

Hearing Transcript

Senate Foreign Relations Holds Hearing on the State of Global Humanitarian Affairs

Wednesday, March 22, 2017

CORKER:

The Foreign Relations Committee will come to order. Last month the U.N. High Commissioner for refugees and the executive director for the World Food Program issued a warning regarding severe food shortages sweeping across Africa. Humanitarian crises are expanding, with famine now afflicting South Sudan and others threatening Somalia, Nigeria and Yemen.

Each of these is marked by mis-governance and conflict that worsens existing conditions and threatens to trigger the starvation and displacement of tens of millions of people. In South Sudan conduct by President Kiir and the failure of the region to effectively engage with the political leaders in South Sudan has led to famine and atrocities.

In Yemen, a country with chronic natural resource and food shortfalls, the crisis is aggravated by conflicts that have created severe obstacles to humanitarian access. In Somalia, al-Shabab created insecurity and lack of governing structures continues to threaten millions of Somalis. In Nigeria, America's (sic) largest country by population, millions in the northeast face starvation as Boko Haram violence has prevented most humanitarian access.

When we consider the ongoing wars elsewhere in the Middle East, Eastern Europe and South Asia, the world is experiencing historic levels of displacement and emergency needs. Last year there was an unprecedented 65 million people displaced, stateless or otherwise, and in need of humanitarian assistance, the highest number ever recorded, and this year it is expected to reach 70 million people. Unbelievable.

The fact that so many of these tragic situations are man-made demands that we look at how we use our policy tools to prevent and relieve such a catastrophe. Today's hearing is an opportunity to understand how these crises affect U.S. interests and review how we might better work to sustain life, support stability, and help communities become more resilient.

It is also imperative that we discuss ways to stretch our aid dollars further through food aid reforms and efficiencies, feeding more people with the same level of funding. I hope our committee can come together to support such reforms during next year's farm bill reauthorization.

Finally, we must look at the instruments of our diplomatic, development, economic and defense power and determine how we might best put them to use in reversing this trend that leads to instability and threatens our interests.

We thank are witnesses. I'll introduce you shortly, and I want to turn to our distinguished ranking member, Ben Cardin.

CARDIN:

Well, Mr. Chairman, thank you so much for holding this hearing on the state of global humanitarian affairs. Yesterday I joined the chairman with our counterparts in the House of Representatives as we acknowledged the sixth anniversary of the Syrian war and the atrocities that have been committed there and the humanitarian needs.

Today we shift our attention, same subject matter but to the 20 million people who are starving as a result of famines in Yemen, Somalia, South Sudan and northern Nigeria. As we saw the faces of children who were murdered in Syria, we now see the faces of children who are stunted and are suffering as a result of the atrocities and tragedies in these countries.

And we know that we have to do something about this. We know that America can do something about this. So I look forward to our witnesses giving us the current status, but also challenging us to do more to alleviate the humanitarian needs.

We know that these circumstances in these countries will lead to instability, breeding grounds for terrorists, and it leads to conflicts. So it's in our interest not just from the humanitarian point of view but from the national security issues to do something about the circumstances.

The tragedy is even made worse because political leaders in these countries are denying humanitarian access. They are not only causing a problem for their people, then they are denying the international community access to try to deal with the aftermath.

As the South Sudanese government recently said they want humanitarian workers to pay \$10,000 for a visa. That's outrageous. And the international community needs to speak out. We also know that humanitarian convoys have been attacked as part of a conflict. That's a criminal -- it's a violation of war crimes and it's matters that cannot be allowed to continue.

So Mr. Chairman, I just really want to underscore the need for U.S. leadership. When I look at what's happened internationally, the status of select U.N. humanitarian appeals global, we are at 13 percent funded, Nigeria is 6 percent funded, Somalia 21 percent funded, South Sudan 18 percent funded, Yemen 7 percent funded.

If the United States is not in the leadership, the international community is not going to respond. And as you pointed out, this is a circumstance where the famine has been enhanced or made possible through human actions. This is not nature. This is what humans have done. We can change that.

So I look for U.S. leadership, and so far what I've seen is President Trump being very silent on this issue. I haven't heard very much. I have seen his executive order on immigration, which 100

national security experts, both Republican and Democrats, have condemned as being counterproductive to our national security and not defending our great nation.

I do look at a budget that he has submitted that has a 28 percent cut in foreign aid, and wondering how can we respond and show leadership and expect other countries to follow when the president has made our foreign assistance such a low priority.

Mr. Chairman, I might be incorrect in this but I think there's only two agencies have been treated as badly -- I mean one other agency treated as badly as foreign assistance in the president's budget, and that's our environment. So it really does speak to our priorities and the international community is looking at us and saying, where is America's priorities if the president is submitting this type of budget?

And I just want to point out, as you have, that we can prevent these humanitarian disasters if we invest more in good governance, in anti-corruption, in the building blocks so these countries can have stable governments that could help their own people, and we are cutting those programs in the president's budget.

So I do look forward to our witnesses as to how we can be more effective in dealing with the crisis in northern Africa and how America's leadership can lead the world to help those that are in real danger of literally losing their lives.

CORKER:

Well, thank you. I had no idea that focusing on conflict in four parts of the world would move to the direction you just went. I think we all understand that these issues have been persisting for a long, long time and we need to certainly show U.S. leadership.

I will say our government funds one-third of the World Food Program and will continue to. And my guess is at the end of the day, by the time Congress gets through having its say, we're going to be very involved, and appropriately involved, throughout the world, as we have been for years. So I hope we will focus on the issue at hand.

I don't think this is been created over the last 55 days, and certainly I appreciate some of the sentiments. But again, the issue is here we've got millions of people that are starving due to conflicts in their region. And as my staff has pointed out so well, once these people are malnourished for a period of time, it actually affects their ability to function for the rest of their life.

So what we have happening in these countries is people, really we are stunting the next generation of people who might lead innovation and do the kind of things that are necessary to cause these countries to be successful.

So for that reason we certainly appreciate Mr. Gottlieb for being here. He's acting assistant administrator from USAID bureau of democracy, conflict and humanitarian assistance. Assistant Administrator Gottlieb manages the office of disaster and assistance in Food for Peace, two of

the primary U.S. responders to international humanitarian emergencies, with both food and nonfood assistance.

We thank you so much for being here. Glad we have someone to actually come testify as you are today. We look forward to that. And if you can summarize in about five minutes, I'm sure there will be many questions from the panel. Thank you.

GOTTLIEB:

Chairman Corker, Ranking Member Cardin, members of the committee, thank you for your continued support for humanitarian assistance, including convening this hearing. Today we are confronted with massive humanitarian crises around the world, which demand immediate substantial and creative responses. There are more than 65 million people displaced today, numbers we have not seen since World War II.

We are also facing a most serious food security crisis in the modern era. Famine likely occurred in parts of Nigeria late last year and was declared in South Sudan this year. Somalia and Yemen are likely to be next.

Further complicating things, much of the humanitarian need today is man-made, a result of civil conflicts, instability and a lack of solutions to political disputes. I have worked in humanitarian assistance for more than 30 years, in more than 40 countries, across four continents, and I can say I haven't seen anything on this scale in my career.

Despite these challenges, and thanks to generous support from Congress, the United States continues to be the world leader in humanitarian response. We at USAID strive to best utilize those resources to prevent, mitigate and respond to humanitarian crises around the world. USAID's leadership in this area demonstrates extraordinary global reach, influence and impact.

Today I'd like to briefly walk through the major crises we face in 2017, the challenges we confront and how USAID is responding. In January, the famine early warning system, FEWS NET, warned of possible famines in a record four countries this year. The first was declared just one month later in South Sudan. More than three years of horrific violence in South Sudan has transformed the world's youngest nation into one of the most food insecure.

Even before the famine declaration, many South Sudanese were dying of hunger and faced an impossible choice: stay where they are and starve, or run for their lives, potentially into mortal danger. USAID continues to feed more than 1.3 million people each month, but enormous needs remain; 5.5 million people, nearly half of South Sudan's population, will face life-threatening hunger in July.

In West Africa, the savagery of Boko Haram triggered a humanitarian crisis in Nigeria, displacing over 2 million people and leaving more than 10 million individuals in need of humanitarian assistance. More than 5.1 million people face severe food insecurity. It is likely famine occurred in some inaccessible areas in 2016. As access improved, humanitarian agencies

are encountering communities with dire levels of hunger and malnutrition, particularly among children. More than 450,000 children are severely malnourished in northern Nigeria.

Nigeria is also a protection crisis. We hear reports of vulnerable women and girls forced to trade sex for food to keep their families alive, men and boys forcibly recruited into Boko Haram were killed, and children whose worlds have been shattered after months of captivity by Boko Haram.

Meanwhile, the Horn of Africa is facing increasingly severe drought conditions that are quickly exceeding people's ability to cope. The scope is so great that relief agencies estimate that up to 15 million people in Somalia, Ethiopia and Kenya are facing food and water shortages. More than half of Somalia's total population currently requires urgent humanitarian assistance.

In Yemen, more than 17 million people, an astounding 60 percent of the country's population, are food insecure, including 7 million who are unable to survive without food assistance. This makes Yemen the largest food security emergency in the world and it's also at risk for famine in 2017. In Yemen more than 460,000 kids are severely malnourished.

Beyond these four likely famines, we are confronted with protracted crises in countries like Iraq and Syria, which have no clear end in sight. These emergencies are complex, dangerous, and require the majority of our personnel and funding.

In this time of unprecedented need, we are looking at all options available to us, finding ways to provide assistance efficiently and encouraging other donors to step up. USAID is also applying lessons from previous responses, making effective use of early warning and investing in resilience strategies to reduce the impacts of future shocks and stresses.

We remain committed to providing humanitarian assistance around the world as both a moral imperative and a direct benefit to the well-being of the United States. I thank you for your time and support and I look forward to your questions.

CORKER:

Thank you very much. You know, we have the constant tension, if you will, between the short-term emergencies that are so important and affecting so many people and longer-term issues. How does USAID and other donor nations manage the evolution between short-term emergency interventions with long-term development needs for communities displaced for years like we are seeing right now?

