

# RELEASE OF THE 2009 COUNTRY REPORTS ON HUMAN RIGHTS PRACTICES

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## HEARING BEFORE THE TOM LANTOS HUMAN RIGHTS COMMISSION HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

ONE HUNDRED AND TWELFTH CONGRESS

FIRST SESSION

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TOM LANTOS HUMAN RIGHTS COMMISSION

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# CONTENTS

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## WITNESSES

Michael Posner, Assistant Secretary, Bureau of Democracy, Human Rights and Labor.....	8
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TUESDAY, MARCH 16, 2010

HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES,  
TOM LANTOS HUMAN RIGHTS COMMISSION,  
*Washington, D.C.*

The Commission met, pursuant to call, at 10:05 a.m., in Room B-318, Rayburn House Office Building, Hon. James P. McGovern [co-chairman of the Commission] presiding.

Mr. McGOVERN. The hearing will come to order.

Good morning, ladies and gentlemen. I would like to welcome you to today's hearing on the just-released State Department Country Reports on Human Rights. This report reviews global human rights developments in 2009.

The Country Reports were mandated by the United States Congress, one of the most important actions Congress has ever taken in support of human rights in addition to the creation of the Bureau of Human Rights at the State Department and the creation of the Assistant Secretary for Human Rights. Originally, the reports were mandated to assess the human rights situation only in those countries that received U.S. assistance, but, since then, the mandate has been broadened to include all members of the United Nations. In 2009, the reports continued the proud tradition of providing Congress with detailed and comprehensive reporting on how 194 countries are dealing with human rights.

I want to thank Secretary of State Hillary Clinton, Assistant Secretary Michael Posner, and all the hardworking men and women in the Bureau of Democracy, Human Rights, and Labor, as well as all of human rights officers at our embassies around the world for their extraordinary work in compiling these reports.

Needless to say, no report of this length and detail can be absolutely perfect. There may be differences in the evaluation, descriptive language, and exclusions of human rights situations here and there; and my colleagues and I appreciate having a chance today to discuss these details with you Mr. Secretary.

Rather than discussing specific findings for individual reports here in my opening statement, I would like to leave that for the question-and-answer period. I would like to address the reports here from a more general perspective.

Mr. Secretary, I would like to share with you some of my impressions from my 2008 trip to the Ecuadorian-Colombian border and, in particular, my visits to indigenous communities in northern Ecuador.

I found indigenous communities whose traditional ways of life, traditions deeply dependent on the quality of the environment, significantly and adversely affected by

decades of reckless environmental destruction by oil companies. The degradation they suffer is hard to put in words. The water and soil are contaminated. You can see it, and you can smell it, resulting in an array of illnesses and deprivations that particularly affect children, women, and the elderly. It compounds and amplifies the many challenges facing poor and rural communities in general. Domesticated farm animals, wildlife that indigenous peoples hunt, the fish in the rivers, the plant life are all compromised and threaten the very survival of these communities. Yet our country's reports do not at this point examine these realities from a human rights perspective. I think this is something that you and the Bureau need to reexamine.

I believe in the universal declaration of human rights. I believe in one body of rights. I believe the deprivations suffered by these families, communities, and peoples are violations of article 25 of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, which states, everyone has the right to a standard of living adequate for the health and well-being of himself and his family. I believe that the State Department needs to evaluate how best to report on all of the rights enshrined in the Universal Declaration.

I would also point out that since the Country Reports were initiated, the international community has adopted an international convention on the rights of indigenous peoples, which we should also be incorporating into our Country Reports. The pain and suffering of these people deserves to be recognized and evaluated from a human rights perspective.

When I mention these rights, I do not suggest that they should come at the expense of our traditional reporting on civil and political rights. Nor should they supersede those traditional goals as we formulate our foreign policy. Rather, I think it is important to understand the Universal Declaration as one body of rights, indivisible, with the guarantees of all these rights to every individual and to all peoples.

No one knows this better than you, Mr. Secretary, on how destructive to the protection and to the promotion of human rights was the Cold War tug of war that divided human rights into competing boxes.

I strongly believe that, just as we in Congress strive to prepare our country for the humanitarian and security challenges of the 21st century, we also need 21st century information on new and emerging challenges to human rights, whether that is looking at sophisticated technologies like access to the Internet and social networking or what happens when people are deliberately deprived of access to food or water and their traditional territories are degraded by exploitation and climate change.

In the past, I was told that we cannot report on these types of human rights nexus because we never have in the past, and so we are not going to change. I say that that is not a good enough reason. We need to be looking ahead, and I believe these deficiencies make it even more urgent that we start examining, evaluating, and reporting on these rights as soon as possible. I also believe that, under Secretary Clinton's and your guidance, Congress will receive 21st century human rights information.

Let me conclude by noting that the annual State Department Country Reports have become one of the premier human rights reports in the world. Everyone waits for it to come out, and everyone immediately reads it. One way you could tell this is by how quickly governments around the world read the report, respond to it and, quite frankly, denounce it.

I noticed on Friday that Colombia, Venezuela, and Ecuador all denounced the

report on their respective countries almost simultaneously. Mr. Secretary, I am sorry to inform you, but, according to these governments, you are a hypocrite, a liar, and a master manipulator of misinformation. If only they could get along in other areas as easily as they denounce your report, I think we would have a better situation down there. So I hope that you take such comments from around the globe as a badge of honor and as proof that you are doing your job.

With that, I would like to yield to my friend and colleague on the Commission, the Honorable Donna Edwards from Maryland.

Ms. EDWARDS. Thank you very much.

Secretary Posner -- it feels great to be able to say that. I think if anybody had guessed a couple of years ago where the two of us would have been we wouldn't have said right here at the United States Congress and the State Department. So it is a delight to see you again; and I welcome, as my colleague, Mr. McGovern, has said, the human rights report, because I think these current reports really give us a window into the world about the status of human rights around the world; and they are instructive for us as Members of Congress, for our diplomatic corps, and for how we proceed with relations with other countries, what the demands and requests are. I think for people around the world, you know, we demonstrate to those who suffer human rights abuses that the United States and we here are in observance of that and that we stand with them. I think that that is an important message to convey.

I want to take this opportunity also to welcome here a constituent of mine, Ola Odanola Ojawoomie, who is a sophomore at the University of Maryland. She is also the United Nations Population Fund award winner for Health and Dignity of Women. She is a human rights ambassador and will be traveling on behalf of the United Nations, looking at the human rights of women around the world. So I just appreciate her being able to sit in here as well, because I think it is really important for all of our young people to have a sense of the world and of our place in the world and to understand the importance of identifying and supporting the declaration of human rights and our commitment to it.

