3802 Ms. Power. You'd have to ask him, but on my side it's a
3803 very productive relationship. I'm a big fan and his energy is
3804 made for this moment, and his entrepreneurship.

3805 Mr. Vargas. I've only heard good things about you with one
3806 exception and I'll say -- I'll tell you the exception. I was
3807 very happy to hear your comments the last time, and then I spoke

3808 to my daughter, who's at the Harvard Law School, and she said,
3809 wait a minute, she's married to Cass Sunstein. I can't get in
3810 his class. I guess he's too busy.

3811 But anyway, put that aside, that's the only negative thing
3812 I've ever heard and that isn't even here.

3813 But what I do want to say is this. I'm very grateful that
3814 you said something about the vaccines because I've been one of
3815 those ones that have been pushing for us to spend more on that
3816 internationally, and the people who are against it and vote
3817 against it then say, look what Russia is doing, look what China
3818 is doing, and we look awful because we're not helping, when they
3819 vote against putting money in for these international vaccines.

3820

3821 So I'm glad you spoke up. I mean, I think that that's so
3822 important to comment. I don't have much time here. But I do
3823 want to thank you. I do think you're doing an excellent job --
3824 the scope, the breadth of what you need to do -- the depth, and
3825 I think you're doing a great job.

3826 Continue to work hard as you're doing. I think you're doing
3827 very well. Thank you. We're proud of you.

3828 Ms. Power. Thank you. Thank you so much, Congressman, and
3829 I'll talk to Professor Sunstein about his poor selection process.

3830 But on the vaccines, just to say, you know, it hasn't come
3831 up that much in this hearing and, yet, we could look back on this

3832 period with such regret if we don't find the resources to continue
3833 vaccinating the world, regret for the reasons that you say in
3834 terms of who else will step in to fill the breach but also regret
3835 because when immun.-compromised people get COVID, the risks of
3836 new variants and mutations that, ultimately, imperil Americans,
3837 you know, really increases and it would just be horrific to look
3838 back and think there were things we could have done but we didn't
3839 because of whatever -- whatever the logic is, you know, because
3840 it didn't seem a good investment at the time. We have to plan
3841 ahead and know that this is about prevention of something much
3842 worse.

3843 Mr. Vargas. Thank you.

3844 Mr. Malinowski. From saving the world's to getting a kid
3845 in class, congressional oversight works.

3846 [Laughter.]

3847 Mr. Malinowski. So, finally, last but certainly not least,
3848 I will recognize Representative Brad Schneider of Illinois.

3849 Mr. Schneider. Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I want to thank
3850 you, Chairman Meeke, for having this hearing, and Administrator
3851 Power, thank you for spending time with us and staying so I have
3852 a chance to ask a question.

3853 As you touched on and you also said in your testimony, we
3854 face mammoth problems in the world that -- problems that the U.S.
3855 can't solve alone but that the world can't solve without U.S.

3856 leadership and I'm grateful for the work you're doing, that you're
3857 in your position to do that and the leadership that the United
3858 States is showing.

3859 You touched on with your comments about vaccines, and we
3860 know that if we don't get it right the consequences can be
3861 significant not just for the United States but globally. But
3862 it's true on so many issues.

3863 And before I go on, I want to touch on the Russian invasion
3864 of Ukraine and I am grateful, again, for American leadership,
3865 for the administration and what Congress has done in ensuring
3866 that we're delivering critical security, economic and
3867 humanitarian assistance.

3868 American leadership in this case has to be steadfast and
3869 we must continue to demonstrate not just to Vladimir Putin and
3870 Russia but to the world that we will remain united with our allies
3871 and not just stopping Russia's unprovoked illegal invasion but
3872 reversing and securing Ukraine's sovereign future and helping
3873 the Ukrainians rebuild their country.

3874 I also know we have talked a lot about it over the course
3875 of this hearing, turning to the Middle East. Two years ago,
3876 Congress passed and authorized the Nita Lowey Middle East
3877 Partnership for Peace, and we have touched on some of those
3878 programs and you've talked about making sure that we adhere to
3879 the Taylor Force Act and make sure none of that money goes to

3880 people who are given incentives by the PA to commit grievous acts
3881 of terror in Israel.