GOTTLIEB:

As you pointed out, Senator, there are -- we never fully reached the maximum support for all appeals, and that has meant that we've always made trade-offs in how we approach different emergencies.

I do think over time what we have managed to do is to draw a much tighter linkage between our emergency programs and our development programs, and there is no better place to look right

now, I think, then in Kenya and in Ethiopia. Both countries recognized about five years ago that they needed to do something about drought, and so during that particular drought in 2011-2012, we began to work together to draw those programs together, to make sure that our development programs were located where we were spending the bulk of our humanitarian assistance.

We've spent billions of dollars in those countries to address drought. Now we have moved much of our development program into that area to support those communities so that we don't have -- so that they are better equipped to deal with the droughts that will come. The droughts will come, but we hope not the emergency side of things.

And I will say in support of those countries, that the Kenyans themselves have put up almost \$1.6 billion of their own funding toward this. So I think were beginning to get a grip on, in those countries of repeated droughts. In conflict areas of course it is much more difficult because while we had a development program in Yemen for many years, we no longer have that program there because of the conflict and the inability to really stay for the long-term in communities.

So I think as we -- if these crises, as they abate, it will be very important for us to bring the kinds of development programs that target those communities and understand the problems so that, should we have another crisis, whether it's a drought or conflict, those communities are better able to cope.

CORKER:

And I guess the governance issues are keeping us from, in these other conflict areas, being able to do what you just said, correct?

GOTTLIEB:

Yes.

CORKER:

Let me digress for a moment. You know, look, this appeal that's going out and the lack of response is disturbing. You know, at the end of the day the United States will provide one-third of the food assistance around the world. I mean, I'm proud of us for doing that and I know we'll continue to do that. At the same time it's still not meeting all of the needs.

If we look at countries like China and others, who are just doing a pittance, a pittance as it relates to these kinds of issues. We've had discussions like this around NATO. All of us strongly support NATO, and at the same time we want our partners to step up. We strongly support helping people with famine and disaster like this. Our heart goes out to these people, knowing they could be our neighbors and yet they are perishing by the thousands, in some cases daily.

What is it that we can do to build support from other countries, other well-developed countries to support this type of effort when it's needed?

GOTTLIEB:

One of the things that we have done over the years is we have supported a number of donor groups to draw in other countries to the work. Right now actually I'm the chair of the OCHA Donor Support Group, the coordinating office for humanitarian assistance in the U.N. And one of the things we've done over the last several years is we have reached out to numerous donors, whether it's the South Koreans, whether it's the Turks, the UAE, Qatar.

And those groups, when we first started the group some years ago, were not participants. They are participants now. We endeavor to bring more countries in. I will leave next week and go talk to the Saudis about additional assistance that they can bring.

We have had assistance from many countries around the world, but what we are trying to do is to bring that into the system, that it's more systematic, it's more coordinated, and it also -- you are right that we believe that there are other donors out there that can do much more to support the systems that we support.

CORKER:

And just briefly, one of the issues for me is we have each year -- it is unfortunate but the ag community continues to handle the food program in the manner they do. We know there's no way, for instance, to get U.S. agriculture products into places like Syria. It's impossible, and yet the ag community, and I've talked to many of the ag constituents, they don't even know this is taking place and don't care. It doesn't help them in any way. It's a small pittance of what they sell each year.

But the ag community, for some reason, wants to hold onto this commodities program as it is, and that means that between them and the maritime industry, which is a small group of folks with vessels that are of no use whatsoever to our country. Of new use. But they are extorting us, they are extorting us.

So we have the ag community, which isn't even aware that these things are visiting us, actually just taking place here in Washington. The people who are -- the ag community itself don't care about this. Matter of fact, I think they are embarrassed by this.

Then we have the maritime industry that's extorting us over shipping these goods and the way they are. We could feed 4 to 6 million more people each year if that were not the case, is that correct?

GOTTLIEB:

You're correct. We appreciate the flexibility that has been given to us by this committee and Appropriations. We now are able to do -- you know yourself we are able to do a combination of food, commodities and cash. There are times when we need commodities because we can't even access them out there.

And we still, as you know we still ship American commodities. We just did it for Somalia into large tranches recently, 37,000 tons. And because of our good use of early warning, we were able to plan ahead and move those commodities.

At the same time, our use of cash, vouchers, other things has increased greatly, with your support. And it has enabled us to do a lot more. And we think that we could feed another -- with additional flexibility we could feed another 5 million people with the budget we have.

CORKER:

If I could just, before I turn to the ranking member. We did some great things last year thanks to this entire committee on a bipartisan basis. But to know that legislation, which doesn't cost the American people one penny, could be passed to feed 5 million more people today, and we are sitting here with 70 million starving today, to me is unbelievable.

And I just hope that somehow we'll overcome the special interests here in our country really are not even representing the entire industries that they supposedly represent. I hope somehow or another we'll overcome that so that we ourselves can pass simple legislation to allow 5 million more people each year to have food with the same amount of money.

But anyway, thank you, and I'll turn to the ranking member.

CARDIN:

Thank you, Mr. Chairman. As has been pointed out, this is a man-made problem, so we need to work on dual track. And we need to work on the root causes and then to me is a critically important part of the State Department's function. It's not the subject of today's hearing but it is very much involved.

If we want to save the needs for humanitarian assistance, let's deal with the root causes. We should be putting more resources into governance, and I just don't know how, if the president's budget were to become real, how America would be responding to that need.

The other area is how do you deal with the humanitarian crisis, and here U.S. leadership is critically important. So Mr. Gottlieb, let me ask you first. The United Kingdom is hosting the ministerial meeting in May for Somalia to deal with the crisis.

Now ministerial meetings are normally attended by the foreign minister, secretary of state. Can you tell us what role the United States will play in the U.K. ministerial meeting, and what commitments we are prepared to make in regards to Somalia?

GOTTLIEB:

Senator, it's hard for me to speak for where the State Department or where the secretary might do for that particular meeting, but what I can tell you is, and I think what you are -- perhaps what the committee is concerned about is how are we responding to what's happening in Somalia.

CARDIN:

No, I'm interested in what's happening this May in U.K. and where the United States is going to be at that meeting at the UK.

GOTTLIEB:

Right. And what I can tell you before I talk a little bit about that is that just recently we held another meeting in the U.K. and this was of the operational side for people like me and others at my level who look at the practical side of how we can move our money to Somalia.

So what happened in that meeting was donors sat around the table and said what they were going to commit up to now. What I heard at that meeting was donors committing around \$500 million. We ourselves, to the end of April we will have moved \$225 million of our own funding to Somalia for just...

CARDIN:

Do you believe the U.K. meeting is important or not?

GOTTLIEB:

I think it is important...

CARDIN:

Are we to be represented?

GOTTLIEB:

Yes, we will be, I'm sure.

CARDIN:

While the secretary be there, or you do not know that?

GOTTLIEB:

I can't speak to who will represent us.

CARDIN:

Do you know what the goal is of this meeting that's coming up?

GOTTLIEB:

The goal will be, I think, to draw more donors into responding to the situation in Somalia.

CARDIN:

Will the U.S. be prepared to be part of that increased commitment to Somalia?

GOTTLIEB:

Well, certainly that will be a discussion that we will have up till then. As I said, we have -- what we've budgeted so far for this year, we will have moved by the end of April.

CARDIN:

I know you are in a tough position on answering these questions, and I appreciate that. But we have responsibility in Congress and we appreciate the U.K.'s leadership in calling this ministerial meeting for Somalia, which normally means that we would have the foreign ministers present. From what we understand, our foreign minister will not be present.

GOTTLIEB:

I can't speak to that, Senator. I don't know that he will or won't.

CARDIN:

Let me get to the budget for one moment, as to whether you have adequate resources to deal with the need. I don't know whether the president's budget, and I appreciate what Chairman Corker is saying. I do not believe we'll pass the president's budget. I think Democrats and Republicans will reject the deep cuts that have been suggested in the State Department because we recognize the importance of our programs.

But I'm trying to get how you are going to operate. And Senator Corker is correct. Last year with Senator Corker's leadership and Senator Casey's leadership and others, we were able to pass the Global Food Security Act, which deals with the future initiative. The president's budget cuts the funding in that program -- I don't know the exact number but it's been told it could be as high as 36 percent, maybe 28 percent. We know it's a cut.

And I just want to know, do you have too much resources there for Feed the Future, that you think is right for us to reduce our share in the Feed the Future program?

GOTTLIEB:

I'm not currently overseeing Feed the Future. I was there at the beginning of it, and I can say we really appreciate that the Global Food Security Act was passed. I don't know where that budget is going to end up. I mean, what I can say...

CARDIN:

Do we have too much money in that program? What's your observation?

GOTTLIEB:

There was a very substantial sum that was given to Feed the Future in the beginning. Like with many programs, we would look at whatever that budget is and we would adjust to whatever that budget is.

CARDIN:

You're here before this committee. I'm asking your view on this. We know also that the administration wants to prioritize for counterterrorism. We know that many, many, many of the countries receiving Feed the Future funds would not fall into that category. So their cuts are going to be even deeper than 36 percent.

I'm trying to get your assessment as to whether the U.S. role here in Feed the Future, which has bipartisan support, whether the funds need to be increased or not.

GOTTLIEB:

Senator, it's hard for me to assess from my perch where I am as to what Feed the Future or what the bureau for food security needs in its budget. It's hard for me to say what they need or how they can adjust their budgets. I talked to my colleagues certainly...

CARDIN:

So you don't think that's an important part of democracy, conflict and humanitarian assistance?

GOTTLIEB:

I do think it's -- I do think the programs are vitally important. I was there to help set them up. And I don't know -- I'm not there now so it's hard for me to say how they've adjusted the programs. I'm not saying they're not important. I'm just saying it's hard for me to answer...

CARDIN:

Well, you're losing at least my -- the chairman is usually very direct. I'm going to be direct. You play a very important role. I expect when you testify before our committee you'll give us your views. And I find it somewhat shocking that you can't answer a simple question about whether the United States Feed the Future program is important in your role, and the resources we are making available to a number of countries, the type of cuts that are being suggested, what impact it would have on your role. I find that very disappointing.

Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

CORKER:

If I could, I would say that because of concerns that we all have about budget and our strong support for things like Feed the Future and PEPFAR and global efforts like that we've arranged next week at 11:30 all of us to have the opportunity -- I hope everyone will come -- to meet with Tillerson. It is next Thursday, right? Tomorrow. OK, tomorrow.

So to Mr. Gottlieb, I'm sure that Senator Cardin and others will have the opportunity to ask these questions very directly tomorrow. I've let Secretary Tillerson know this -- my concern about the budget issues. I know he wants to talk a little bit about his trip to Asia. But also concerns about Russia, and that he should be prepared to answer those questions.

But just for what it's worth to committee members, because of the known concerns about the president's budget, I asked that this meeting be set up and to give us all an opportunity to see where the secretary of state actually is on these issues. And I think it will give us a good sense of where we go from there. So I just want to make people aware.

And I haven't seen their emails, and that's occurring tomorrow. We have an opportunity to be very direct and ask questions that we care about.

CARDIN:

And I appreciate that, and obviously the secretary of state is the critically important person in regards to the State Department. I am looking forward to that. I would just hope that when we have witnesses that come before our committee that they are prepared to testify as to their views and are not as restricted as I just heard this reply.

CORKER:

And if I could, I know we all know this, Feed the Future is more of an economic development program than it is an issue relative to the thing today. But still important, and I appreciate your emphasizing that issue.

Todd Young.

YOUNG:

Thank you, Chairman, Ranking Member. I want to thank you for your service, Mr. Gottlieb. I believe in the mission of the USAID and I want to continue to be a fulsome supporter of that mission. But for me to advocate on behalf of USAID, I need to ensure that you're the best possible steward of resources so that I can explain that support to my constituents.

The General Accountability Office lists 53 recommendations and 12 priority recommendations that had not yet been implemented, or fully implemented by USAID, and some of these open recommendations go back to the year 2013.

Mr. Gottlieb, do you agree that it's important at this committee have full visibility on the status of these open recommendations? Yes or no hopefully.

GOTTLIEB:

Yes.

YOUNG:

Well, I agree. That's why I, along with Senators Menendez, Coons, Rubio introduced legislation, S418, the Department of State United States Agency for International Development and Accountability Act of 2017.

Do you commit to providing to my office and this committee without delay a detailed written, unclassified update regarding the status of all open USAID recommendations from GAO?

GOTTLIEB:

Yes.

YOUNG:

OK, thank you. And for any recommendation USAID has decided to adopt, please provide a timeline. Is that OK?

GOTTLIEB:

Yes.

YOUNG:

And for any recommendation USAID decides not to adopt, could you provide a full justification for that in great detail?

GOTTLIEB:

We will.

YOUNG:

All right, thank you. I'd like to turn to the issue of resilience. I gather it's already been invoked some here today. In her prepared statement Ms. Lindborg, whom we'll hear from in the next panel, cited Amartya Sen's book, "Development is Freedom." And the assertion that no famine has ever taken place in the history of the world in a functioning democracy because democratic

governments, quote, "have to win elections and face public criticism and have strong incentive to undertake measures to avert famines and other catastrophes."

We've discussed again the principle of resilience. Mr. Gottlieb, if Sen's assertion is correct, isn't the ultimate resilience measure a functioning democracy?

GOTTLIEB:

Certainly Sen's book is a remarkable book and he has done a fantastic job of pointing out the importance of having stable government. I think the programs -- the crises we look at now are mostly man-made. We do have, I think, when we look at Ethiopia and Kenya, we still have crises. We don't have famine yet, which is good, because there's more stability there and so it sort of gives proof, I think to some of Sen's work, that with stability you can avoid famine.

I think for us right now we would wish that there would be better governance in the places in which we are working, but unfortunately we don't have that and...

YOUNG:

Well, as one of your core tasks USAID lists promoting democracy, and you've cited a couple of examples around the world where to varying degrees we've seen some success. How do you measure success with respect to advancing that aim of promoting democracy?

GOTTLIEB:

Oftentimes we would measure it through the transparency lens, how honest and forthright is government in indicating to its population what it does. Transparency in the way of budgets. Transparency in the way that its armed forces or police treat people, in the way that, in our case, transparency and how they spend their money.

And I think a lot of those things, and how they conduct their elections is another area of transparency. So when I look at our democracy programs, often those are -- many of those programs are targeted exactly at those things.

YOUNG:

That makes some sense. Transparency leads to trust, trust is essential mortar of social and political capital that can lead to a stable democratic governance. If you have an addendum to that answer, I'd certainly welcome that.

Lastly, a little bit of remaining time here. I just want to note the importance of private sector development. Eighty-four percent of all donors' total economic engagement with the developing world is through private financial flows.

Now it's essential that we maintain our international affairs budget, from this senator's standpoint. But we need to understand and facilitate legitimate private sector development. This too is one of the core tasks of USAID, fostering private sector development.

Perhaps you could very briefly speak to how you measure at USAID success in this area, and if there are particular statutory, regulatory or other obstacles that exist to legitimate private sector development, I'd certainly welcome those.

GOTTLIEB:

What I can say is I think one of the things we've done in USAID is, particularly over the last several years, is to reach out strongly to the private sector. I will go back to actually Feed the Future, the bureau for food security. One of the things that we did in that bureau was we set up a whole section just a deal with the private sector.

We realized that to develop agriculture we needed to link strongly with the private sector. So over the last several years several very I think import partnerships have been developed to have private business come into agriculture. But there's also other things, like in for instance we've done it in -- I spent the last couple of years in Pakistan. We've had a number of programs where we used OPIC and we use the private sector to foster energy programs. We do it all over Africa now.

So I think USAID as an agency is extremely aware of the importance of finding partnerships, because as you point out, you know, 50 years ago the amount of money that flowed from official sources was 80 percent. Now it's completely opposite.

YOUNG:

I'm going to pass -- out of respect for the chairman, I going to pass this back to him. If there are any barriers to advancing that core task, kindly submit those to me. Thank you.

GOTTLIEB:

Thank you so much.

CORKER:

Senator Shaheen.

SHAHEEN:

Thank you, Mr. Chairman, and Mr. Gottlieb, thank you for being here this morning and for your many years of service to USAID.

I have to say I share the concerns that are being raised about the budget outline that we've seen from the administration and what the impact on our aid programs would be, especially at a time

when we know that there is so much humanitarian need in the world, especially in the four countries were talking about today.

And I appreciate very much the chair and ranking member's comments about the bipartisan support that has existed on this committee for humanitarian efforts, and that we expect that the budget as it's been presented is probably not the budget that will go through Congress. I share those sentiments.

I do believe, as David Knolaband (ph) said last week that American leadership in the world on these efforts is absolutely critical if we are going to get other countries to ante up what they need to do in order to contribute.

I would also like to point out that one of the challenges that is contributing to what we are seeing in so much of sub-Saharan Africa is climate change, that the droughts that are being affected are being affected because of our changing climate. And for us to ignore the scientific information that's available and suggest that we should not participate in addressing that with the rest of the world I think is just naive and very shortsighted.

So let me ask you, because I appreciate that you don't want to respond on the budget issues, but let me ask about what's happening with women's health, because you referred to that, the challenges that women are facing in these humanitarian crises.

We know that pregnancy-related deaths and instances of sexual violence soar in times of upheaval, that in 2015 the U.N. estimated that 61 percent of maternal deaths took place in humanitarian crises and fragile settings where health services were not available to women. In South Sudan, for example, a woman's risk of dying from pregnancy-related causes is about one in eight, compared to the United States, where it's one in 3,500.

So what is USAID doing to ensure that the needs of women in these crises are being met?

GOTTLIEB:

Thank you, Senator. I was just two weeks ago I was in Maiduguri, northern Nigeria, and I visited a maternity ward on one of the camps in the city. I was incredibly impressed by -- I mean, it's a very simple facility but I was incredibly impressed by the effort the women made, the nurses and attendants. They recognize the challenges for those women.

Many of those women probably have a better ward there in that camp than they would have out in their village. Nevertheless, in all -- whether it's in Maiduguri or whether it's in South Sudan or wherever we are, women's health is one of the primary things we look at.

We understand what's happening with women in these conflicts, the incidence of rate. I certainly got that in very graphic detail when I was in Maiduguri, and that has become an important element, not just what we do on health side but what we do on trying to deal with the effects of that gender-based violence.

I've seen the clinics where women can get counseling, where there is special medical attention paid to the problems they've had. And we've seen those problems over the years. Many years ago when I worked in eastern Congo, it was the same. Issues of fistula and that kind of thing.

So we've become, I think, acutely aware of it and made it a major part of what we fund in every humanitarian program.

SHAHEEN:

So are we working with the U.N. population fund and the World Food Program and other U.N. agencies and NGOs who are working to address these issues?

GOTTLIEB:

Yes, we work with UNFPA, we work with World Food Program, we work with UNICEF in particular, and a host of NGOs. You heard from David Miliband. We work, in fact a clinic in Maiduguri was by IRC, so a host of groups.

SHAHEEN:

Thank you. And can you talk about whether if there are budget cuts whether some of these programs that are particularly targeted to women and girls would be more adversely affected?

GOTTLIEB:

It's hard to say how they would be affected. For us this is a core part of what we do. As I mentioned earlier, we have to look at priorities, and feeding people and bringing people health and water, sanitation has been the core of our programs.

So my own sense is that we will continue to prioritize the health of women and girls in conflict.

SHAHEEN:

Thank you.

CORKER:

Thank you.

Senator Merkley.

MERKLEY:

Thank you, Mr. Chairman, and appreciate your testimony.

Can you elaborate a little bit on the Food for Peace program, whether that is in the target sights of the administration, and if so, what your concerns might be or how that might impact the ability to assist folks in distress around the world?

GOTTLIEB:

Thank you, Senator. What I have seen in what's termed the skinny budget, the language is that humanitarian assistance would be largely maintained. So from that language I am hopeful that we will maintain the robust humanitarian assistance that the United States has provided over the last many years and that will allow us to remain in a leadership position. So that gives me hope.