So, again, I look forward to hearing your testimony today, Secretary Posner.

Mr. McGOVERN. Thank you, Congresswoman.

Now I would like to yield to Congressman Cao from Louisiana.

Mr. CAO. Thank you very much, Mr. Chairman.

Mr. Secretary, thank you for coming to this hearing this morning.

In the past year, since coming to Congress, I have been very focused on the issues of human rights and religious freedom, especially in Vietnam and China. Before this hearing, I was reading the report that your agency issued on the human rights and labor practices in the country of Vietnam. I just want to quote to you some of the violations that your Bureau has particularly articulated here in this article. This is from your article here:

The most recent national assembly elections held in 2007 were neither free nor fair since all candidates were vetted by the CPC's Vietnam Fatherland Front. Citizens could not change their government, and political opposition movements were prohibited.

During the year, the government increased its suppression of dissent, arresting several political activists and convicting others arrested in 2008. Prison conditions were often austere. Individuals were arbitrarily detained for political activities and were denied the right to fair and expeditious trials.

The government continued to limit citizens' privacy rights and time controls over the press and freedom of speech assembly, movement, and association. The government maintained its prohibition of independent human rights organizations. Violence and discrimination against women as well as trafficking in persons continue to be significant problems. Some ethnic minority groups suffer societal discrimination.

Here your article goes on and on and on, outlining the various violations on human rights and religious freedom in Vietnam.

Let me just give you another example with respect to the outrageous actions of the Vietnamese Government.

I was there on a codel back in January. Two days after I left, they sent close to 1,000 troops down to Dong Chim; and they started to beat up priests, parishioners, and nuns because of their protests with respect to some land disputes. These violations and these issues we have repeatedly pointed out to the administration and to the State Department, and we have asked them to speak out against the violations in Vietnam and in other areas.

I am happy that Deputy Secretary Kurt Campbell issued very strong statements challenging Vietnam on its human rights and religious freedom records, and I hope that we can do even more than simply just provide lip service. I believe that with governments like Vietnam and governments like China we have to be proactive in trying to promote human rights and religious freedom.

I hope that you can continue to work with the Tom Lantos Human Rights Commission to make sure that issues of human rights and religious freedom are fostered and encouraged worldwide. I hope that we, as an administration, as a government, will provide more than simply lip service. I hope that we will take the means and take whatever actions that we need to take in order to substantiate what we speak.

So thank you very much for being here.

Mr. McGOVERN. Thank you very much.

Let me just say, for the record, that the reason for the Tom Lantos Human Rights Commission is because the Speaker thought it was important that we have a commission that focuses on the important issue of human rights and that, if this country stands for anything, it needs to stand out loud and four-square for human rights and that we need to find ways to inject the issue of human rights, where appropriate, in all of our debates, whether it is on economic policy, military policy, or whatever. So we gather here frequently to talk to people about terrible situations that are going on all around the world; and we do so to raise awareness and to, hopefully, promote action so that people's human rights are expected.

So, with that, I would just say we are honored to have you here, and we look forward to your testimony.

#### **STATEMENT OF ASSISTANT SECRETARY MICHAEL POSNER, BUREAU OF DEMOCRACY, HUMAN RIGHTS AND LABOR (DRL)**

Mr. POSNER. Thank you, Chairman McGovern and members of the Commission. I very much appreciate your having this hearing, and I appreciate your personal commitment to these issues.

What I would like to do is just say a few words about the reports and the structure,



as well as the principles that guide us in producing them, and then a couple words about the trends, and then I am eager to take your questions.

The human rights reports, now in their 34th year, are a massive undertaking. More than 1,000 people work to produce them. They cover 194 countries. The reports, if you put them all together, would be over 7,000 pages. It is a major undertaking. It is the most comprehensive view of human rights done by any entity in the world.

It is animated by three broad principles, which I think reflect the Obama administration and Secretary Clinton's approach to human rights:

One which the President keeps talking about and we keep talking about is a sense of engagement but a principled engagement. We are involved in the world. We are dealing with governments. We are dealing with the United Nations in a different way. We have joined the Human Rights Council over some objections domestically but with a sense that it is better to be in and engaged than to stand on the sidelines. Engagement doesn't mean that we accept the world as it is. Part of the purpose of doing these reports, as you mentioned, Chairman McGovern, is to give us a realistic assessment of the world that we face so that we can make intelligent policy decisions.

The second thing that is critical to us -- and I think it is a challenge always but, in doing these reports, it is a particular challenge -- is that we apply a single universal standard to every country, including ourselves. We are determined this year -- and Secretary Clinton said this last week when we released the report -- to do an excellent job in preparing a report to the U.N. under the Universal Periodic Review about the United States.

We have held and are holding a series of informal hearings for non-governmental rights activists. We have held one in Louisiana, looking at some of the issues in New Orleans around Katrina. We held one last week in El Paso. We held one in New York and another here in Washington. There are several more to come, but we really do believe that every country ought to be held to the same standard, and it is important that we lead by example.

The third thing that animates all that we do is a sense of fidelity to the truth. Nothing challenges us probably more in government than producing a 7,000-page report on human rights. To get the facts right and to be honest in our assessment of countries, including allies, is a challenge but one that we undertake with a great deal of commitment. The report doesn't make policy. It simply is a foundation on which we base policy. In this report, we are trying to simply report honesty and accurately on what is happening in the world.

I have three trends, and then I am going to stop.

There is a sense in the world that, in many parts of world conflicts, internal conflicts and wars are fueling human rights abuses. We cite over 30 examples in the report where ethnic, racial, or religious tensions have exacerbated or created conflict. We know that in most, if not all, of those situations vulnerable groups -- women, children -- are on the receiving end. They bear a disproportionate share of the suffering, and we need to be aware of that, and we need to address those underlying conflicts as a way of reducing and addressing human rights abuses.

We also see a greater both opportunity and challenge -- and, Congressman McGovern, you mentioned it -- relating to the new media and the use of the Internet and new communications technologies. Human rights activists around the world and others

are using these new technologies, and because they are and because they are becoming more effective, governments are cracking down.