3882 But the MEPPA program is critically important. It focuses
3883 on people-to-people interactions, creating the prospects for
3884 peace between two peoples, creating a situation that, hopefully,
3885 will lead to a better future. I note we have talked about the
3886 three USAID grants that have so far been issued and there are
3887 second solicitations.

3888 I'm proud as I supported MEPPA and I'm pleased to see these
3889 grants being put out. But as we get to the end of this hearing,
3890 can you talk a little bit more about some of the successes we
3891 have seen but also where investments are going and, at the risk
3892 of repeating what others have asked, how these are setting the
3893 path?

3894 You know, I'm the chair of -- one of the chairs of the Abraham
3895 Accords Caucus hear in Congress, a part of -- introduced and we
3896 passed the Israel Relations Normalization Act. We know that the
3897 path and prospects to peace are creating opportunities on the
3898 ground and how MEPPA and the work in USAID can help us do that.

3899 Ms. Power. Well, I mean, I guess, because it is a little
3900 bit early days, I would just speak to the relative enthusiasm
3901 and I -- you know, I've talked a lot about the consultations we
3902 have done on the Israeli side.

3903 But I think at the community level in the Palestinian

3904 territories the desire to see America back funding these programs,
3905 out and about, I think, you know, we're talking about support
3906 to battle a pandemic. I mean, this is meeting people at an hour
3907 of such need.

3908 We're talking about water and sanitation projects that we're
3909 trying to pursue and those are challenging. And, again, given
3910 the Taylor Force Act, we are absolutely determined to stay within
3911 the confines of the law and so making sure that the projects that
3912 we do provide material benefit in communities without having any
3913 benefit to the PA is so important.

3914 So, you know, I think it's going to be exciting to see those
3915 projects launched, the three that have been announced so far.

3916 I think the -- you know, getting the two communities together,
3917 you know, isn't easy, given the other challenges, you know, the
3918 absence of a visible peace process.

3919 And so, you know, much as we would like, you know, again,
3920 the bottom-up programming to give rise to a different kind of
3921 climate, sometimes the current climate and the divisions there,
3922 you know, make it harder to do some of this work.

3923 But I think that once these projects are out and about and
3924 people see the resources available, you know, for this kind of
3925 community interaction, I'm hopeful that we'll be able to really
3926 scale some of what we're doing so far.

3927 Mr. Schneider. All right. Thank you. I'm convinced that

3928 investment in people-to-people programs can make a difference.
3929 U.S. leads best when we lead with our values and demonstrate
3930 them by supporting people but also making clear that we will oppose
3931 terrorism and violence.

3932 So again, I thank you. I'm extended past my time. So, Mr.
3933 Chair, I yield back.

3934 Mr. Malinowski. Thank you so much.

3935 Administrator, thank you for being willing to spend this
3936 much time with us, giving every member of this committee a chance
3937 to interact with you. That is greatly appreciated on both sides
3938 of the aisle and I think speaks well of your commitment to making
3939 the Congress a full partner in your efforts.

3940 I will just refer back to, in closing, something that
3941 Congressman Vargas said to you. We are, all of us here on both
3942 sides of the aisle, eager to see the United States compete with
3943 China, deal with the threat posed by Russia, and yet many of us
3944 don't seem to feel the same sense of urgency when it comes to
3945 giving you the resources to do that.

3946 We have the capacity. America has the capacity to feed the
3947 world. We have the capacity to save millions of lives around
3948 the world through a vaccination program, and a shot of Pfizer
3949 costs a lot less than a cruise missile.

3950 And we could actually do those things if our foreign
3951 assistance budget was, say, as great as it was 40 or 50 years

3952 ago, the last time we had a great power adversary in the world.

3953

3954 That's not a crazy goal to simply do what we did the last
3955 time we faced a situation like this. I know you're a champion
3956 of that. I know you're a good steward of these programs, and
3957 I hope all of us will continue to do everything we can to support
3958 you and give you the resources that you need, even if you don't
3959 help our kids get into a class at Harvard.

3960 So with that, the hearing is adjourned.

3961 [Whereupon, at 5:00 p.m., the committee was adjourned.]