MERKLEY:

And there have been various conversations about how to make that aid more effective, give it more flexibility, one of which has been a proposal some years back to spend up to a certain percent of funds, either locally or on food vouchers or on cash transfers. It wouldn't necessarily follow the well-established model of buying American food and shipping it overseas.

Does there need to be -- is it something that you would advocate for, more flexibility in this program?

GOTTLIEB:

We have appreciated the flexibility we've got in the recent years to be able to give cash to reach people. It's allowed us to buy locally, and it's allowed us to develop, as you said, you mentioned voucher programs, where we can move money electronically to people, we can put it on a debit card, we can make it a lot easier for people to obtain food. And by buying locally we are able to save considerable money.

I will say this, that there are times when having the ability to buy food from the United States and ship it is advantageous because sometimes local prices are so high that we can do better by buying here and shipping it actually.

MERKLEY:

How much, what percent, how much flexibility have you had in recent years? What percent of Food for Peace has been in the form of more flexible on-site vouchers, cash transfers or purchases?

GOTTLIEB:

I think it's around 50-50 right now.

MERKLEY:

Really? OK. It surprises me. I didn't think it was that high. One of the other issues has been the issue of monetization, and there's a bit of dilemma here. When food is distributed for free, it can undermine the success of local farmers, whose prices then plummet.

On the other hand, when it's sold, if it's sold, it can be inaccessible to the poorest, who need help the most. What are your insights on that challenge?

GOTTLIEB:

I think when we -- first off, when we ship food into a country, one of the analysis we have to do is what's the economic impact of bringing that food in. And so I think we are very cautious about trying not to disrupt local markets. Usually we are bringing food in because there are inadequate amounts of food on the market, so we feel like we're not impacting prices.

In terms of the monetization, part of that is to sell the food into that market to raise funds so that the implementing partners can then do a project that may or may not be a food security project. It could be a health project, it could be any other kind of project. But usually if we do that, we also have to do the market analysis to make sure that we are not disrupting those local markets.

MERKLEY:

And to make sure that food gets to those who may have no money to be able to purchase food. Some organizations have sworn off doing monetization. What is their thinking, and what's the opposing argument?

GOTTLIEB:

I think the opposing argument is that there is -- we can use monetization to raise funds to do other kinds of development programming that may complement, may help those that are food insecure.

MERKLEY:

Under the existing program is this completely at the discretion of the implementing organization?

GOTTLIEB:

You mean on the terms of the project they do?

MERKLEY:

Yes, in terms of the monetization.

GOTTLIEB:

It would be a discussion with our missions in the field and with our folks back here at Food for Peace.

MERKLEY:

Thank you.

CORKER:

Thank you. I share Senator Shaheen's respect for your service and I appreciate your coming up. I know you received somewhat of a hard time for not answering questions. I will say that you might go back to the State Department, and we welcome nominations at any time and would be glad to process them. Maybe you are up for one of these posts. That would be great.

But we do thank you for filling in as acting person in this time of tremendous need around the world. I think it's hard for most Americans to get a grip on the fact that 70 million people today are starving. We have a great country and we've been generous and we help lead the world in those efforts. And I think you know that we want to continue to do so.

The president's budget has been certainly discussed today. I will say that in the decade I've been here I've never seen a president's budget become law, and we've all got a lot of work to do over the course of the next several months to make sure that we maintain our leadership.

But at the same time, even with all that we do and the great citizens of our country do to help others, the need still is not being met. I hope to a degree this hearing will raise that issue and I hope that other countries will join us.

And again, the conflicts, what's unusual about what's happening right now is the fact that it's being generated in these four areas because of conflict. That's a very unusual situation, very unstable world, and it brings even greater importance to the bipartisanship that we have on this committee in helping to resolve those.

Thank you so much for coming, and we will move to the next panel.

GOTTLIEB:

Thank you.

(Next panel seated.)

CORKER:

All right. Our first witness today on the second panel is the Honorable Nancy Lindborg, who we all know well. She is president of the United States Institute of Peace. Ms. Lindborg previously managed the bureau of democracy, conflict and humanitarian assistance from 2010 through

2015. Prior to that she was president of Mercy Corps for 14 years. We thank you and appreciate your very distinguished career. Thank you so much.

Our second witness is Mr. Yves Daccord. Did I pronounce that right, sir? Thank you so much. Director general of the International Committee of the Red Cross. Thank you for what you and your organization does.

Mr. Daccord is a former journalist who joined the ICRC in 1992, working in such places as Sudan, Yemen and Georgia, eventually moving up the ranks of leadership until finally becoming the director general in 2010. Thank you for your leadership, both of you for your testimony.

I think you both know you can summarize in about five minutes, and people look forward -- all of our panelists look forward to questioning. Thank you so much. And Nancy, if you will begin.

LINDBORG:

Thank you, Chairman Corker, Ranking Member Cardin, and members of the committee. I really appreciate the opportunity to be here with you today, and your focus and attention to these issues is more important than ever.

We've heard from your summations and Greg Gottlieb the depth of the issue. You have my full testimony, so let me use my time to summarize a few key points and recommendations.

As we've covered, we have an urgent and very grave humanitarian threat with the potential of four concurrent famines and the prospect of 20 million people, proportionately children -- disproportionately children starving to death in the next six months. That's as if the entire state of Florida, all the people in Florida were at risk of starvation. That's the urgent threat.

These four crises also represent a political and a security threat. Each crisis has a regional cascading effect, disrupting markets and economies of the countries around them. Millions of refugees are seeking safety and assistance across borders.

They are straining infrastructures, they are disrupting markets and politically destabilizing the region because of the numbers, and they join an historic number of 65 million refugees that are already straining the global humanitarian system and politically destabilizing our E.U. allies.

Just to give you a sense of scale, the 1.4 million people who have been displaced just from Nigeria's Borno state are only about 40 percent of those that have reached Europe by boat in 2015.

As we discussed, famines are man-made. There are certainly natural disasters that intertwine with existing situations but these are fundamentally man-made crises. And each of the four nations currently facing famine, Nigeria, Somalia, South Sudan and Yemen, have distinct and complex issues, but they share important attributes.

Each nation is characterized by weak governance at the national and local levels, ineffective institutions, high levels of corruption, periods of prolonged and intense armed conflict, a breakdown of domestic political order and vast humanitarian need, with assistance often blocked either because of lack of infrastructure or government obstacles.

Which is to say that all these countries are mired in fragility. They lack the institutional capacity and the political legitimacy to withstand the shock of conflict and natural disaster.

So what should we do? First and foremost, by the time famine is declared it's already too late for many. Many of the deaths happen far before the famine declaration. We've already had the declaration of famine in South Sudan, three more are on the horizon. We have to urgently and quickly lean into this response now.

U.S. government and international donors need to respond quickly to the urgent need to provide life-saving assistance. And U.S. leadership is essential to catalyze other donors to give. Our contributions will meet basic needs. We will also ensure others contribute. And responding to this extraordinary level of suffering is a reflection of who we are as Americans and will make the difference between life and death for millions.

Secondly, as you discussed with Greg Gottlieb, we need to build on the important progress that has already been made to make our aid smarter, more effective and more efficient. There's been significant headway in building resilience, as we've seen in places like Kenya and Ethiopia. Resilience to recurring climatic and natural disaster shocks.

We need to sustain that effort with greater support from local actors. Early actions, early warning, by bridging the gap between relief and development action and looking at more innovative financing options. We have made great progress. We need to continue it.

Ultimately we will not be able to address these four famines or the other humanitarian crises with humanitarian responses alone. A decade ago 80 percent of our humanitarian assistance, global assistance went to victims of natural disasters. A decade later, that percentage has flipped and 80 percent of global humanitarian assistance goes to victims of violent conflict.

We need to use all of our tools, humanitarian assistance, development assistance, diplomacy and security, in a very strategic, selective, systemic and sustained way to address the drivers of these grave humanitarian crises.

Countries like Yemen, South Sudan, Somalia and the northeast region of Nigeria have all been trapped in multiple cycles of conflict. So without addressing these deeper drivers, we can be assured that there will be additional needs of humanitarian assistance in the future.

Let me conclude by noting that yesterday at the U.S. Institute of Peace we hosted a conversation with Martti Ahtisaari, one of the great mediators and negotiators of his generation. He recounted his experiences of helping to resolve some of the protracted, complicated crises of his time -- Angola, Namibia, Aceh -- and he reminded us of two things.

First, that these seemingly intractable conflicts are solvable. And secondly, that he couldn't have accomplished anything without U.S. support. These are generational issues but they are not insolvable. They have been resolved and they can be in the future, including the four crises before us today.

And as we like to say at the U.S. Institute of Peace, peace is possible. Thank you.

CORKER:

Thank you.

Go ahead, sir.

DACCORD:

Thank you very much, Chairman Corker, Ranking Member Cardin and all distinguished members of this committee. I'm very happy that you hold a hearing on these very specific issues.

I would like to share four points with you, and these four points are informed, and I would say tainted by the experience of my own organization, the International Committee of the Red Cross. As you know, we are focusing on extreme vulnerability in times of war. This is where we work.

We work in the four countries we mentioned. We also work in Ukraine, in Afghanistan, Syria. And when we work, it doesn't mean we work in Damascus. We work in Homs, in Idlib, where we're really closely related to the people and, you know, to understand their needs and what is happening.

We also, discuss and engage with every single party due to conflict. Which means, of course, government but also, nonstate actors (ph), as we call it, or jargon (ph), and it's important because there will be some connections in what I would like to say.

First point quickly, is about the label we want to give to this crisis. In our organization we don't like so much, to compare crisis. Is this this crisis worse than before? Is Syria suffering worse than South Sudan? It's always complicated.

We do recognize, though, that what we are facing right now in terms of humanitarian crisis this fore country, plus in Europe and Kenya. It's possibly becoming one of the worst serious humanitarian crisis that we are facing in recent history.

It is for three reasons, one, the nature of the crisis, Nancy mentioned on conflict, together with, in fact, famine and drought, which makes it so complex.

It is, in fact, the scale of it. We're talking about 20 million directly affected. Plus, as you mentioned, several other thousand millions being possibly affected.