The Chinese, certainly, are a prime example of that, a huge amount of time and energy spent trying to control access to information and trying to shut down people's abilities to communicate internally and with the world. That is even part of a broader concern we have. In more than 25 countries in the last several years, governments have passed new laws designed to impede civil society, to crack down on NGO activism, to restrict the ability of organizations to associate or to function and/or to receive foreign funding. So there is a trend we see and one we really feel we will need to address more aggressively.

Finally, the balance between national security and human rights is a challenge to all of us, including in this country. We have faced a range of difficult choices in our own society, but in places like Egypt or Russia or Sri Lanka, we see governments using and misusing the language of national security and emergency as a way of undermining human rights and of denying people their right to speak freely.

There are some positive trends, finally, in places like Liberia, where there was a Truth and Reconciliation Commission that completed an exhaustive look at the past violence there, a model. I think President Ellen Johnson certainly is a kind of model leader. There are some other examples, places like Georgia where there are some reforms in criminal procedure; the Ukraine, which has done some interesting work on anticorruption; the transition to a constitutional parliamentary monarch in Bhutan.

There are also lots of troubling developments in places like China, where the record remains poor and worsened in some areas. We can get into that in the questioning, but it is a place I want to highlight. In Iran, we are already in a poor human rights situation, which rapidly deteriorated after the elections last June. Cuba, where political prisoner Orlando Zapata Tamayo died of a hunger strike. Others have now gone on hunger strikes and, more recently, the violence in Nigeria, which has resulted in more than 300 killings. So lots to talk about.

Again, I cannot say how much I appreciate the commitment of this Commission to keeping these issues alive and public, and I very much look forward to working with you in the months and years ahead.

Mr. McGOVERN. Thank you very much.

Before I go to questions, I want to yield to my colleague, Janice Schakowsky, for an opening statement.

Ms. SCHAKOWSKY. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Thank you, Secretary Posner, for your testimony as well and for your very distinguished career. I appreciate your being here today.

There are a couple of points I want to make.

Last week, I had the honor and pleasure of having breakfast with Secretary Clinton, talking about international women's rights, about violence against women, about how rape has become an effective, low-cost, and low-tech weapon of war, how those women then become outcasts, victims suffering from fistula around the world. In general, just the status of women being as low as it is in so many ways means that societies are poorer in so many respects.

But all the data is in that the investment in women really pays off in terms of national security, health care, education, fewer children -- in every way. Yet we don't

really see that even laws result in changing cultures, so the importance of the status of women, when we consider human rights and those ratings, I think is very, very important and the higher that can be on the agenda the better.

I also wanted to raise the more specific issue of Honduras. I traveled there last November to meet with human rights defenders and victims of abuses, and I am extremely concerned to hear that human rights violations continue under the new regime. I recently sent a letter to Secretary Clinton, which was signed by Chairman McGovern and by several other Members, asking her to look into allegations of serious human rights abuses in Honduras since the government of Pepe Lobo took control. These alleged, ongoing abuses have been documented by both domestic human rights groups in Honduras and by major international organizations, such as the Human Rights Watch.

So I would appreciate, when you can, to discuss the current human rights situation in Honduras and whether the Secretary has raised this issue with the government of Pepe Lobo.

Again, just to end, I am extremely interested to know how your office works with the Office of the Ambassador at Large for Global Women's Issues, Melanne Vermeer, to prevent, respond to, and punish serious abuses against women.

So those are the issues I want to highlight. Thank you very much.

Mr. McGOVERN. Thank you.

Mr. Secretary, there is so much to talk about, so we are going to miss a lot of countries.

In my opening statement, I talked about my visit to Ecuador. I went out and visited the area of the country where Texaco, now Chevron, used to operate. Now Petroecuador operates out there. They left this place a mess. It is an area about the size of Rhode Island. It is contaminated from oil pits that were created with no lining and that seep into the precious rivers that lead into the Amazon. Everywhere you go, you smell oil. The children are drinking water out of a well that reeks of oil. They are swimming in rivers where you can see the rainbow color that oil sometimes makes when you mix it with water. There are animals drinking water that is contaminated. With the people that we met, almost everyone had a rash. The incidences of cancer are high in that area.

It seems to me, as I mentioned before, for the indigenous people who used to live in these areas and who lived off the land, there are no more fish to fish. Plant life is being destroyed. So some of these indigenous communities have moved deeper into the jungle into other places, and some of them have just disappeared entirely. Entire communities have been ruined because of this.

I understand there is a lawsuit going on. We don't want to get involved with any lawsuit, but the reality is that the lawsuit will never end. While that goes on, the people of this area continue to suffer.

I would just plead with you that environmental degradation is a human rights violation. People living under these conditions is not right, and a U.S. company is responsible for this. I think that we need to find ways not only to highlight the fact that this is serious -- and this is not the only environmental catastrophe around the world, and there are others which, I think, also need to be highlighted, but I think we need to be more aggressive in terms of trying to provide some answers and some solutions, whether it is technical help or whether it is trying to bring parties to the table to try to resolve things.

You know, when I went down, I was ashamed. That is how bad it was. I was also kind of stunned that, in our Country Reports, we don't even talk about it. Yet it is severe not only there but in other parts of the world.

So I would hope, in the future, that you will incorporate this issue of the environment and the challenges that indigenous communities face. Because I think, if you look at the Universal Declaration, they should fit in your reports.

I would be interested in any comments you have.

Mr. POSNER. Thank you.

I confess that the issue you are raising in particular about Ecuador but, more broadly, has not been one that we have given a great deal of focus to, as you say. We do have in our Bureau -- and I am spending quite a bit of time on a broader look at corporate social responsibility. In fact, I am leaving this afternoon for a meeting in London of something called the Voluntary Principles, which is an initiative that was started in the Clinton administration, with the British Government, to look at security arrangements in the extractive industry. So I will be dealing with some of the companies that are involved here but in a different context.

I think it is a fair question for us, and it is going to be part of what we do in the next year to review the reporting. There are five or six reports done on related human rights issues, and we are trying to get a handle on that and to do it in a more both efficient but more effective way. So there are a range of recommendations that are coming to this, and I will add this to the list as something we look at, particularly in the context of looking at indigenous issues in Ecuador and elsewhere.

Mr. McGOVERN. Right.

In places like Ecuador, where this contamination exists, I think it would be appropriate to also urge members of our Embassy to go out and to see firsthand, you know, what the deal is; and I am not sure, as of this date, that that has happened. So I will just throw it out there.

I read the report on China. We continue to be concerned about China, not only for their cracking down on Internet use and for all of the terrible human rights abuses that continue to go on in China but also because of some of the things they support in other parts of the world, including their military assistance to Sudan, which continues to be of great concern to me.

In terms of China in general -- I think it was a year ago, it was during the Olympics in China -- we had gotten a number of reports of people who had been apprehended and who had disappeared and who had been put under house arrest, and we had gotten reports of entire neighborhoods being razed so they could build, you know, things that would be nice for tourists to look at during the Olympics.

One of the things that shocked me was that I was told that we only have one human rights officer in China. I mean, you know, we wrote to Secretary Clinton with a suggestion -- and I hope that you will bring this issue some light. If we are serious about human rights in China, we need more than one person working on human rights in China. That is a big place, and there is a lot going on. You know, for the life of me, I mean, I was stunned. I thought we had a whole office on human rights in China, but I was told we had one person.

So this is, I guess, maybe less of a question and more of a request: You know, can we double it?

There is so much happening, you know, and it is not just within the borders of China but outside, and I think one person can't do it all, and one person shouldn't be expected to do it all. But to the extent we could beef up our office there, if you could recommend that, I think that would be a sign that we are more serious about human rights in China than, I think, some people think that we are.

Mr. POSNER. I will certainly take your request back and reflect on it with people in the State Department.

I will say, on a certainly weekly and almost on a daily basis, we are in touch in our Bureau with the Embassy in Beijing on a whole range of issues, and it is a long list. There are a number of very, very serious concerns I have about prisoners, about Singen, about the growing violence and unrest there last summer, about the government's reaction to that, about Tibetan issues, about religious freedom issues. It is a very long list, and it is a big, complicated relationship, but I am determined to make sure that the human rights issues are front and center in our discussions with them.

Mr. McGOVERN. I appreciate that.

Again, I think you need some more people there to focus on this. You know, by increasing the number of people in human rights, I think that sends a signal to China, too, that we are not kind of putting human rights as a secondary matter. I have no doubt that Secretary Clinton is absolutely committed to human rights improvements in China, but the initial kind of outreaches to China put less emphasis on human rights and more emphasis on trade and on energy deals and on all kinds of other stuff which, I think, cause some concern here that somehow we weren't going to be out front. If we could increase the number of people in our human rights office, I think that would help counter that impression. So I would appreciate it if you could take that recommendation back.

Let me just ask one other thing, and then I will yield to my colleagues here, on the issue of Sudan, which I continue to be very concerned about, and I think everybody up here does as well. You know, the people of that country have suffered terribly. I visited a number of the refugee camps in Chad where some of the refugees from Darfur were, and even that is a terrible existence, and these people are constantly in danger. I wanted to go into Darfur, but the Sudanese Government wouldn't give me a visa, but I did get a pretty good understanding of what was happening.

Your chapter on Sudan accurately describes the severe human rights conditions and ongoing suffering there. Can you give us an update on the most recent human rights developments? The AFP reported that President Obama's special envoy to Sudan, General Scott Gration, has announced in Doha that the U.S. supports holding Sudan's national elections as scheduled for the coming April. I guess, in your view, does the human rights situation support such a view?

Mr. POSNER. I share your continuing concern about the overall human rights situation in Sudan and, in particular, the continued suffering of millions of people literally in Darfur. I think we need to be putting greater attention, frankly, on both the humanitarian and human rights consequences of the violence there.

There is also a crisis in terms of north-south relations, and I think General Gration has been focused greatly on trying to create an environment where those issues can be dealt with through elections and through a political process. I think the jury is still out as to whether or not that is going to work, but, you know, we will certainly be watching those elections closely and will be seeing if that leads to a political resolution of the

north-south question.

I think we cannot take our eye off the balance in terms of what is happening in Darfur. The suffering is on a daily basis. Again, women and children are disproportionately affected, both in those refugee camps and those who are internally displaced, and there are huge numbers. So I think we have got to be very resolute in saying this is part of when we care about.

You mentioned arms sales. You know, there is still a massive amount of arms and small arms coming into Sudan, which are fueling the conflict. We need to be much more aggressive.

Mr. McGOVERN. I appreciate that.

When General Graton was up here, one of the concerns that I raised -- because he has this carrot-and-stick approach when we are trying to engage, you know, much more than we have in the past. The leader of Sudan, President Bashir, is under indictment by the international criminal court. I would hope that one of the principles that we will conduct ourselves is that, one, I mean, we should not be dealing with him, and there should be no deals, that he somehow gets let off and is not held accountable for what he is responsible for. He is overseeing, you know, the massacres and the killings and the brutality that has gone on there for so long. General Graton assured me that that wouldn't be the case. Nonetheless, I am worried.

I think people who commit terrible crimes against humanity ought to be held accountable; and if there are any deals or something like that that gets them off the hook, I think it is a terrible example to set. The people who have suffered the most deserve for us to hold the people who are responsible to account. So I will just leave you with that. You know, there are some bad players there who should be in jail, and we should not dignify them by entering into a serious negotiation with them.

Mr. POSNER. As you know, Congressman, during the previous administration, there were efforts by some in the U.N. at the Security Council to push that indictment to the side.

Mr. McGOVERN. Right.

Mr. POSNER. Much to the credit of the Bush administration, they resisted that. We need to continue to resist those efforts and to make sure that the prosecutor in the internal criminal court can do his job and that Mr. Bashir is brought to justice.

Mr. McGOVERN. I appreciate that.

Mr. Cao.

Mr. CAO. Thank you very much, Mr. Chairman.

Your example about China concretely shows our lack of emphasis on human rights in the last several years, and I just want to ask the Secretary, what plans do we have as a government to, I guess, more substantiate some of the speeches that we have been giving -- the speech that Deputy Secretary Kurt Campbell gave in regards to human rights and religious freedom violations in Vietnam, your concerns about Ecuador, concerns about China, the Sudan? What concrete programs do we have to show that we are serious about human rights and democracy in the world? What steps are we taking to promote human rights and democracy in the world?

Mr. POSNER. It is a good question, and it is the primary thing that I try to do every day in my job.

I think there are three different aspects that we need to do in every country:

One is to have a strong diplomatic presence and a strong sense of what our policy agenda is. If you take the case of Vietnam, we had in November, I think, a day-long dialogue, which I led with the Vietnamese Government, on human rights. We set out a range of concerns, very much the list of things that you outlined in your opening statement; and we are trying -- you know, I don't believe that you have dialogues for the sake of dialogue. So we have taken several of the issues there -- the religious freedom issue, the issue of Internet freedom. As you know, the Vietnamese Government basically shut down some of the social networking sites in the fall, and we have really tried to push those on a private diplomatic basis with mixed results.