And the third element is the impact. You have an impact right now in this fore country, talking about Yemen, South Sudan, Northeast Nigeria and Somalia, but you too, have an impact also in the region.

If you just look, Northeast Nigeria, Cameroon, Chad (inaudible) would be affected, directly. If you look at Yemen, you can see immediately all the region is affected, and it is a crisis which can affect all of us.

If you look at the impact over time, in terms of life, funds, but also, migration. So yes, it is absolutely important that we focus on this crisis. That's clear.

Point two, time, timing. So, I think there is an issue about timing. I'm of the opinion, we're of the opinion that we can make a difference over the next coming weeks, and I want to insist on that one.

Specifically in two country, Yemen and Somalia, where if we mobilize our self, we can prevent the famine in this two country. On the rest, it's also long-term aid that needs to happen, but there is a timing issue, time is short, we need to be able to focus.

My third point is about some of the specific element of the crisis. One, the population and the communities in these fore country are, somewhat, not in a position anymore to absorb shock.

This is why the crisis is so complex, because there is war going on, conflict, people are displaced, they don't have other choices. South Sudan is 3 million people displaced in three years, out of millions.

If you look at Yemen, it's what 70 percent of people needing aid, just to give a sense, right. If you look at Somalia, 60 percent of the people depend on livestock, livestock is gone, almost.

So there's a very fragile environment, which is very complex. Which means that people, communities are not able to absorb shock.

But the problem is the system, where they exist, is also under pressure, health system, water simulation (ph). If you think about Yemen, 160 hospital health structure, attacked last year, I mean, this gives you a bit of a sense. So we have a situation where the resilience is extremely low, that's why it's so complex.

At the same times, you do have in this fore context, local and national authorities in government no in a position to provide basic service to the population, they don't. Sometimes because they can't, they don't have the means, the infrastructure.

But most of the time is because they are, them self, parched with the conflict, which makes things extremely complicated.

And my fourth, and last comment, Mr. Chairman, is of the fact that we need to have a complex response to these complex issues.

One, we need to massively scale up the humanitarian response, very clearly. But doing that we need to be, also, pragmatic on who can do what, and here, the question is, who has access to which communities?

Who is able to be able to perform now? Who is able to perform in six months' time? There is differences, we need to be able to focus on that one.

We need to make sure we don't just, now, do massive scale up everywhere. We need to scale up where there are issues and we need to impact that in every country, right?

And here, the focus is really on displaced people, on communities hard to reach, in places which are not always controlled by government, that's where it's important so the access is central.

Point two, and Nancy mentioned that, I can't imagine it's just a humanitarian response. We are aware humanitarian, the limits of what we can do, we will do our best, but there is a diplomatic surge which is needed.

There is really a diplomatic surge, which is massive diplomatic surge needed, in this fore country, in order to end conflict. And to make sure that also, states, but non-state doctor are also held accountable to what internationally jus in bello, I mean the law of war.

Very clear, look at South Sudan, look at Yemen, look at Northeast Nigeria, look at Somalia, there is a limit of leadership. Which is not just a financial leadership, but also, a diplomatic leadership.

Thank you very much.

CORKER:

Thank you both, for that testimony.

So, I think you get a sense that most members of this committee are going to do what's necessary to make sure that we continue to play a role in helping people who are starving, not to starve. And I think over time, there will be a commitment to weed out some of the special interest issues that are keeping us from feeding 5 million more people, I think that will happen.

You will see, you know, a united effort to make sure there's appropriate funding. Look, every organization can be streamlined, we all know that, the two of your organizations could be streamlined, every organization can be looked at.

But my sense is, you're going to see a combined effort to make sure that, you know, these types of efforts are appropriately funded.

But my question is this, two weeks, I mean, we get emails, we understand people today, as we sit here, are dying, some cases a thousand people a day, and a thousand people a day dying. What is it that we can do in our respected positions right now, today, if anything; hopefully there is.

What is it that we can do to help try to meet the needs that you are talking about over the next two weeks? I'd love to know.

Most of the stuff we do around here is long-term, takes a while, happens way beyond, in many cases. No doubt, a diplomatic surge, couldn't agree more.

But what can we do as individual committee members, or as a group, to try to meet the needs you're discussing over the next couple weeks?

LINDBORG:

Well right now, the first and most important response is to ensure that funding is moving through the humanitarian channels. All of those other things are needed, approaches that marry the development and the resilience approaches, the diplomatic surge.

But right now it's saving lives, it's making sure that those urgent appeals are being filled by global actors, by global donors. And that sometimes requires going around and saying, to a broader set of donors, "it's up to you, as well", which is a role that the U.S. has frequently played, quite successfully.

DACCORD:

I think, first of all, by showing an interest and focus on this crisis. That's what you doing, it's important.

B, by ensuring funding, the funding is extremely important right now, and C . . .

(CROSSTALK)

. . . identify where the funding needs to go.

CORKER:

And we're going to do that I'm sure, as a group, that's going to be pursued and will happen, but I'm talking about over the next two weeks. I mean, you referred to the fact that over the next two weeks, millions of people may well perish and so, what is it that we might be able to do, in the short-term, to have some effect on that?

DACCORD:

I think the issue has, and Ranking Member Cardin, you mentioned what's happening about Somalia. There is an interest right now, I mean, there is a diplomatic interest, also.

To make sure that around Somalia, for example, and Somalia and Yemen, is maybe the two country I would prioritize right now. Because there is a possibility both at the political level, and this is one element, diplomatic level, but also, at the humanitarian level.

Where, over the next coming weeks, we make a difference, I mean, there is a question in Yemen about access, everybody knows that right now there is a huge issue around Taiz and Odadah (ph), very clear. Maybe not this committee, but new interest in helping, maybe, you know, your country, important country playing a role, focusing on the question will help, I can tell you, that's for sure.

And B, making sure also, that some of the funding goes now directly, specifically to operator, actors like us being on the ground, being able to perform right now. It's not a time of planning right now, it's a time of acting and that's what's so important.

To be able also, to prioritize what needs to be prioritized in terms of funding and diplomatic engagement.

CORKER:

Who's the lead pitch person internationally to generate the immediate funding this additional alter call, if you will, that's occurring right now? Who is the lead pitch person on that? Internationally?

DACCORD:

I think right now, you have two model, one is, of course, the U.N. And I think, as you may know the Secretary General of the U.N. has really mobilized, in fact, the international community and I think the good news is, I've seen them also, mobilizing the World Bank for help.

So, I think, you can see things moving up and I really commend the Secretary General of the United Nations, to have brought the attention and mobilized the U.N. in its entire forces, that's one element.

And then, B, we have organizations like the Red Cross-Red Crescent, you follow my own organization, I also feel responsible. We are not part of the U.N., we are a different organization, but we are collaborating and we are mobilizing our self.

We talking for our own organization, \$400 million we are spending and using now, on the ground, specifically.

And last, but not least, already mention about the diplomatic outreach. There is an important limit about the diplomatic outreach, which needs to come from your government, it's not the only government, but your government can play an extremely important role when it comes to Yemen, for example, very central.

CORKER:

Are there any U.S. dollars, today, that for some reason have been committed and yet, are not making their way to the appropriate place, today?

DACCORD:

I don't know.

My sense is that I see an interest at the level of the State Department, a level of your government, but I think there is maybe, also, a bit of a worry. How do we spend the money right now?

And I think that's for sure, but I think, I hope, that the crisis will help in fact, to spend in the right places. I would just be very careful again.

When you look at figures, it's overwhelming, right? And I do understand that there is a need to impact the questions and here, I really would like to stress, there are element which need to happen urgently, now.

And there are element, which is more short and long-term, and that needs to be distinguished because when you look at the figures, I do understand, if I would be an American citizen I would say, "My God, we're talking about millions of people, billions of dollar, what does that mean, what are the plan?"

What we can say is there are element that need to happen now, and we can re-prioritize that, and that's important to be clear about it. We need to prioritize, also, who can do what, and make sure that in the way we intervene as humanitarian, we are doing that smartly among us.

And last, but not least, I really want to insist, there is really a diplomatic surge. Which, frankly, as humanitarian, we can't do, that needs to happen at the state level.

LINDBORG:

If I could elaborate on that. If dollars aren't reaching their intended targets in some of these cases, it's because of obstacles being presented by the governments of these countries.

And where there could be very effective immediate action, is making it clear to the governments of South Sudan and to various actors in the Yemen conflict, for example, that the world will respond and we need them to do their part.

We need them not to charge \$10,000 per visa for an aid worker. We need them to allow barges to move up the rivers to the remote locations, and have a concerted both regional and international set of pressures that says with response, and global response, comes local responsibility.

CORKER:

Thank you very much, very powerful testimony.

Thank you both, for what you do.

Senator Cardin.

CARDIN:

Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

I also, complement our two witnesses, not just for being here, but what you do on the ground to help in this regard.

And I read out the percentage of funding on the U.N. humanitarian appeals in the four country's we're dealing with, and they're between 6 to 21 percent, it's very low, so the funding issues are a significant problem, but it's more than funding that's been pointed out.

Yemen, we do need a diplomatic surge. The United States plays a critical role in Yemen, we are dealing with the neighbors of Yemen and we are engaged in supplying military assistance in dealing with those issues, so we do play a role.

And I think we need to look at the people of Yemen and recognize that as part of our diplomatic role, we need to get access for humanitarian assistance and helping the people of Yemen that have been so much impacted, South Sudan, right there also.

South Sudan, youngest country in the world, and yet, we have seen their government do horrible things in regards to allowing international intervention to help their own people. Instead, they seem more interested in arms than they are in food and we have to act in that regard.

So, each country is different, but they do have a lot in common. The Chairman asked a very important point, what can we do short-term to provide relief?

Well it seems to me in these countries, access by humanitarian workers in an area that could be done in the short-term. That, if we put a real spotlight on that \$10,000 visa, you can't defend that, South Sudan can't defend that.

If we put a real international spotlight on humanitarian worker's safety issues, and I commend you, you're frontline people are at risk. It's difficult to work under ideal circumstances, but under attack, it becomes impossible.