Father Li, as you know, one of the long-time political prisoners, was paroled this week but on humanitarian grounds because his health is so poor. I don't regard that as a victory, but it is certainly something we have pushed very hard for in the private space.

The second thing is that I think we need to be stronger and are trying to be stronger on the public diplomacy side. So the speech by Kurt Campbell that you mentioned is an example of that. We ought to be privately having conversations. We need to be publicly saying things.

I went out of my way in introducing the human rights reports last week by mentioning two cases of Chinese activists:

Liu Xiaobo, who was convicted last December based on a pamphlet that he wrote, Charter 08, was sentenced to 11 years in jail basically for speaking out for human rights and democracy.

I also mentioned one of the lawyers, Gao Zhisheng, who was picked up by the Chinese security forces and who is in detention somewhere. His family doesn't even know where to find him.

The fact that lawyers who were bringing human rights environmental cases are now fearing for their safety is something of great concern. We need to say that publicly, and we need to say it privately.

Finally, the third piece of what we do is to provide support to local activists, human rights activists, journalists, bloggers, people who within their own society are trying to promote change. I think it is very hard from the outside to force change, but there are agents of change in every society who are trying to improve the human rights situation. Our job is to really help support them with money, with a lifeline when they get in trouble, but, really, it is to try to amplify their voices and to give them a chance to be more effective in what they do.

Mr. CAO. I have a couple of concrete questions to ask you.

There was a list of 300 Montagnard prisoners that was submitted to the State Department. Has the State Department tried to contact them or their family members?

Mr. POSNER. I want to take that question back to you. I don't know the details of that, but I can get back in touch with you about that.

Mr. CAO. I know that in the past year I have pushed very hard for the U.S. Government to get the Vietnamese Government to pay on the \$3.2 million judgment that was issued by the high courts of the American Samoa, holding the Vietnamese Government responsible for the human trafficking problem at the Daewoosa company. What steps have we taken in order to get the Vietnamese Government to pay on this \$3.2 million judgment?

Mr. POSNER. Again, I can get back to you on the details, but I am not familiar

with that.

Mr. CAO. Okay.

We have been pushing for the State Department to put Vietnam back on the CPC list. My last question is, what is the probability of the State Department's doing so?

Mr. POSNER. As you know, Congressman, we published the report on international religious freedom last fall, and we are now in the process of reviewing all of the countries for decisions about the list of countries of particular concern. We are looking very closely at the situation in Vietnam, and a decision will be made in the next month.

Mr. CAO. Thank you very much.

Mr. McGOVERN. Thank you.

I would like to yield to Congresswoman Donna Edwards from Maryland.

Ms. EDWARDS. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

I just have a couple of questions, at least to begin with.

I want to ask you more broadly in terms of the use of the Country Reports, because one of my concerns is that we have the reports that come out, and it is unclear to me how those Country Reports really inform public policy. I will just use one example.

When we get, you know, Country Reports about the status of women, particularly around violence issues, the use of rape and sexual violence against women in the context of war, how does that then inform and direct our public policy and our strategy for intervention and for laying out a different dynamic?

Mr. POSNER. I would answer that in a couple of ways.

One, I think all of us probably underestimate the extent to which the reporting process itself sensitizes and informs diplomats. I think the Country Reports over the years have probably done more to educate the Foreign Service than any other activity of government. The fact that more than 1,000 people are involved in the preparation of the report, the fact that there is an emphasis on violence against women, for example, or, you know, attacks on young girls is something that now is put in an instruction. It is put out to every embassy. Every embassy has a political officer, a human rights officer, whose job it is to go figure out what is that situation in the country they are serving.

I think, over time -- I have met so many diplomats, senior diplomats, who reflect back on their early years in the Department where the Country Reports sort of opened their eyes to the fact that things were going on that, heretofore, the State Department never paid attention to. So that is the first piece.

The second piece is that, also, I think the Country Reports have created an internal pressure within our government to take these issues seriously. When you have a report -- you know, take the situation of the eastern Congo. When you have the level of reporting that we now get on the use of rape as a weapon in war and on the mistreatment of women in the refugee camps and in other places, the facts take on a life of their own, and they begin to drive policy. I have been in meetings with Secretary Clinton particularly when she came back from the eastern Congo where it so much animated her thinking and informed her thinking that she then comes back and says let's figure out what we do about it.

One of the things we are doing on that issue is to be a leader at the Security Council in promoting an action plan under resolution 1820, which deals exactly with



these issues. So the facts drive policymakers to look for opportunities to raise the issues both at a national level and internationally.

Finally, last but not least -- and I regard this as a kind of undervalued piece of this -- the reports are now translated in multiple languages. They are available on the Web. They are available in multiple forms, and we are pushing it out more aggressively than ever. What that means is that, within countries, people are often for the first time getting details of what is happening in their own societies. That is further creating pressure and empowering people to take these issues up more aggressively.

The fact that the United States Government, in this kind of detail, reports on what is happening is a really strong, empowering device, and people are taking advantage of that, as they should.

Ms. EDWARDS. Well, let me just follow up on that. Thank you, Mr. Secretary.

I want to ask you about the Philippines and, more broadly, about journalists and, you know, what we have seen particularly over this last year or so where there just seems to be increasing violence that is taking place against journalists, both in country and journalists who travel in difficult zones. I want to focus specifically on the Philippines.

Your introductory section on freedom of expression actually failed to note the single largest massacre of journalists in recent history, in recent memory, in Maguindanao in the southern Philippines. The country chapter, the episode, doesn't address the government's failure to arrest those implicated in the massacre, probably a significant number of whom were police, military, and paramilitary personnel implicated in the massacre at large.

So why is it that what seems to me to be a rather significant detail is missing? I wonder if you can discuss the situation of extrajudicial killings in the Philippines, particularly of opposition and of labor rights leaders.

Mr. POSNER. On the first question, you know, I want to go back and look at the report. There is in each section an introduction that is several paragraphs, and I can't say -- you know, the decisions about what gets into the introduction are made by the people writing the report. There isn't a consistent form that necessarily every violation gets into every introduction.

I think we certainly talked about the targeting of journalists in the Philippines. I have read the materials of the committees to protect journalists and others about that, and it is an area of great concern.

On the extrajudicial killings, you know, we are very aware of the political violence and extrajudicial killings that are going on in the Philippines. There is a growing concern, as you pointed out in your question, about the lack of accountability or prosecution for violations that are occurring in various parts of the country. We do report on that, and we certainly raise that on a regular basis with the Government of the Philippines. This is one of the places where we are, you know, struck by the --

I was in the Philippines 25 years ago, and I saw many of the same patterns. We are still in a place, unfortunately, where there is too much political violence and not enough accountability. So we are going to keep pushing it.

Ms. EDWARDS. I am just asking this because it just came to mind. Do our strategic or other relationships with these nations play into the formulation of the Country Reports?

Mr. POSNER. Well, our goal is to put those strategic relationships to one side.

The purpose of these reports is to get the facts straight. As Congressman McGovern said, there are literally, probably, dozens of countries that have reacted negatively to the report, including some of our very close allies. That, to me, is a reflection of the fact that we are simply here, documenting the facts. Here is what is happening in the world.

We then have a more complicated set of discussions about what do we do with these facts and about how do we balance or inject human rights into relationships where there is strategic or military or economic interests at stake. That is the China example at large, but there are many places where we face it. In most places, in fact, we have more things going on, and we are trying to balance those relationships.

What makes these reports important is that it gives us a basis. This is the foundation on which we build a human rights policy. Whatever else is going on with the Philippines, with the Congo, with Sudan or with China, this report straightly says these are the problems we confront, and then it is up to me and others to try to push to make sure these issues are given the attention they deserve, and that is an ongoing and challenging process.

Ms. EDWARDS. Let me just go then to Turkey. Because, on this Commission, we have heard testimony about human rights violations and about the context of human rights in Turkey, which, frankly, raises increasing concerns, I think. There have been a number of news reports -- it seems like a deluge of them in the last couple of days and weeks -- about the situation in Turkey. So I wonder if you would comment about that.

Mr. POSNER. Sure.

I mean, you know, the report talks about continuing concerns about abuses by the security forces, the hindrance of fair trials, the constraints on freedom of expression, including the blocking of Internet sites, restrictions on religious minorities. We don't hold back. It is, again, our effort to have a straightforward report on what is going on.

We have a set of important relationships with the Turkish Government, and part of the challenge I face and we face as a government is how do we address the issues raised in this report, the long list of things, in a country where there are competing interests. Turkey is a classic example or Colombia or Egypt. There are many people with whom we have important other interests at stake.

Yet there are serious human rights issues. The goal here is to lay out the human rights issues and then, in a smart way, find a way to have strategic, economic, military discussions but not let the human rights issues be marginalized.

Mr. McGOVERN. Will you just yield to me for one second?

Ms. EDWARDS. I will.

Mr. McGOVERN. I have to go to a Rules Committee meeting, but I want to raise one other issue, and that is, you know, over the past years one of my concerns has been that we have politicized human rights, that there are some countries that violate human rights that we spend more time condemning, and there are others that commit human rights just as bad that we kind of gloss over. I am not saying that is in the report, but I am saying it just as a matter of policy.

On the issue of Cuba, the Cuban Government, I think, has a lousy record on human rights, and the death of Orlando Zapata, the dissident who went on a hunger strike, I think is unconscionable, and I think we all condemn that. Yet, you know -- and I mentioned this to you earlier -- one of the things that has always puzzled me is that we have politicized the issue of human rights so much in Cuba that we have put Cuba on the

terrorist list when, in fact, I can't get anybody to show me any evidence that Cuba is supporting terrorism around the world. That is not to justify or to gloss over the human rights situation, which is bad, but I think that a political decision was made that put Cuba on the terrorist list. Because of the politics that is involved in that, I think it diminishes the power of the terrorist list. If Cuba is supporting terror around the world, I would like to know, but I can't get any indication that they are.

So I mean -- and most of the dissidents that I have met with have argued very much against our policy of kind of isolation. I mean, they always say that the more of you who come down here the harder it is for the government to be oppressive.

So I think we need to make a concerted effort to take the politics out of all of this, and it is not so much of what is in the report. It is about how the report is used. You know, I think we need to be mature enough to say, you know, no, they don't qualify for this list, but maybe they qualify for that list but based on the evidence, based on what is real.

One of my hopes is that, you know, this administration will do that. I have great respect for you, and I know that is where you come from, but some of these things have still -- I sometimes feel that we are still operating with a Cold War mentality, and I don't think that is helpful. To the extent that our policies reflect, you know, actions based on the facts, I think the more that our human rights reports are going to be respected around the world.

Anyway, that was just occurring to me when you were talking, so I wanted to add that for what it is worth.

Mr. POSNER. I would just say that, you know, I am going to go back and try to get a better sense of how we put together the terrorism list. I am not involved in that.

What I would say on the human rights front is the thing that I am most focused on is the political prisoners, the fact that there are still something like 200 political prisoners. I was particularly focused on the 75 or so people who they arrested in, I guess, 2004 or 2005. Fifty-two of those people are still in detention; and that, to me, is where our energies and focuses ought to be on.

Mr. McGOVERN. Again, I don't think there is anybody up here who is not absolutely horrified by the number of political prisoners who are being held there.

Mr. POSNER. Right.

Mr. McGOVERN. This is one issue, but that is not exploiting terrorism.

The other thing is, can we have a discussion here where we think about maybe there are other ways to get these political prisoners released? I mean, maybe engagement is a better way to help these people, and a lot of them tell us that, than what we are doing right now.

So, in any event, I thank you for coming. I will yield back to Donna Edwards here. I have to go to a meeting, but thank you.

Ms. EDWARDS. [Presiding.] Thank you, Mr. Chairman. That is exactly, you know, the direction I was thinking, both with respect to Cuba but overall with the report.

I want to ask you one last question because I know my colleague has arrived and has questions.

In the chapter on Israel and the occupied territories, you give a pretty accurate overview of the human rights situation. Of course, as you know, the Goldstone Report has garnered a lot of international attention and attention here in the Congress as well.

Secretary Clinton denounced that report in general. Do you think it could be useful to the Israeli courts currently investigating these matters? Can you give us an update on the current status of the proceedings?

Then, also, if you could explore with us how you have been able to look at the human rights situation, particularly in Gaza. I know I have had a chance to travel there, and it would be useful to know the context of human rights, especially given where we are right now on the peace negotiations and on restarting peace talks.