So, could you just share with us what we could do to, perhaps, give you greater access, that you can, in fact, have safer access on the ground in order to assess and help the people that are in need?

DACCORD:

Thank you very much, Senator.

Maybe you will allow me to be a bit more specific about access, and just say a word, then link with your question, "what can we do?" My organization, the International Committee of the Red Cross, what we do is, we engage with every party to the war.

So, let's look at Yemen, we would talk to all the parties. To the governments, but also to all, what we call the rebel (ph) groups, and the different groups, including the one which could be labeled as outlaw or terrorist.

Why? We do that with a very, very clear, in fact, humanitarian perspective and agenda. Which is, we are talking to them in order to make sure that the checkpoint can be crossed, in order to make sure that people can go to the hospital.

In order that Taiz, right now which is besieged, can get the water they need and you need to talk to the people. So, in that sense, access is something which is created, can be not order, I mean, this is something you negotiate on a daily basis.

And it's sometimes extremely complex, it took us years to really get access, and get curated, in Northeast Nigeria. So you arrive and then you negotiate, that's how we do that and it's sometimes very complicated, to be honest, because some of these groups, they will very carefully look at us, and how do we connect, and what we are saying and how it works.

Where you can play a role, as a very important government and you have played that role already, for quite a while, is exactly what you mentioned, on global and specific issues. Global is very clear, if there's a sense by some of the government, but also, not sadam (ph) group, that your government.

And you, as steering group, and as a committee, you still have an interest, a focus, on South Sudan as an example. Authority would behave differently, they know, they'll be very careful on the way they will look at that, Yemen, the same, Northeast Nigeria, also.

And then, there are specific elements and here, if I look at Yemen, everything related to the sea, and to the ports, is a big issue that are sometimes beyond what we can do as a humanitarian organization. You can ensure access to the port, you can make sure that the blockades is done, but also where the humanitarian exception very clear.

You can talk to, in fact as you mentioned, coalition country which are close to your country, and help possibly, to integrate international humanitarian level perspective when it comes to, in fact, delivering food and delivering aid. And I think this is something which we would value enormously, specifically when it comes to Odadah (ph), for example.

Right now in Yemen, that would be very, very important and it would make a lot of difference for a lot of people. 70 percent, 70 percent of people right now in Yemen need, in fact, aid and this aid needs to come from outside, there's no choice.

There's no market anymore in Yemen, so we need absolutely, the blockade needs to cease and needs to be, to be managed.

CARDIN:

Mr. Chairman, that may be a specific area, within the next couple weeks, that our committee may want to keep a look on today. Clearly that's a target for action and it could be the major entry point for humanitarian assistance.

And it's unclear as to the current abilities to get humanitarian aid into Yemen, because of the control by the illegitimate authorities. That if it's taken back, there is a concern as to whether the government would be interested in using that port for humanitarian needs.

So, I think that's an area where we may be able to have some impact that could really help people save their lives and I appreciate that comment.

CORKER:

Senator Young.

YOUNG:

Thank you both, for your service and for your testimony.

I'd like to ask Ms. Lindborg, picking up on some testimony I elicited from Mr. Gottlieb earlier.

I actually cited your prepared statement in your reference to Amartya Sen's observation in, *Development As Freedom*, that, "No famine has ever taken place in the history of the world in a functioning democracy, because democratic governments have to win elections, face public criticism, have strong incentive to undertake measures to avert famine and other catastrophes".

We discussed here today the principle of resilience. I'd just like to get your thoughts, is Sen's assertion correct, isn't the ultimate resilience measure a functioning democracy?

And in your opinion, how effective has our government, USAID in particular, been at promoting democracy and good governance? And if you could, sort of, include in there how you access, how you measure effectiveness in democracy promotion?

I'd be grateful.

LINDBORG:

Yes, thank you.

You know, since Amartya Sen made that statement in the 80's, which really turned on its head the assumption that famines were a function of food scarcity. And instead, made the assertion that it is the result of failed democracies or ineffectual systems.

Scholarship has really moved us forward on this understanding of the importance of having what's called a functioning state society relationship. Where you have both state capacity, the ability to provide services, the political legitimacy and the occlusion of people from throughout their country.

And when that is nonexistent or when it is a frayed relationship, is when you have greater fragility in the system, which I talk about in my testimony. And that is what leads these states to not being able to manage conflict, so that it doesn't become violent and rip them apart.

YOUNG:

So where has our government, if at all, fallen short with respect to adapting to this new scholarship?

LINDBORG:

I think our greatest difficulty is that, it really does require a combination of assistance, development, humanitarian assistance, as well as, understanding the security dimensions. And the need for using our diplomatic, our security, and our development tools, together in a coherent way to bring to bear on country's that are in deep states of fragility; that is our biggest challenge.

And I co-chaired a study on this, senior study group on fragility that I'm happy to share that report with you.

YOUNG:

I look forward to receiving that, thank you.

In his prepared statement, Mr. Gottlieb states that, "The United States commitments to humanitarian efforts, also enable us to push for greater transparency, and improve efficiencies in the international system, specifically in the United Nations".

I serve as Chair, the sub-committee that oversees multilateral international development and multilateral institutions. I'd like to get both of your thoughts, if you have thoughts on this matter, with respect to specific examples where there's a need for greater transparency, and improved efficiencies, in United Nation agencies?

DACCORD:

Thank you, Senator.

(PAUSE)

(CROSSTALK)

YOUNG:

Is the question arcane or is it politically sensitive?

DACCORD:

I think the question is very - - let me try to answer, it's a big question, exactly.

I can start with my own organization, my experience first of all, we benefit from an extremely powerful and support from the governments, including the member of the Congress, which is fantastic over time, and we value that.

And as always, the support is not just a fanishing (ph) support, it's not just a diplomatic support, it's also a partnership, right? Which means as an organization, including my organization, including working in the most difficult places, you need to be able to show result.

You mentioned, Senator Young, at the beginning that you need to be able to explain to your own constituency where the money goes, what does that mean, and of course, we as you see work in the most difficult places. It's difficult to explain to anybody that we're doing humanitarian actions in Somalia, or in Ukraine, or in Afghanistan and get some impressive support.

People say, "What the hell are you doing there, how does that work", right? So I think, there is a need for us to be able to show results, to be specific, we do, including the united actions right now, result base management.

So when we do, in fact, our own way to gratify, we do very differently from the United Nation, be aware of that, we do a yearly base, we do by target audience, we're very specific. So as a humanitarian organization, you can be humanitarian, but also be very specific about what you want to be able to achieve; that's one.

B, where the transparency and where the government, your government, have played an important role, is in the quality funding. Quality funding, it's not just the money, it's also giving flexible funding and that has made an enormous difference.

Can I just give one anecdote? Northeast Nigeria. Nobody was interested about Northeast Nigeria five or six years ago, nobody, not single person. My team at the time, set six year goal, we have a problem here.

It took us four years of operation to little by little, started to understand the problems and get tolerated. We were able, by the people, and by also, by the groups, and the government, on the spot.

We were able to do that because we had flexible funding, because in fact, the United States government is giving us this flexible funding. So that I found extremely useful, but at the same time, when you do have flexible funding, you need to be able to show that you're efficient and that's fine.

You need to be able that when you're evaluated, you are the best, but in terms of finance, in terms of diversification of aid, we do have system, which are very robust and we do have it. And we had long discussion with your government over time and it works.

So, I don't know if I answered your question because this is not the United Nation, this is my organization.

But what I wanted to tell you is, yes, it has an inference on the way we work on our policies, on our practice, including in the most difficult places. And this is absolutely critical, if we want to get the support we need from people.

YOUNG:

So, I'll just add this, being respectful of the Chairman, and my colleagues, time.

If you have additional ideas, I know this is a big, complex question that lends itself to a multi-faceted, and extensive, response. I think it's incumbent upon us to really scrutinize how these agencies are organized and further their mission.

I want to work with the State Department, our U.N. Ambassador, and others, but I need some input from experts, like yourself, moving forward on this area.

LINDBORG:

If I could just briefly note, there was a very landmark event last May, the World Humanitarian Summit, that really crystalized, and articulated, some of the very important advances that have been made over the last years, in part, in response to the extraordinary strain on the humanitarian system, but ways to make it more effective, more efficient.

That's an agenda that has yet to be fully realized, but it provides an important blueprint of where to put energies, and how to move forward smarter, move effective assistance.

YOUNG:

That's instructive.

Thank you.

CORKER:

Thank you, thank you very much.

Senator Shaheed.

SHAHEEN:

Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

And thank you both for being here, and for your very important work, at this very critical and difficult time.

Last week the Armed Services Committee, which I'm a member of, had presentations from the CENTCOM Commander, General Votel, who has Yemen as part of his area of oversight. And the AFRICOM Commander, General Waldhauser, who has Nigeria and Somalia, as part of his area of oversight.

One of the things that General Waldhauser said that I thought was very important, he talked about the importance of addressing development, and governance, and economic issues in Nigeria and the impact of that on the rest of the continent of Africa; because of Nigeria's size and importance.

But, can you talk about how, if at all, you work with the American military, and other military efforts, in the country's that we're talking about today, and particularly in Yemen and Somalia?

Because if very much appreciate the Chair, and ranking members, what can we do today that's going to help this situation in those two countries.

LINDBORG:

Sure.

One of the things that U.S. Institute of Peace has been doing, has been to work with both our DOD, our state, as well as our AID colleagues to conduct table-top exercises. We recently completed a series of exercises looking at the Lake Chad basin where the Nigerian crisis has provided regional disruption, Cameroon, Chad, Niger, are all affected by Boko Haram and what's been going on.

And the interest of General Waldhauser, and his associates, are how do we better coordinate across all of these tools, so that we have shared understanding of the problem that we're trying to solve and make a better, more effective difference, both immediate and long- term.

We have a lot of resources if we coordinate them, together we can have a far greater impact.

SHAHEEN:

So are they engaged in the current immediate crisis in both Yemen and Somalia?

LINDBORG:

They are not engaged with the delivery of humanitarian assistance, but they are engaged on the security dimension of those crisis because . . .

SHAHEEN:

So the protection for aid workers, that . . .