Mr. POSNER. I have been quite closely involved in the review of the Goldstone Report since it came out last September. I was at the Human Rights Council, and we were critical of the report on several bases, which I will outline, but we also said, and I believe very strongly, that the Government of Israel and the Palestinians have an obligation to review the allegations in the Goldstone Report and to establish credible accountability mechanisms. I said it in September. We have said it ever since then.

We had concerns about the context in which the report was prepared. The Human Rights Council has only one country that has a permanent agenda item. That is Israel. It had five different resolutions in March looking at Israel. There is disproportionate attention, and that causes, obviously, concern.

We also had concern that the Goldstone Report didn't reflect the views of the Israeli Government. I have a lot of respect for Judge Goldstone. I have known him a long time. He had to get permission. He was not granted that permission, so the report suffers from that.

Then, to me, the biggest challenge of the report or the biggest shortcoming is that it doesn't deal with the asymmetrical nature of the conflict, the fact that it is an urban war. It is a 575-page report. There are maybe a dozen pages focused on that.

I went to Israel in January to talk to Israeli officials, human rights groups, the Red Cross, to everybody. My view is that there is the beginning of a serious response. General Mandelblood has put a lot of time looking at the 36 Goldstone cases. Most of those cases are still either being reviewed by his office or have been referred for some criminal prosecution. There were two cases referred for criminal indictment this week, but it is very much a work in progress, and we have continued to have discussions with the Israelis.

I think the real challenge and the thing that we ought to be focused on is the broader policy questions. How do you maximize the protection of civilians in an urban conflict and make sure that humanitarian practices and choices of weapons, a whole range of things, are as protective of civilians and have precaution against abuse against civilians as possible?

This is not an issue that is limited to Israel. We face it in Afghanistan and have in Iraq. The British face it. The Australians face it. I think there ought to be an honest discussion going forward. What does it mean to be fighting these urban wars? This is the future, unfortunately, that many armies, sophisticated armies, find themselves in.

So I continue to be involved in this. I think we are in the middle of a process. I think it is very important that we stay engaged. We had good discussions with the Israeli defense force. I think they are trying to look at some of these things, but there is some more work to be done.

Ms. EDWARDS. That is right. Thank you, Mr. Secretary.

You had an opportunity, though, to speak with Justice Goldstone. I think that he

pointed out some of the same failings of the report and, you know, felt that he was able to proceed, even given those flaws, but I think some of the things that you have acknowledged he has acknowledged as well.

Mr. POSNER. He has, indeed, and I have great respect for him.

Ms. EDWARDS. Thank you. Ms. Schakowsky.

Ms. SCHAKOWSKY. Thank you.

I wanted to go back to the issues that I had raised, and I wondered if your office has looked into recent allegations of human rights violations in Honduras and if human rights will be part of the decision to further normalize relations with Honduras and part of decisions to further reinstate aid.

Mr. POSNER. We have, indeed, been looking at these issues and in recent weeks particularly. So, after the coup d'etat in June, there were a range of violations -- killings, arbitrary detentions. There continue to be problems with poor prison conditions. But we also in the last several months have seen some political violence -- the killing of a gay rights activist. Walter Trochez was killed in December. A woman named Claudia Larissa Brizuela was killed at her home. Her father was an activist opposing the government. Ambassador Lorens met with President Lobo on March 4 to raise these concerns, and we continue to pay very close attention to what is happening in these weeks, not just going back to the post-coup violence but really looking at what is happening on a contemporary basis. We have concerns. The concerns are being expressed at a high level. We are going to continue to pay attention.

Ms. SCHAKOWSKY. I hope those concerns then will be factors in the decision whether or not to normalize relations with Honduras and the reinstatement of aid. Because, you know, if we raise concerns but we proceed ahead, then I think we take the teeth out of our commitment to human rights.

I wanted to also talk a bit about Congo. Did that come up?

Ms. EDWARDS. It did.

Ms. SCHAKOWSKY. Okay.

In light of the U.N. Security Council resolution which condemns the use of rape and sexual violence as a weapon in armed conflict and the increased violence cases in the DRC, approximately 7,500 in 2009, double compared to the same period in 2008, including a case of a 2-year-old victim who was raped by the army forces of the Congo. What actions have we taken with respect to the DRC?

Mr. POSNER. As you know, Congresswoman, Secretary Clinton visited eastern Congo. She went to Goma, and she saw up close the level of violence. It affected her greatly. She and we have been trying, both through the U.N. Security Council, through their resolution 1820, to beef up the action plan of the U.N. for dealing with these issues broadly, but we are also trying to figure out ways in which we can create greater accountability and greater disincentives to people who engage in the violence. The violence is longstanding. It has been out of control for a very long time.

You know, we are talking about millions of people who have died in the Congo in the last 15 years. There is probably no place on Earth that has had this kind of violence; and to pretend that we have one answer, I can't do that for you. There are multiple parties fighting, both from in the country and outside. There are multiple governments involved.

One of the things we are looking at now that I feel quite strongly needs to be part

of our toolbox is to look at the effect of the minerals in the ground and how, you know, coltan and other things that people find in the Congo are fueling the conflict. Under Secretary Bob Hormats, the Economic Under Secretary, and we have been working with Maria Otero, who is the Global Under Secretary, to try to develop a plan for really enlisting and pushing American companies and European companies to be more mindful of the effects of their mining operations and how that is a factor. It is not the only factor but a factor in fueling the conflict.

The Congo has been Africa's war. There are eight countries that have had troops there, and they are not fighting over people or politics. They are fighting over resources. They may be doing both, but the resources are a huge part of it. So I think that is one aspect we need to increase.

But, you know, all of us despair. It is a tragic situation. It has been for a long time, and the Secretary has made it clear that she regards it as a priority. Finding the quick answer is not there, but we have got to really push to ensure greater accountability.

Ms. SCHAKOWSKY. I want to convey to you and to the Secretary that we could not have a more ardent advocate for women's rights around the world than Secretary Clinton, and it really is comforting to hear her speak with such clarity and force about these issues. It is a tremendous challenge. I mean, she said in Beijing years ago that women's rights are human rights and, you know, it is something that we -- I know that she is continuing to work on.

My understanding is that there is going to be more scrutiny of ourselves as we go forward. I wonder, will that include looking at the criminal justice system? The United States of America incarcerates 25 percent of all of the world's prisoners -- the land of the free -- more than China, more than any other country in the world. Our sentences are often longer. Once again, women are incarcerated for nonviolent crimes more often than their male counterparts. Women, by the way, are still shackled during labor. Women prisoners are shackled during labor. That is the law of the land. And I know the Women Judges Association has tried to work with the Bureau of Prisons to change that, but -- and of course we have the death penalty. So is our criminal justice system going to be part of this examination?

Mr. POSNER. Yes. This year, as part of the U.N.'s -- what is called the Universal Periodic Review, which every country is now subject to -- the United States will submit a report in September and have it reviewed by other countries later in the fall.

In preparation for that report, we in my Bureau and the Civil Rights Division of the Justice Department are coordinating a series of public meetings, public hearings, where we are bringing in experts on the criminal justice system, on immigration, on a whole range of issues. We had one in Washington about a month ago, convened by Wade Henderson on the Leadership Conference on Civil Rights. There were people in that meeting who were very focused on criminal justice system.

We had a meeting last week in El Paso focused on immigration. We had another meeting in New Orleans. We are having another meeting in Dearborn to look at some of the Muslim American relations.

So we are going to look at national security issues. We are going to do a soup-to-nuts look at human rights in the United States. We want the report to be a model. We want to do as good a job as anybody; and, as Secretary Clinton keeps saying, we want to lead by example.

It doesn't mean our system is perfect. We have to be honest about it. We have got to put forth here is our own assessment of what our challenges are, hear other countries' comments, and then try to make changes and adjust.

We have out of the White House now an Interagency Group on Human Rights which brings together the Justice Department, the Department of Homeland Security, and the State Department and others to try to figure out also how we implement changes. When we get the recommendations from this report, we are going to come back and say, what are the things we have learned and what can we be doing better?

So we are not just going through the motions here. We are trying to do this a serious way, and the response has been very gratifying. People in the advocacy community are quite forthcoming. They are not shy. And I used to be part of that community and are very engaged in this, and I think that is a good thing.

Ms. SCHAKOWSKY. I hope that this Commission can have input as well into that study.

Mr. POSNER. We would welcome it. As we move along here, if you all are so inclined, I would be glad to come up, maybe with Tom Perez, and talk about what we are doing and what we are learning and what we need do.

Ms. SCHAKOWSKY. Great. I will recommend that to the chairman. I think that would be a good thing. Thank you very much.

Ms. EDWARDS. I just actually have a couple more questions; and then, following on that, I do think some of the issues that you might look to as we examine our own human rights issues are things like access to food, access to water, and the treatment of children in the criminal justice system. I know there are a number of advocacy organizations that have been working for some period of time with the international community to actually ask us for this kind of self-examination and particularly around those areas.

Just before we leave, I do want to ask you about Afghanistan and Pakistan because, you know, the reports really, particularly in those two countries, point to both the increase in the level of conflict and that impact on human rights. So I wonder for both of those countries if you would speak to those issues and particularly in Afghanistan the impact on the status of women with the increased conflict.

Ms. SCHAKOWSKY. Can I add one thing to do, too?

The status of ethnic minorities in Iraq, I have a lot of Iraqi Christians in my district, if you could include that.

Ms. EDWARDS. Thank you.

Mr. POSNER. All three of the countries you mentioned are countries that are in conflict, have been in conflict, are in conflict; and those -- as I said at the outset of my remarks, those are the places where violations are the worst; and they are disproportionately, again, targeted against the most vulnerable populations.

In Afghanistan -- I don't need to give you the litany -- a broken justice system, all kinds of failures in the electoral process, marginalization of advocates, all kinds of restrictions on freedom to participate. But what I am particularly focused on going forward is trying to deal with the dilemma we face in terms of detentions and how, you know, on the one hand the United States is now detaining people in Bagram. We are trying to figure out how to deal with those cases, what the adjudication is of those cases; and one option -- and I think it is the preferred option -- is to hand all of those cases over

to the government of Afghanistan. We want to do that with some confidence that there is a system that can handle those cases, and the reality is it is a broken system now. It is not a system that has the kinds of due process protections that we want to see. So that is an area where there is a lot of work that is being done and needs to be done. It is very hard to do that in the middle of a war. I mean, again, I am giving you the reality of where we are, but it seems to me that is an area that needs great attention.

The treatment of women historically is a huge problem that we have raised, we continue to raise. There are some wonderful advocates, people like Sima Samar who are trying courageously to change the perception of women and women's role in the society; but there is still a pattern of discrimination and targeting of women that is intolerable and that we need to address.

Pakistan is also a very fragile place right now, and my concern over the long term -- there are a range of human rights abuses. Again, I am not going to give you the litany, but there is a civil society there that has existed for a long time. It has some extraordinary people, and I think it is critical that we also, not in addition to our own military and security concerns, that we be mindful of the things we need to do in the here and now to sustain and to amplify the voices of those advocates within Pakistan who, over the long term, are going to be the people who are going to make the difference, and that is a challenge.

But there are people again like Hina Jilani and Asma Jahangir with the Human Rights Commission who have been at it for a long time. We need to be figuring out ways to give them both the space and the protection but also to amplify their voices.

The situation of Iraqi Christians in particular has been a challenge for a long time. There is a huge number of Iraqi Christians who have fled the country. Many have gone to Syria. I think one of the things we are going to be looking at very closely is whether and, if so, under what conditions they can come back and reintegrate into the society. Not at all clear at this point.

We just had an election. The election results are still being tabulated, and we are obviously trying to figure out what are the next steps in Iraq to create a multi -- you know, an ethnic, multicultural, multi-religious society of tolerance. That is the challenge, and the Christian community is one of many that ought to be part of that mix, but the track record in the last several years is that they have had a hard time.

Ms. EDWARDS. Well, thank you, Mr. Secretary. This has been very enlightening.

I would say, just on Afghanistan, if you would, looking into the situation of women judges in Afghanistan would be very useful. My understanding -- and I have had a long relationship with women judges in Afghanistan. You know, their organization is part -- their chapter is part of the International Association of Women Judges, was decertified. That was a way that they had to communicate both amongst themselves and with the international community, and that is very troubling, as well as the sort of second-class citizenry of women who are part of the parliament. So it would be helpful if you would look into that.

As we close, I just want to ask that additional statements from the Commission will be added and made part of the record; and I would like to ask if, Mr. Secretary, if you would accept additional questions in writing. We would appreciate that.

Mr. POSNER. Glad to do that.



Ms. EDWARDS. Thank you very much for coming.  
With that, the hearing is closed.  
[Whereupon, at 11:26 a.m., the Commission was adjourned.]