LINDBORG:

More about the ongoing threats presented by the terrorist groups that are part of the conflicts, that are creating the conditions for famine to occur. It is an essential part, and it's essential that they be a part of a joint understanding of the problem.

SHAHEEN:

Yes.

DACCORD:

If you know me, Senator, I mean, we are lucky enough we get to meet American troops everywhere on the ground because we're together. When it comes to CENTCOM, of course, there is a lot of work that we do together (inaudible) so we are used to that.

I think, we in fact, value their reading of the situation, they have very, very good understanding of what happens. They have very clear, I would say, military and strategic objective, and they distinguish them very clearly from our own, I would say, humanitarian objective.

I think we value that, to have this very regular, but also very strategic contact on a daily base.

SHAHEEN:

Thank you.

Ms. Lindborg, USIP has been very involved in the role of women in conflict areas, and the importance of women being at the table in negotiating ends to conflicts.

So I want to ask you about that, but I also want to point out that I've been part of a task force that's been done by the Center for Strategic and International Studies that just came out with a report this week on addressing adolescent girls, and women, and empowering them in four areas, maternal and child health, family planning; reproductive health; nutrition and HPV vaccines.

And this is the report, and Mr. Chairman, I would like to share this with anybody on the committee who has an interest, but I know this is a longer term issue than the current topic of today's discussion.

But can you talk about how important it is to make sure that as we're engaging in these conflict areas and areas where there are tragedies, like the famines we're facing, that we engage with women and make sure that they're at the table, because of their importance to the long-term solution for many of these situations?

LINDBORG:

Absolutely, and congratulations on your work on that important study.

You know women and girls, and children, disproportionately suffer from these kinds of complicated conflicts and famine. The health implications, as you discussed earlier, are overwhelming and they are also, those who often on the front lines of mean to take care of their families.

Often, they're the ones who are the refugees and have to hold together family and often, community cohesion. It's very important to include women in the longer term rebuilding of these communities, both at the community level and at the peace table.

And we're seeing that when women are included in these peace processes, they are far more likely to be enduring, there's a lot of research on this. So, from taking care of women at the health level, to empowering them as leaders, is an absolutely essential aspect of addressing these crisis, short-term and long-term.

SHAHEEN:

Thank you very much.

And Mr. Chairman, just another reason why we need to advance the Women, Peace, and Security Act.

(LAUGHTER)

CORKER:

I am sure we will get that done, in some form.

If you want to enter that document into the record, you are welcome to do that.

OK, so without objection, we'll enter it in.

Thank you for the comments.

Senator Rubio.

RUBIO:

Thank you.

Thank you both, for being here.

All of these areas are important. I want to focus on South Sudan for a moment.

I want to read to you from the first paragraph of the Enough Project, it's in combination with the Century, a partnership Century, which is an investigative initiative.

Here's what they write, "South Sudan leaders have stoked violent conflict, committed mass atrocities and created a man-made famine. The main source of the conflict is the competition for spoils, in which factions based primarily on ethnic, and historical allegiance, compete violently for power, and the massive opportunities for self- enrichment available through looting national budgets, exploiting natural resources and manipulating state contracts".

Would either of you disagree with this assessment?

LINDBORG:

No.

DACCORD:

No, I would be, it's more specific.

RUBIO:

You want to be more specific, is that what you said?

Or you could not be . . .

DACCORD:

No, I think South Sudan, I agree with the statement, but then I think we have to understand exact in which dynamic it is. South Sudan is something than look in the vacuum, it's a country where it has been created a few years ago.

The leaders there have been part of the guerrilla and it questions, which is there for a very, very long time. So, I agree with the statement, but I think we need to put the statement, I would say, in context to understand exactly what we're dealing with.

RUBIO:

Well, I appreciate that, I think what we're dealing with according to this, according to the statement from Mr. Gottlieb, where he said that, "we hold all the warring parties, including the

government, the opposition, and affiliated armed groups responsible for the hostilities that abandon, even worse, targets civilian lives and livelihoods".

You've also had a large number of aid workers killed trying to provide services in South Sudan.

So here's what I really wanted to ask about, you've sensed from some of the members a sense of urgency about what can we do now? And the resources, I don't think any of us disagree, although in 2013 I believe South Sudan was the largest recipient of aid in the world and yet, this remains.

So the resources, I don't think, are in dispute. We all agree we want to continue to be a part of it, but that is not enough, unless we get through the access problem. The access problem requires a whole of government approach from our perspective.

And one of the suggestions that they make is that we need to, in essence, "We have an opportunity to hit these leaders, and their criminal networks, in their wallets. Using the power of the U.S. dollar, which they rely on almost exclusively to create leverage in support of a renewed peace initiative that can probably bring stability and peace to the region".

And they go on to talk about, "Changing the calculations of South Sudan's leaders through this leverage". The aim is to bring them to the table, for example, "negotiate a new cease fire, but the leverage would involve designation of individuals, and entities, both in the government and in the opposition".

"That it should start with mid to senior level targets", they also believe that "we can reach out to financial institutions to take extra steps to safe-guard against the laundering of the proceeds of corruption, originating in South Sudan."

"The U.S. Department of Treasury financial crimes enforcement network should issue and advisory that identifies particular, very specific, categories of money laundering associated with kleptocracy in South Sudan including real estate transactions".

The point being, the argument that they make in this report, which I am compelled to agree with, is that the only way we're going to get to the access problem here, is not simply by providing more resources, but by using leverage. Particularly the unique leverage the United States brings to bear, to pressuring these criminals, on both sides, to the table.

To organize a cease fire, and as a result, allow access to humanitarian relief and the safety of the workers that provide it.

My question to both of you is, do you believe that it would be a positive exercise of American power to use the threat of sanctions against these individuals on both sides of this conflict?

To bring them to the table to resolve this in a way that allows access for food, and medicine, for these people that are on the verge of starvation, and death, in South Sudan?

LINDBORG:

I've heard of the Enough proposal. I think that it is critical to bring U.S. leadership to bear.

We've used threats through U.N. security resolutions, they're not always born out. If there is a way to use the sanctions that Enough is proposing to really make a difference, and to galvanize action, and to jump-start a very more abundant peace process.

I think it's a very important idea to explore and look at the feasibility for this, we need to refill the special envoy position. We have long looked at local leadership as being key, local regional leadership at IGAD, or the African union, as key for moving forward that process, that's still true.

And it will be important to have U.S. leadership in all of our tools as a part of moving that forward. This has been a very difficult, non-productive peace process to date, but we will not be able to solve this problem if we don't engage more effectively, regional leadership, African union leadership.

And ultimately, look at these kinds of creative uses of sanctions, American leadership, I believe will be absolutely essential.

DACCORD:

Senator Rubio, I do value and my limit is that I'm a humanitarian.

So I will not look at all these questions of sanctions and all that, but as a humanitarian, I know also my limits.

When it comes to South Sudan, it's not what is requested, not more, you might in response. What is requested today is a political response, very clearly.

And here, the framework is very clear. You have international humanitarian, which very specifically says what party to the conflict needs to do.

There is an article in one of the Geneva Conventions, it says respect and ensure respect. What I would really find interesting is that, for once, the committee of states is ready to do that.

In South Sudan, it is a place where it is possible to guarantee in fact, the respect of internationally written law, absolutely, and it's a political, and diplomatic, endeavor.

CORKER:

Thank you very much.

Senator Markey.

MARKEY:

Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

So, would each of you support targeted sanctions in South Sudan as a strategy which the United States should be supporting?

LINDBORG:

I would, I think so. I mean, I don't know enough about the specifics, and who would be targeted, but we should look very carefully and lean into those possibilities that will make a difference.

MARKEY:

Great.

DACCORD:

You know, I'm careful about sanction, if I look at the humanitarian side, normally the people are suffering from the sanctions are never the ones you are targeting.

(CROSSTALK)

That's my problem. So my point too, though, as a humanitarian organization as I mentioned before, we're extremely interested that the government, but also all the party in the conflict are really abiding by internationally written law.

That should be the focus of the international committee.

MARKEY:

Members of this body called for targeted sanctions in the Congo, last year on the elections issue, targeted those who were repressing democracy, and now we see some success. We're going to have to keep our fingers crossed, so that would be one of our goals.

I would like to focus as well, on climate change and the impact it may have had in South Sudan. We've been warned for 40 years about the impacts of carbon dioxide in the atmosphere, and the impact it was having on Sub-Saharan Africa.

And now we see droughts, followed by famine, followed by limited resources inside of a country, followed by fights over those limited resources.

So, can you talk a little bit, Mr. Daccord, about the need for the United States, for the world to lead on climate change? So that what we see in South Sudan is not exacerbated and what we see in South Sudan is not replicated, in other parts of the world.

DACCORD:

Senator, you take me bit outside of my zone of competences and knowledge. If I look at the pure humanitarian perspective, what we see of course, is that in the region of East Africa over the last 15 years, there's a clear impact of climate change in the country and in the entire region.

Not only South Sudan, by the way in Somalia, Kenya, very clearly what you see, it has a dramatic impact on the way people are living. With the livestock, they had to go down in fact, because it was drought everywhere for a long, long time. We know that El Nino has an enormous impact right now in the region, we know that very clearly.

Now this is my, I would say, responsibility as a humanitarian is to be able to integrate that dimension when we respond that.

MARKEY:

So should the United States be a leader in reducing the carbon dioxide, so that we don't see a further exacerbation of this increased desertification that we're seeing all across the world?

Do you think we should take the lead, sir?

DACCORD:

Senator Markey, what I would find important is the United States would understand in fact, when they look at a crisis like the crisis we're talking about, all the different components of the crisis.

MARKEY:

So should we take the lead?

DACCORD:

That's not what I'm saying.

MARKEY:

OK, Ms. Linborg, should we take the lead?

LINDBORG:

U.S. leadership is absolutely essential for making movement on global problems. We're seeing that over and over again.

MARKEY:

You put climate change in that category?

LINDBORG:

As Yves as said, we have seen an ever fasting cycle of drought in the Horn of Africa that's leading to exacerbated and increased humanitarian . . .

MARKEY:

And you agree with the experts that it's caused by human activity that is warming the planet dangerously and causing an exacerbation of these problems, do you agree with that?

LINDBORG:

So, like Yves, I'm not a scientist, but from a humanitarian perspective . . .

(CROSSTALK)

MARKEY:

The science is clear and the impact is, also clear.

I'd like to move over, if I could, to Haiti. There are many, many people who are in need of help in Haiti.

In December, the United Nations asked for \$400 million for a strategy to address a cholera outbreak started by U.N. peacekeepers in Haiti. Two days ago, the New York Times reported that the total amount raised, so far, is \$2 million.

\$2 million to help these people in Haiti to deal with the long- term consequences of this cholera introduced by U.N. peacekeepers about 10 years ago.

What are your perspectives on this U.N. appeal for such severe humanitarian need? And how it has failed so spectacularly, in terms of actually getting the help from the United Nations to deal with the problem.

Mr. Daccord.

DACCORD:

Again, a humanitarian perspective, I think what I find so difficult is to see that aid that today still, in terms of population and system, is not equipped to be able to absorb shock, whatsoever right? And after now, what's seven or eight years of intervention of the international community, I think it is a reflection of how we're doing together.

And what are we able to do to make sure that we are able to not only to respond to emergency, the emergency was rather well responded, not perfect, but it was . . .

MARKEY:

In the immediate, but not for the long term, it's just sitting there waiting for a repetition. So are you disappointed in the U.N.?

(CROSSTALK)

DACCORD:

I'm disappointed, not in the U.N., I'm disappointed about the global response of . . .

MARKEY:

So you're disappointed in the individual countries in the U.N.? Is that what you're saying?

DACCORD:

No.

I'm disappointed about the global response. I find it difficult, as always as a humanitarian, what I'm trying to do is to see what is our contribution, we have a very clear united perspective, we try to see that, but we also see the limits of what it is.

Typically in Haiti, we have really downsize our presence because we thought that we, as a humanitarian, we need to focus on where really, there is a need to do that, right?

MARKEY:

Yes, what I'm afraid of, Mr. Daccord, is that the global response, or just how well each of the individual members did on it. And I think in the Trump era, with his America first attitude and saying we are going to retreat on the State Department budget.

Other budgets that would have the United States being a leader, it's going to give other countries which have not been so great anyway, a further excuse not to themselves, participate. And then the global response, unfortunately, is going to leave these poor people in even worse situations, even though it was a problem that was caused by the introduction of cholera by the United Nations peacekeeping forces into that country.

And now, they're going to be living with it forever, if this period of time, this Trump America first attitude is perpetuated in our own country, but around the world and is replicated. So, I just think it's a huge long-term problem.

Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

CORKER:

Thank you.

I will note the incredible discipline of our witnesses to stay within humanitarian confines.

Senator Young.

YOUNG:

Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

I just want to build on this question of access in various areas, particularly South Sudan, it's been invoked a number of times. A related question is accountability, when there's a lack of access.

Mr. Gottlieb noted in his written testimonies that the aid workers have been harassed, attacked, or killed in South Sudan, with at least 72 aid workers dying there since 2013.

Mr. Daccord, you cite the widespread violation of international humanitarian law, attacks on health facilities, health care workers, so on, and so forth. As you know, rule 31 of Customary International Humanitarian Law states that, "Humanitarian relief personnel must be respected and protected".

Rule 35, "prohibits directing an attack against a zone established to shelter the wounded, the sick, and civilian, from the effects of hostilities". And that applies to all parties including Russia. The Assad regime, their deliberate and repeated targets on hospitals in Aleppo, I might note.

Mr. Daccord, in all conflict zones where ICRC operates, are you making any effort to document these attacks on humanitarian personnel so we can bring the perpetrators to justice?

DACCORD:

Well first of all, and I have to thank you for the question.

Your assessment is quite right, I think we see really, when it comes to access, and not just access of humanitarian, my concern is access for people, communities to health risible (ph). And you mentioned the issue of health, what we've seen over the last few years, is a systematic pressure attack in health structure.

And by the way, not only in South Sudan, in Yemen, as an example, in Afghanistan, in Syria, by all the parties from day one of the conflict and this is really dramatic.

So what do we do, as I see, we first of all are part of something larger, but we as an organization, we document that, of course, but we don't then put that at disposal of the public. What we do is, we document that because we engage in a very bilateral discussions, confidential discussions with the people in charge, right?

So we do discuss with, in fact in the case of Syria, we do discuss with the government, with the rebel, with also, international government, you mentioned Russia and other. And we engage with them on the very specific elements.

We did the same with your government on specific question in Afghanistan, for example in Syria, and Iraq. And I think it's important to be able to do it, that's the way we do. Other will do differently, I mean, other organization will then really recommend, and look, and be more public about that.

And I value, in fact, this different perspective, but our perspective is to document and to have a real very, very thorough discussion over time with in fact, the people directly responsible. We don't do that only about health, we do that as you mentioned, about the tensions and all that.

This is something we maintain very carefully.

YOUNG:

And I can understand on account of your mission, why that sort of, neutral disposition would make sense, you try and mediate these conflicts.

Tell me if I'm misrepresenting it, but you try and come to some more positive resolution short of outing these individuals. Passing this information onto authorities that might pursue legal action against the perpetrators.

Correct?

DACCORD:

Senator, we are very pragmatic organization.

YOUNG:

Yes.

DACCORD:

In fact, we adapt to the reality of the world. And I think if we would start to pass information to anybody . . .

YOUNG:

Yes.

DACCORD:

My role as a CO (ph), I would have to withdraw my people from most of the places where we are. You mentioned trust . . .

YOUNG:

Yes.

DACCORD:

Trust is the critical element and we need to have a minimum of trust from, in fact, the parties to the conflict, so when we are confidential, they need to trust us, that we are really confidential. If they would start to make a mix between us and justice, it would be extremely difficult for us.

I do . . .

YOUNG:

I understand your perspective.

Ms. Lindborg is chomping at the bit to chime in here, so.

LINDBORG:

I just wanted to note that my current organization, the U.S. Institute of Peace, works on the ground in conflict areas, not providing humanitarian assistance, but looking at how to manage, or resolve, violent conflicts. And to resolve any kind of conflict where there has been violence and terrible things that have occurred, you need to look at this issue of accountability.

There will be different solutions in different contexts in both at a national and international, but also, a local level.

So for example, USIP worked in Terete, in Iraq after the massacre by Daesh, by ISIL of 1,600 Iraqi cadets. When Daesh left, there was enormous distrust between the Sunni and the Shia communities and the possibility of cycles of tribal revenge.

So we brought the tribal sheikhs, the Shia and the Sunni's together to navigate, and negotiate, a peace agreement. So that they would only hold the specific perpetrators accountable, not their entire tribes and that ultimately enabled about 300,000 Sunni families to return.

So justice and accountability is absolutely essential to conclude, and heal, from violent conflicts. And there are both large scale processes, and local level processes, that need to be brought to bear.

YOUNG:

OK, it sounds as though there may some work to be done at the U.S. Federal Government level, with respect to documenting, legal action, and bringing certain perpetrators, under certain circumstances to justice. But we have to be very careful about this.

We'll continue the dialog later.

Thank you.

CORKER:

Thank you.

Senator Cardin.

CARDIN:

Let me just compliment Senator Young on that line of questioning, I understand the confidentiality and the trust issues, but this is violation of international protocols and I do think we need to document.

I know, Mr. Daccord, your people are at risk and the numbers, I think, are public. As I understand, your frontline people have paid in some cases, the ultimate sacrifice for their service.

Do you have just the numbers of people that have been injured or killed from the International Red Cross?

DACCORD:

I always find it difficult to look at numbers because as we know it, it doesn't really reflect the issues. If I look at just my own organization we just lost, eight months ago, six of my colleagues in Afghanistan, for example.

If I look at then, the Red Crescent and Red Cross family, in Syria it's the highest number since World War II. The Syrian Red Crescent, which is part of our family, lost 57 volunteers, and paid staff, in Syria over the last six years.

That tells you a little bit what is happening when you are on frontline, which is very clear, and the access questions, and the ability to negotiate. We're living in a world where fragmentation is there.

You have a lot of fragmentation among, in fact armed groups, which make things extremely difficult because you need to make sure that they understand who you are, at least tolerate you and that requires long-term work.

That's one of the big questions, when you would focus on the fore country, we just mentioned, Yemen, Somalia, Northeast Nigeria and South Sudan. And to answer your question, Mr.

Chairman, let's make sure that the aid will really go to organization where able to deal with access.

That's critical issues, wants to reach out to the population, which deserves to receive help.

CARDIN:

Thank you for that.

I just really would make this point, if the United States did everything that I wanted to do, and the international committee did everything that they should do, we would still need you. Because of the credibility you have in the community and your ability to provide frontline help that we would not be able to do as government.

So I just really want to thank you so much for what you do to sacrifice, both of you, what you do and the sacrifices that you make, really doing what is the key value of America. And that is our international responsibilities for humanitarian assistance.

Thank you.

CORKER:

Thank you, both.

This will conclude our hearing.

Thank you for your testimony, and both, to focus on the short, medium, and longer term issues.

You know, we have the great privilege of serving on this committee and having a better world view than most have, because of all the information that we have on a daily basis, and is incoming from our staff and other people. It is amazing that on one hand, the many good things that organizations like both of yours do.

It's, also, so disheartening to know that we have leaders around the world that would deny, you know, aid to their own people. Yesterday, the event we had relative to Caesar, where we saw again the documentation of Assad torturing his own people.

Have it laying siege to communities where people cannot get medicines, matter of fact specific medicines, what's happening in the four regions we're focused on today. And so there is always going to be more work than we can do.

And there's always going to be people that we could have, and should have, gotten aid to that we cannot. But thankfully the United States of America, generally speaking, has played a leading role and I think most people on this committee want to do everything they can to ensure that

And we're very thankful that organizations like the two of you, as individuals exists.

Thank you so much for being here.

For the record, if you will, it will remain open until the close of business Friday. There will be some additional QFR's that y'all are very familiar with and if, in a reasonable amount of time, if you could respond, we'd appreciate it.

Thank you, again.

The meeting is adjourned.